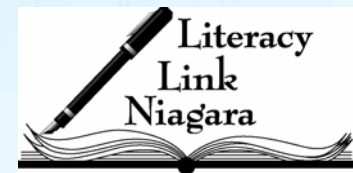


Celebrating Literacy for a Healthy Economy

Literacy in the Niagara Region
Profile for
Employers & Community Organizations



bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Trudy Parsons, Executive Director
Niagara Training & Adjustment Board

Angela Carter, Interim Executive Director
Literacy Link Niagara

Paul Knaflec, President
Community Benchmarks

bottom line impact

Celebrating Literacy Objectives

- Describe literacy skills for the Niagara Region
- Provide a literacy skills profile
- Provide a demographic and a socio-economic profile for Niagara Region
- Provide data for local literacy organizations to target literacy needs and support funding requests

Definition of Literacy

“The fundamental skills, attributes, attitudes and behaviours that enable people to speak, write prose, use documents and numbers, and work responsibly alone or in teams in the workplace.”

Conference Board of Canada

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Nine Essential Skills

Reading Text

Document Use

Numeracy

Writing

Oral Communication

Working with Others

Continuous Learning

Thinking Skills

Computer Use

Conference Board of Canada

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Defining Literacy Skill Levels

- Prose Literacy
- Document Literacy
- Numeracy Literacy

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Five Levels of Literacy

- **Level 1** - very low skills, great difficulty reading but a wide range of performance
- **Level 2** - individuals can read but not well
- **Level 3** - individuals read well, but may have problems with more complex tasks
- **Level 4/5** - individuals have a high level of literacy and perform complex tasks

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Canadian IALS Results

% Employed Population

| | | Prose | Doc. | Quant. |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Not Adequate | Level 1 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Level 2 | <u>25</u> | <u>24</u> | <u>25</u> |
| | Total Levels 1&2 | 37 | 36 | 37 |
| Adequate | Level 3 | 37 | 35 | 36 |
| | Level 4/5 | 26 | 29 | 27 |

bottom line impact

Ontario Employees Who Do Not Meet Minimum Skill Levels

- Accommodation & Food Services – 67%
- Construction – 54%
- Manufacturing – 46%
- Trade Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing – 36%
- Health Care & Social Assistance 35%

Literacy Impact on Business Results

- “Waste” created by literacy issues: impacts productivity, quality, safety
- Flexibility
- Continuous Improvement
- Ability to introduce change
- Employee Relations

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Benefits to Employees

- Ability to complete the same tasks faster and more accurately
- Improved morale/self-esteem
- Ability to work better with co-workers or in teams
- Improved reading, writing, numeracy, communication and problem-solving skills
- Greater chance of promotion or transfer into new positions
- Increased pay and/or responsibility

bottom line impact

Skills Mismatch

- 39.2% of Canada's workforce possesses literacy skills that do not match their respective positions
- 15.5% of workers with inadequate skills to meet the demands of their occupations
- 23.7% of workers have high levels of literacy but are not actively engaging these skills in the workforce

Literacy Skills & Employer Training

- Participation in adult learning increases as one's literacy level increases
- Employer funding of adult education and training differs with respect to:
 - Gender
 - Literacy skill levels
 - Relative size of the employer

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

| Category | Level | # People | % Niagara | % Ontario |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Prose | 1 | 75,378 | 22.9 | 21.3 |
| | 2 | 95,440 | 29 | 28.1 |
| | 3 | 110,347 | 33.5 | 34.4 |
| | 4/5 | 48,343 | 14.7 | 16.2 |

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

| Category | Level | # People | % Niagara | % Ontario |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Document | 1 | 81,501 | 24.7 | 23.0 |
| | 2 | 92,597 | 28.1 | 27.3 |
| | 3 | 105,066 | 31.9 | 32.6 |
| | 4/5 | 50,451 | 15.3 | 17.1 |

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

| Category | Level | # People | % Niagara | % Ontario |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Numeracy | 1 | 95,563 | 29.0 | 27.1 |
| | 2 | 99,111 | 30.1 | 29.4 |
| | 3 | 93,989 | 28.5 | 29.5 |
| | 4/5 | 40,812 | 12.4 | 14.0 |

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Literacy Levels Across Occupations

| Sample Occupation | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4/5 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Clerical Operations | 19.9 | 29.5 | 35.0 | 15.6 |
| Law, Social Services Education, Religion | 15.5 | 27.5 | 37.3 | 19.6 |
| Skilled Sales/Serv. | 21.3 | 29.2 | 34.1 | 15.4 |

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Literacy Levels in Niagara Occupations

| Sample Occupation | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4/5 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Trades/Skilled Equip. Operators | 20.6 | 29.7 | 34.8 | 14.9 |
| Construction | 28.2 | 30.4 | 30.0 | 11.4 |
| Machine Operators | 25.6 | 30.0 | 31.5 | 12.8 |
| Assist. Support of Health Services | 17.4 | 28.9 | 36.6 | 17.0 |

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

| Category | Level | # People | % Niagara | % Ontario |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Average | 1 | 84,147 | 25.5 | 23.8 |
| | 2 | 95,716 | 29.0 | 28.3 |
| | 3 | 103,134 | 31.3 | 32.2 |
| | 4/5 | 46,345 | 14.1 | 15.7 |

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

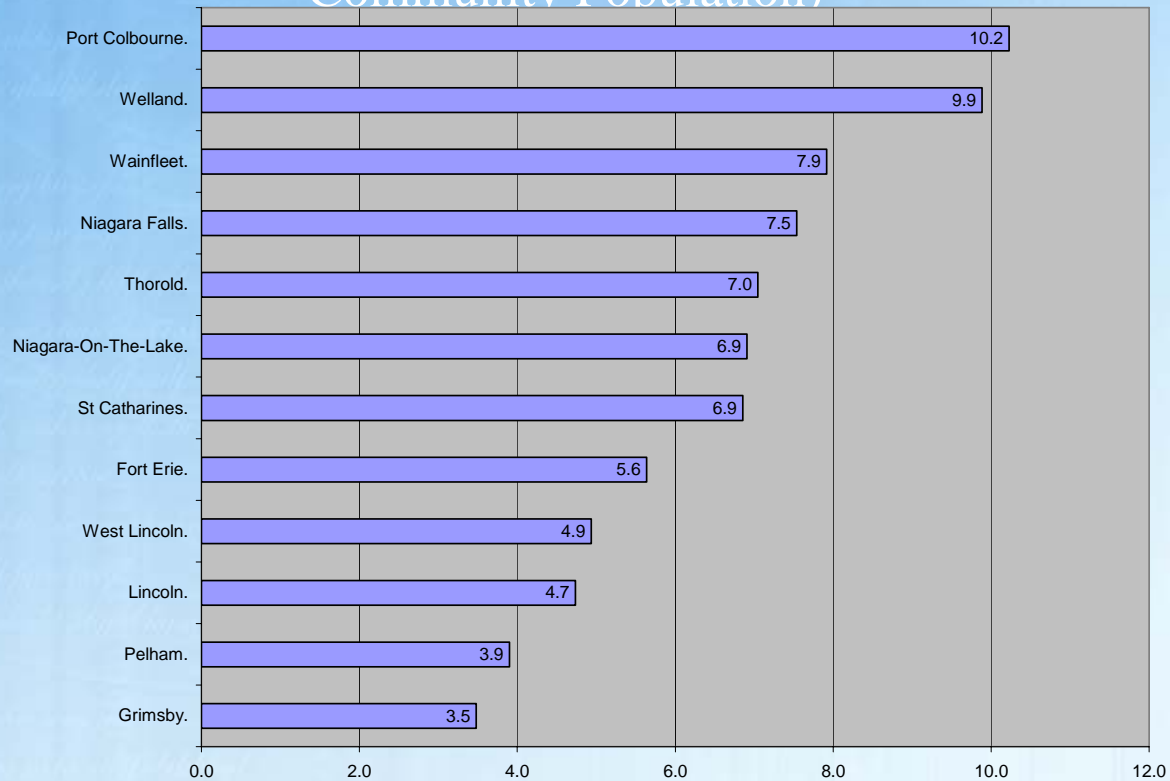
Sample Occupations with Higher Literacy Skills in Niagara

- Business & Finance
- Natural & Applied Sciences
- Health
- Social Science, Education, Government Services & Religion

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

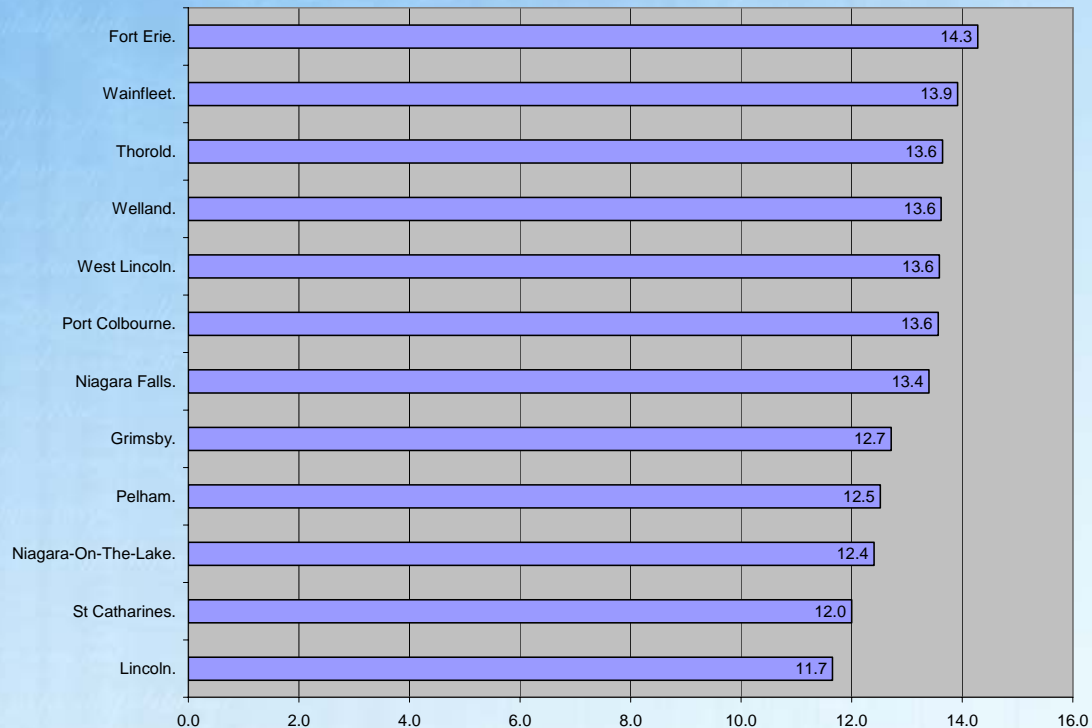
Highest Level of Educational Attainment - Less than grade 9 (% of Community Population)



bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

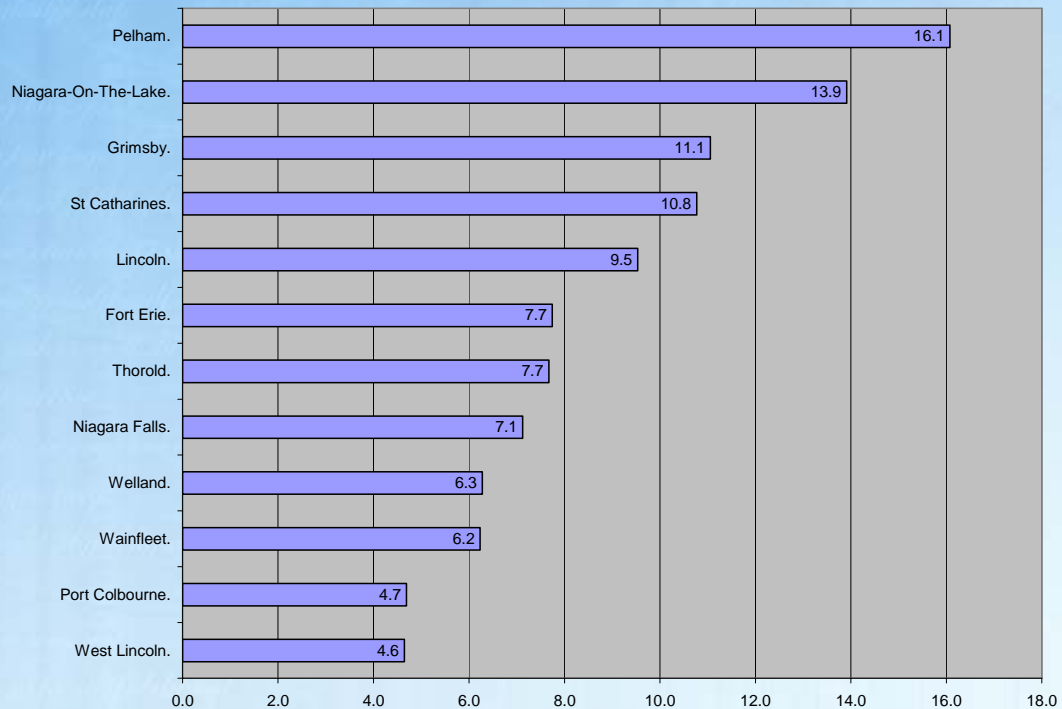
Highest Level of Educational Attainment - Grades 9-13 with high school graduation certificate (% of Community Population)



bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Highest Level of Educational Attainment - University with bachelor's degree or higher (% of Community Population)



bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Fort Erie – Observation

- On average - higher proportion of population has lower literacy levels
- Highest aboriginal population in the Region
- 42.6% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- 14.8% of the population has a college certificate or diploma
- Over 64 year old cohort has higher literacy levels relative to the Region (approx. to the provincial level)

bottom line impact

Grimsby - Observations

- Relative to Niagara communities, higher educational attainment overall
- 32.4% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Consistently exhibits a lower proportion of its population with a level 1 literacy level
- At par with the Region and the province with respect to level 2 literacy levels
- Ranks 10th in the Region in proportion of its population with a college certificate or diploma

Lincoln - Observations

- Regionally higher educational attainment overall
- 32.7% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- 17.2% of the population has a college certificate or diploma
- In the 15 to 24 cohort, the proportion of individuals with level 1 literacy within the community is 32.5%

Niagara Falls

- Relative to other local communities, educational attainment is lower
- 41.9% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Ranks 10th in terms of its population with a trades certificate
- Larger visible minority population relative to other local communities

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Niagara-on-the-Lake - Observations

- 34.9% of the population has no more than a high school diploma (ranks 9th in region)
- Ranks 2nd in region with respect to proportion of population with a university degree
- Largest immigrant population in the region
- Aged 35-44 cohort literacy levels are generally higher than average (17.6% at level 1 compared with 19.9% & 18.9% at region and province respectively)
- Aged 15-24 and cohort has a higher than average proportion of population with lower literacy levels (33.7% compared with 30.9% and 30.6% at region & province)

bottom line impact

Pelham - Observations

- Greater proportion of the population has higher literacy levels
- 31.2% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Ranks first in local communities that have a university degree and second with respect to individuals having some university education
- Aged 15-24 cohort exhibits similar distribution of literacy skills to region and province
- Aged 25 and above has a markedly lower proportion of the population at level 1 literacy levels (12.7% compared with 17.7% and 16.8% at region & provincial levels respectively)

bottom line impact

Port Colborne - Observations

- On average a higher proportion of the population has lower literacy levels and lower educational attainment (among communities in Niagara)
- 45.7% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Ranks 2nd in the region for the proportion of the population without a high school diploma
- Ranks 11th in terms of individuals having a university degree/12th with respect to those with some university education
- In the 25-34 cohort, 19.6% of the population are at level 1 literacy (vs. 17.7% & 16.8% region & province respectively)

bottom line impact

St. Catharines - Observations

- Distribution of literacy skills similar to those of Region and province
- 18.9% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Ranks 4th with respect to the proportion of the population with a university degree
- Ranks 6th with respect to proportion without high school diploma
- Largest visible minority population
- Decline in population between 1996 and 2001 with a 2.2% increase in 2006 over 2001

Thorold - Observations

- On average in this community a higher proportion of population has lower literacy levels
- 40.8% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Ranks 4th in terms of the proportion of the population that does not have a college certificate or diploma
- Among those aged 15-44, community exhibits similar distribution of literacy skills relative to the Region
- For those aged 45 years or higher, community exhibits a higher proportion of its population with a level 1 literacy score

Wainfleet - Observations

- 39.5% of the population has achieved a level of educational no greater than a high school diploma
- Wainfleet ranks second in terms of the proportion of the population with a trade certificate
- Wainfleet is the smallest community in the region (based on population size)
- On average, the population exhibits literacy skills similar to those of the Region

Welland - Observations

- 43.4% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- Welland ranks 1st with respect to its proportion of population with knowledge of both English and French and 2nd with respect to the proportion of aboriginal population
- For the population 15-24 years, literacy skills are in line with the rest of the region
- For the population 25 years and older, a higher proportion of the community is at literacy level 1

West Lincoln - Observations

- West Lincoln has the smallest visible minority in the Region
- 37.7% of the population has no more than a high school diploma
- The community ranks first for the percentage of population with a college diploma
- The community ranks last for the percentage of population with a university degree
- Those aged 15-54 years exhibit a higher proportion of its population with level 1 literacy

Are You Ready?

Three demographic trends are converging with serious ramifications for almost every industry:

- Retirement of baby boomers
- Increase in life expectancy
- Birthrate is at an historic low

bottom line impact

Employer Myths About Workplace Literacy

- *We do not have a problem*
- *We might lose employees if we invest in training*
- *We cannot afford to invest in training*

bottom line impact

What Can You Do?

1. Identify the need for a workplace literacy program
2. Discuss literacy and educational opportunities throughout all levels in the workplace
3. Gain support from management, workers and union
4. Identify resources to implement a workplace literacy program

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Take the Challenge!

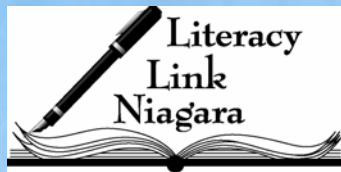
- Be a part of the solution to support a skilled, ready workforce
- Increase local workplace literacy levels by 10% in 2010.

bottom line impact

Making Cent\$ of Literacy

Celebrating Literacy for a Healthy Economy

For information please contact:



Angela Carter – Literacy Link Niagara
905.937.8887



Trudy Parsons – Niagara Training & Adjustment Board
905.641.0801

**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**
Ontario's employment & training network

**EMPLOI
ONTARIO**
Le réseau ontarien de l'emploi
et de la formation

bottom line impact