

*Imagine a life where you couldn't take your gift of reading for granted...*



*Santa Clara*  
**CITY LIBRARY**



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

# Adult Literacy Facts

Over 36 million adults in the US (19.4% of adults in our county) lack basic literacy skills.  
(Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy)

## Why it Matters

**\$300 billion**

**Low literacy costs the US economy over \$300 billion** in lost earnings, lower workplace productivity, higher crime, and more government assistance.

**Employers** in 4 surveyed industries that rely on low-skilled jobs see the impact of adult low literacy.

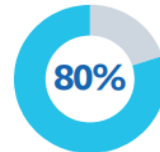
**94%**

say employees in their organization have low literacy skills.

**\$46 billion**

in revenue is lost due to employees' low literacy skills.

Reaching **Level 3** proficiency in literacy and numeracy improves a person's economic, social, and educational outcomes.



of people who live in poverty read at a Level 2 or below.

**Those with skills at or below Level 1 are over**

**4X** more likely to live in poverty.

**\$215 billion**

in health care costs are linked to low literacy.



- ER visits
- Office calls
- Prescription drugs

**Children born to parents with low literacy skills** are likely to have low skills themselves, perpetuating poverty and other socioeconomic issues related to low literacy.



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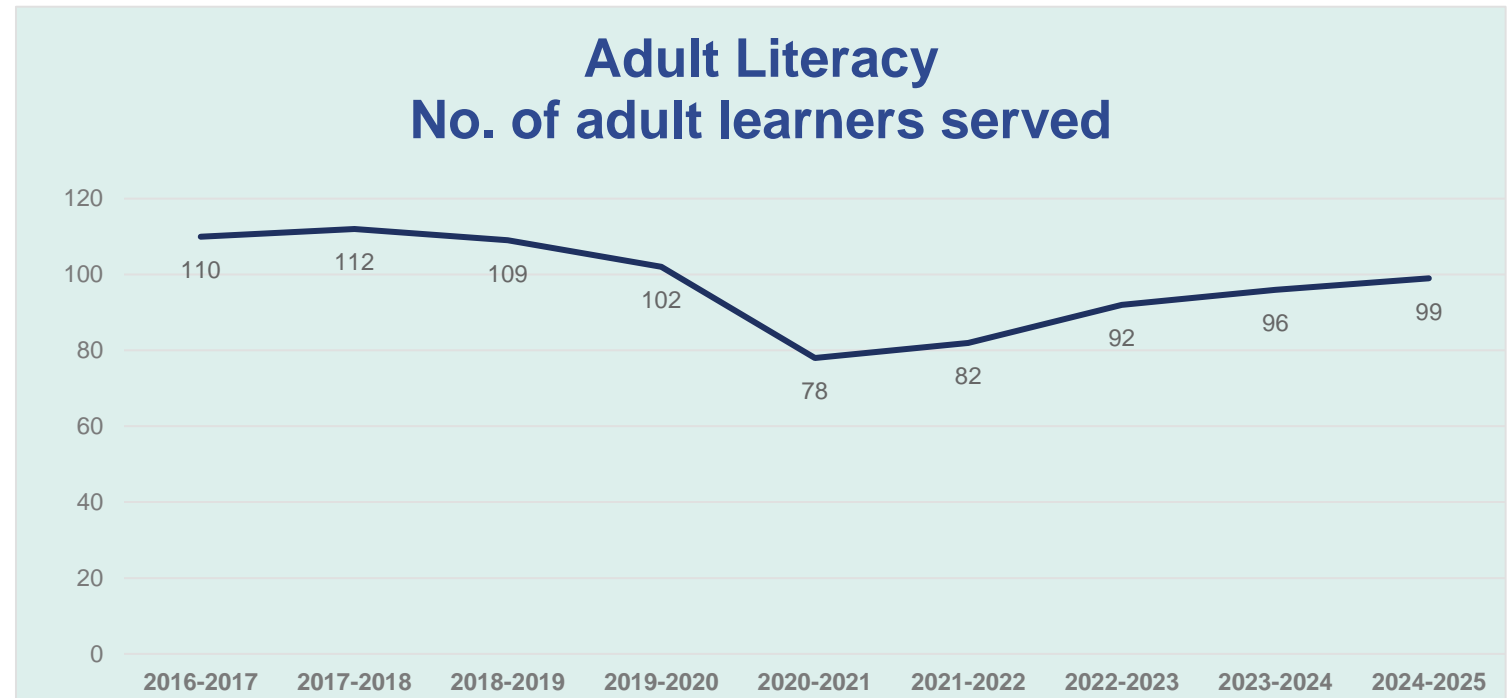
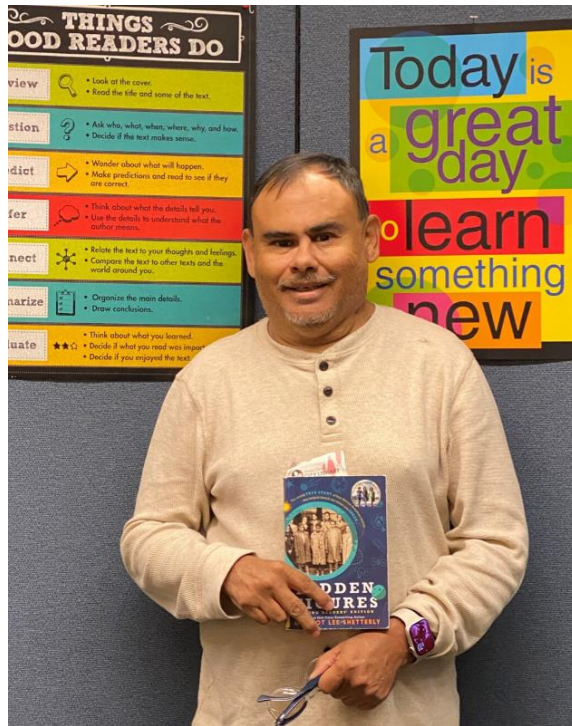
# Read Santa Clara

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- In 1995, the Santa Clara County Reading Program began offering adult literacy tutoring at the Santa Clara City Library
- In 2000, the adult literacy program became an integral service of the Santa Clara City Library and was named Read Santa Clara, with 2.5 coded positions
- Read Santa Clara currently offers four services:
  - **Adult literacy**
  - **Family Literacy**
  - **ESL**
  - **Career Online High School**

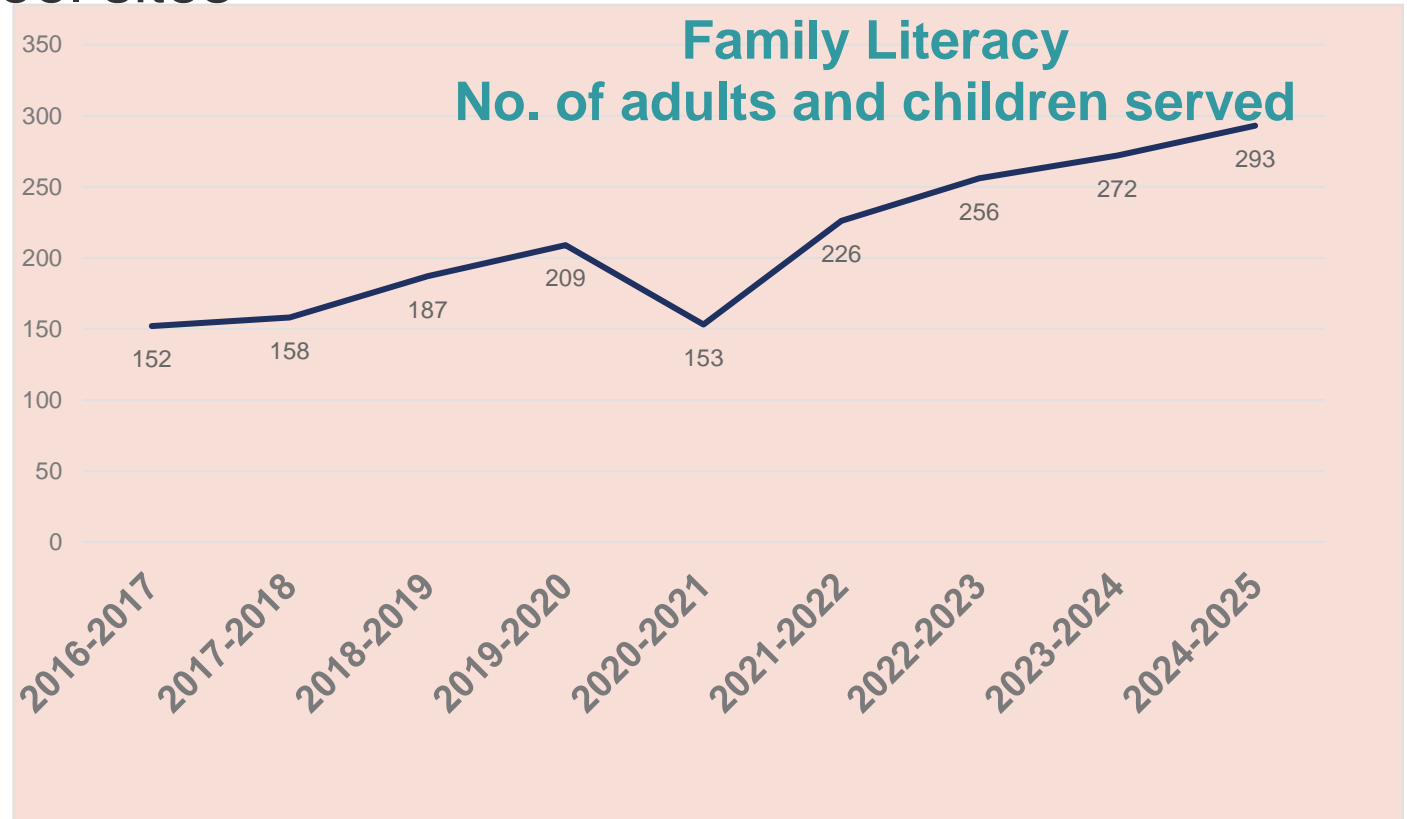
# Adult Literacy Services

In 2024-2025, RSC's trained volunteer tutors served 99 adult learners, 1:1 and small groups, in person and virtually.



# Family Literacy Services

In 2024-25, RSC held 64 family literacy events at the library and at 7 state preschool classes at 4 school sites



# ESL Services

16.7% of residents in the City of Santa Clara are unable to speak English well.

- Small group and 1:1 tutoring for ESL learners at beginning levels
- Tutoring offered at the library and at school sites





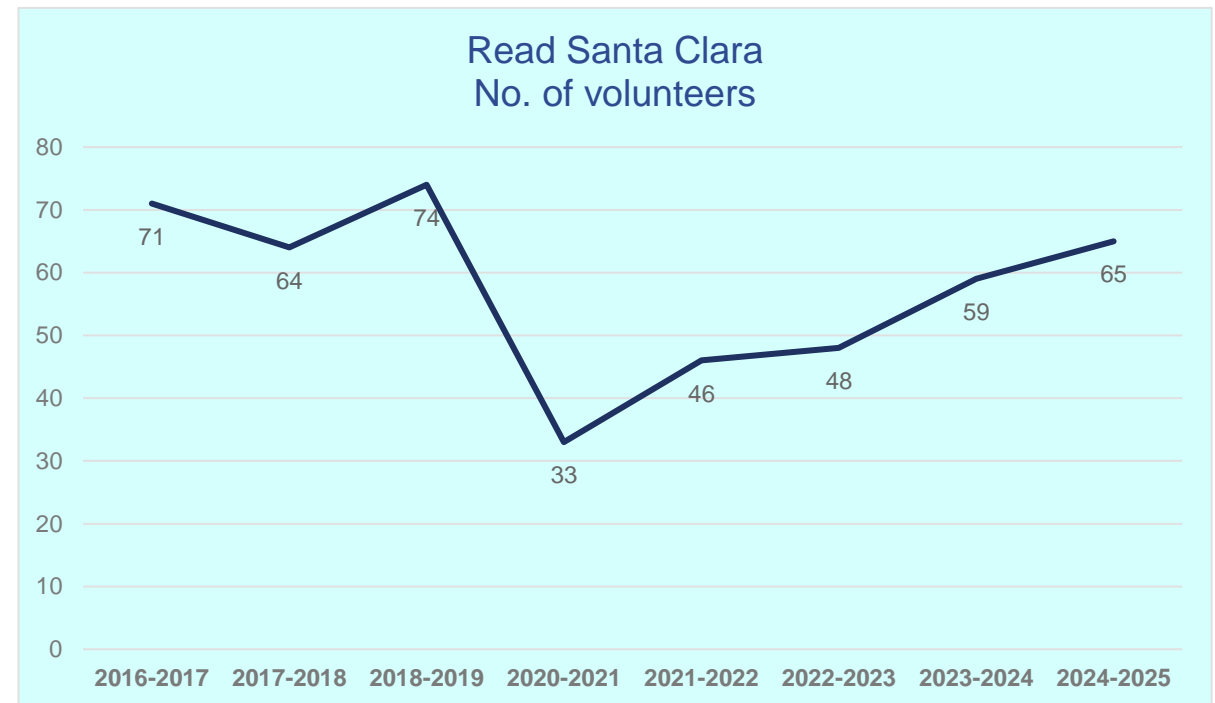
# Career Online High School (COHS)



- Scholarships given to those, 19 and over, who live or work in Santa Clara and seek to get a high school diploma and a career certificate
- 8 have graduated in past year. Currently, we have 13 COHS students , 3-5 anticipated to graduate this year

# The Power of Volunteerism

61 volunteers gave over 3000 volunteer hours helping learners in the adult literacy, family literacy and ESL programs





# Outcomes



- Over 70% of adult learners served each year have met a goal they set for themselves
- All adult learners are encouraged to get library cards, many using the library for first time.
- Families of adult learners read together and develop a love for the library.
- Read Santa Clara bridges the literacy and digital divide creating lasting community connections
- Innovative projects developed by RSC staff have been adopted statewide. They include the tutor training videos project, the Adult Learner Leadership Institute and the Adult New Reader Books initiative

# Challenges and Opportunities ahead...

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- California Library Literacy Services(CLLS) grant for ESL sunsets in June 2026
- The ESL program has recently been selected for grant award from VTA (for FY 2026-2027) through SCCLFF for creating awareness among ESL learners about public transit
- We continue to seek grants and donations to sustain and enhance RSC's services in future years
- Read Santa Clara will develop a strategic plan in 2025-2026, aligned the library's strategic plan

