

6 Organizations Working To Improve Literacy In Children & Adults

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Groups Dedicated To Improving Literacy

Name	Mission
<u>National Center for Families Learning</u>	Work to eradicate poverty through education solutions for families
<u>Literacy Pittsburgh</u>	Better lives through learning
<u>PlanetRead</u>	Contribute to literacy worldwide by innovating and implementing simple, scalable, and cost-effective solutions, especially using mass media and information technologies
<u>Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation</u>	Improve lives through the power of literacy
<u>Ride for Reading</u>	Help children in low-income areas become healthy and literate
<u>Literacy Mid-South</u>	Provide literacy resources to learners of all backgrounds and ages

Important Literacy Statistics

- 12%: Percentage of [world population that could read and write in 1820](#)
- 86%: Percentage that could read and write in 2015
- 2/3: Illiterate people worldwide [who are women](#)
- 85%: Juveniles who interface with the juvenile court system that are functionally illiterate
- More than 60%: Prison inmates who are functionally illiterate
- 90%: Welfare recipients who are high school dropouts
- 2/3: Students who cannot read proficiently by the end of 4th grade [that end up in jail or on welfare](#)
- 53%: Percentage of fourth grade students who said they read for recreation

- 20%: Percentage of eighth grade students who said the same
- 30 million: Number of U.S. adults who cannot read, write, or do basic math above a third-grade level
- 1/6: Young adults who drop out of high school

Literacy Is The Answer



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/z-h-BhcV7DM>

How to Encourage Kids to Read

A great way to start is to get a bookshelf for your child's room. If they have access to their own collection of books, it'll be easy for them to read at their own pace. And if they're looking at the shelf everyday, reading will always be on their mind. It's also important to give your kids a comfortable place to sit. This can be anything from a rocking chair to a couch to a dedicated reading nook. If they have a space that's just for them, it makes reading time all the more special. As they grow, your young ones will start to read more challenging books with words they don't know. Encourage them to look up unfamiliar terms in the dictionary so they can expand their vocabulary. Finally, if you're having trouble getting your kid interested in books in the first place, try bridging the gap between visual media and literature with graphic novels.

5 Benefits of Reading to Young Children

1. Encourages curiosity and creativity
2. Develops language skills
3. Enhances concentration

4. Teaches facts and life lessons
5. Helps strengthen the parent/child bond

How Reading Shapes Your Brain



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/uCg1M9WWwY>

In Depth

The ability to read fluently is the key to a wealth of valuable knowledge, not to mention the joys to be found in a moving poem or a good book. Sadly, there are still many places where it is common for children to grow up without developing this vital skill. In no particular order, here are six groups helping people of all ages strengthen their reading abilities.

Beginning our list at #1 is the National Center for Families Learning. Dating back to 1989, this organization fights poverty by providing educational programs that engage parents and children together, through a nationwide network of Family Learning Communities which develop customized initiatives for local needs and capabilities. This approach is aimed at promoting student achievement, while simultaneously building parents' skills and employment prospects.

NCFL works with local communities, building coalitions to develop custom strategies for family literacy programs. The group also offers professional development opportunities for teachers, with training on topics like early childhood education and effective engagement techniques, and organizes the annual Families Learning Conference for professionals in the field to come together and share knowledge. Those interested in furthering NCFL's work can help by donating or sponsoring an event.

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Following up at #2 is Literacy Pittsburgh, which provides programs in the Greater Pittsburgh area for adults and families seeking to build skills like reading, writing, and career advancement. The diverse options available include Family Literacy training, High School Equivalency Exam preparation, and customized programs for employers to provide job skills training. The organization also shares success stories from students, to inspire others to pursue their goals.

Literacy Pittsburgh offers specialized services like the Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring program, in which volunteers fifty years or older coach children on core skills, or English language classes for foreign-born Americans. The organization also helps immigrants access key local resources, and provides service learning opportunities through the Compass AmeriCorps program. Individuals wishing to further Literacy Pittsburgh's mission can volunteer or make a donation.

Up next at #3 we have PlanetRead, a not-for-profit working to improve reading abilities in India and around the world. This initiative seeks to encourage widespread use of closed captioning in visual media, also known as same-language-subtitling or SLS, to help viewers develop functional literacy skills. The group provides resources such as lyrics for popular Bollywood songs and captioned folk music videos.

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PlanetRead conducts and publishes research projects to demonstrate the potential literacy benefits of SLS, such as studies on children's eye movements while viewing captioned content. The organization's sister company, BookBox, provides animated and subtitled stories in a variety of languages for young learners. PlanetRead also highlights efforts around the world to spread SLS for education. Supporters can assist the group's work by donating.

Entry #4 is the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation. Created to honor the legacy of the former First Lady, a passionate advocate for family literacy education, this effort aims to carry on her work within her hometown. The Foundation sponsors initiatives like My Home Library, which works through local schools to increase children's in-home access to books, or virtual read aloud sessions for kids to watch remotely.

The Foundation's offerings include Camp Adventure, a summer educational experience, and Connect4Literacy, a service pairing volunteers with teaching opportunities. Another program, the Ladies for Literacy Guild, organizes events like book drives and visits from

the Curiosity Cruiser mobile library. The organization also shares suggestions and resources for improving childhood reading skills. Supporters can help the Foundation in a variety of ways, including donating, volunteering, and giving books.

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Coming in at #5 is Ride for Reading, a nonprofit based in Nashville, Tennessee that promotes literacy and wellness, through bicycle deliveries of books to children in low-income areas. Established by teacher and cycling enthusiast Mathew Portell, the organization lets children build a home collection of books, to make reading a bigger part of everyday life.

On delivery days, RfR's volunteer cyclists travel to Title One schools, bringing reading materials and speaking to children about health and literacy. The group also organizes a National Ride For Reading Week each year, with communities across the country getting books into the hands of kids. Anyone wishing to contribute to this organization's mission can donate funds or books, assist with sorting and pickup, or join a ride.

We'll close with #6, Literacy Mid-South. This organization provides resources to support reading proficiency and lifelong education throughout Memphis, Tennessee. The group offers an Adult Learning Program with small group classes and individual tutoring, for adults who read at or below sixth grade level, as well as an English language skills curriculum for those of any nationality seeking to improve their abilities.

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Literacy Mid-South collaborates with other local organizations to bolster children's academic success. The Read Memphis Project provides training and resources for educational programs in the area, while the Read901 initiative coordinates a network of partners to provide out-of-school learning time. The group makes a range of literacy resources available online. Supporters can help by donating, or by volunteering as a tutor or AmeriCorps Summer Associate.