Literacy By the Numbers

More than 36 million adults in the U.S. lack basic literacy skills.

- 28.4% of adults in California read at the lowest literacy skill levels. (Source: Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy)
- 23% of San Diego County adults lack basic literacy skills. (Source: National Bureau of Economic Research)

Nearly 30% of adults with household incomes at or below the federal poverty line do not have a high school credential. (Source: ProLiteracy)

Of adults with the lowest literacy levels, 43% live in poverty. (Source: The National Institute for Literacy)

Every year, 1 in 6 young adults drop out of high school. That is more than 1.2 million. (Source: National Center for Education Statistics)

75% of state prison inmates did not complete high school or can be classified as low literate. (Source: ProLiteracy)

About 50% of the 2 million immigrants that come to the U.S. each year lack high school education and proficient English language skills. This severely limits their access to jobs, college, and citizenship. (Source: Center for Immigration Studies, National Commission on Adult Literacy)

Sources: Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, National Bureau of Economic Research, ProLiteracy, The National Institute for Literacy, National Center for Education Statistics, Center for Immigration Studies, National Commission on Adult Literacy