



Our Mission: Inspiring Educators so Adults Succeed and Communities Thrive

Adult Basic Education Needs

The Promise of Adult Basic Education in America.

In an increasingly competitive world, America needs as many of our people workforce-ready as possible.

Building our economy means empowering individuals, families, and communities with the educational opportunities they need.

America cannot continue to ignore millions of its residents who were never taught or never learned to read, perform simple math, use a computer, or creatively solve problems.



The Challenges

- 1 out of every 6 adults in the U.S. lack basic reading skills – that means 36 million people can't read a job application, understand basic written instructions, or read the Internet.
- 2 out of every 6 adults in the U.S. cannot handle basic numbers, like working a cash register or understanding a transit schedule.
- The United States consistently scores below the international average for modern problem-solving skills.

The Solution

We can make America more competitive, build stronger communities, and add to our tax base while containing costs. We can put adults on sustainable paths out of poverty and open up new avenues to financial security and the middle class.

And we can do it with a basic tool: education.

Adult basic education lets Americans turn things around for themselves. Its impact can last for generations.

The Benefits

- A mother's education level is the greatest determinant of her children's future academic success, outweighing other factors such as neighborhood or family income.
- Education levels have more impact on lifetime earnings than any other demographic factor, including race, gender, or ethnic origin.
- For every dollar invested in adult basic education, a community receives \$60 back in increased income, property taxes, and savings on welfare and legal system expenses.

The nearly 15,000 members of the Commission on Adult Basic Education support state and community programs, reach new students, strengthen teacher training and retention, and provide leadership and research on best practices in adult education.