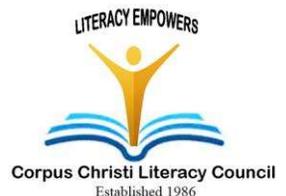


Improving Lives Through Literacy

**Presenter: Dr. Criselda C. Leal, Executive Director
Corpus Christi Literacy Council**

October 7, 2025



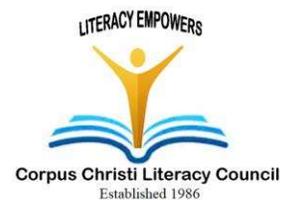
Improving Lives Through Literacy

Improving literacy skills is a key first step to overcoming obstacles that lock individuals into a cycle of poverty, disadvantage, and generational persistence. This session will provide statistics on local and statewide literacy. Also, come learn how the Corpus Christi Literacy Council helps students improve their literacy skills and reach their goals by giving them opportunities for higher education and the workforce, thereby enabling them to succeed in today's world.

Corpus Christi Literacy Council

Established 1986

located at Ben F. McDonald Public Library, 4044 Greenwood Drive CC, TX 78416



Literacy

- Literacy is most commonly defined as the ability to read and write.
- Reading and writing abilities vary across different cultures and contexts, and these too are constantly shifting.
- Nowadays, 'reading' encompasses complex visual and digital media as well as printed material.

Did you know?

Literacy – U.S.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics

- - 4 out of 5 U.S. adults (79%) have medium to high English literacy skills.
- These levels of literacy are sufficient enough to compare and contrast information, paraphrase, and make low-level inferences.
- - This means that about 1 in 5 U.S. adults (21%) have low literacy skills, which translates to about 43.0 million adults.

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/us-literacy-rates-by-state>

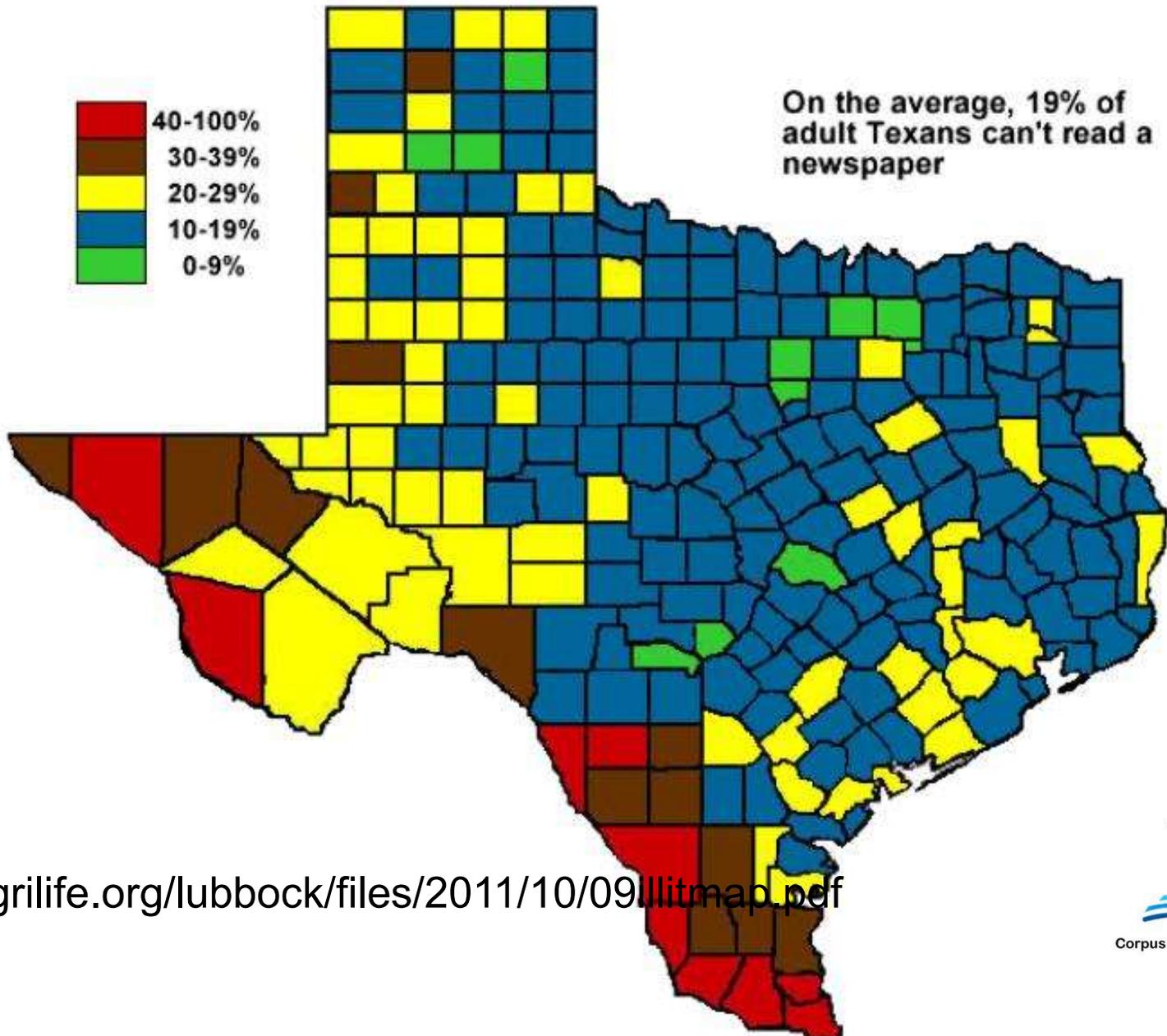
Did you know?

Texas

- Texas has the fourth lowest literacy rate of 81.0% with 19.0% of adults lacking basic prose literacy skills.
- Texas has the fourth lowest number of libraries of 3.2 per 100,000 residents.
- <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/us-literacy-rates-by-state>

Percentage by County of Illiterate Adult Texans

Basic Prose Literacy Skills (BPLS)



<http://agrillife.org/lubbock/files/2011/10/09/illitmap.pdf>

Did you know? Nueces County

- 17% of Nueces County can't read these books...



Did you know?

Data

- 51,000 (17%) adults in Nueces County cannot read well enough to function in our society.

Did you know?

Illiteracy is expensive – low literacy...

- ❖ Keeps people in low paying jobs
- ❖ Is linked to poverty and incarceration
- ❖ Is linked to poor health
- ❖ Is generational. The number one predictor of success for a child is the mother's educational level.

Did you know?

History

- In 1986, the Corpus Christi City Council appointed a commission to address literacy problems brought to light by citizen planning groups. The Literacy Commission was incorporated in June 1986 to address the need for the speaking, reading and writing of the English language and a year later became the Corpus Christi Literacy Council. The council is affiliated with ProLiteracy America (www.proliteracy.org).
- The governing body of the Corpus Christi Literacy Council is composed of volunteer board members. New members are selected from names submitted to the Board by the Nomination Committee. Consideration is given to the Corpus Christi Literacy Council's needs and the interest and active participation of potential candidates.
- The core program provided by the Corpus Christi Literacy Council consists of class instruction and one-on-one Tutoring. Volunteers from the community are recruited and trained, if needed. For the one-on-one tutoring, volunteers are matched with adults who are reading below a fifth grade competency level. Adult learners served by these literacy volunteers are seventeen years of age and older and are not enrolled in public school.

Who We Are

- The Corpus Christi Literacy Council (CCLC) is a non-profit 501(c) (3) agency composed of paid staff, part-time instructors, and lay and professional volunteers actively working together to combat illiteracy in the Corpus Christi area.
- CCLC's mission is to identify, develop, promote, coordinate, and deliver comprehensive programs and resources that will measurably reduce functional illiteracy in the Corpus Christi Bay Area.
- CCLC's goals include:
 - ❖ Provide on-going reading programs for adults lacking English literacy proficiency;
 - ❖ Promote the importance of literacy through public awareness campaigns;
 - ❖ Serve as a clearing house for existing literacy programs in the city of Corpus Christi and the surrounding Coastal Bend area.

CCLC Program

- Serves adults, 17 years and older not enrolled in public school who are:
 - Non-readers or non-speakers of the English language
 - Readers of the English language functioning on or below a fifth grade competency level

How we serve

- Adult learners are served through a variety of methods. Volunteers are recruited from the community and trained to teach adult learners to understand, speak, read and write the English language.
- Adult learners enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL), citizenship, or literacy classes. Classes are offered during the day and evening. Computer class is offered on Saturdays.
- Options include computer-assisted instruction independent of or in combination with one-on-one tutoring or classroom instruction.

Did you know?

We Serve

- An average of 300 students per year at various locations
- The Literacy Council provides literacy information, tutor training, literacy instruction, and conversational English to any adult, seventeen years and older, seeking assistance.
- Poor reading skills create a huge and growing problem for our community. Over one-fifth of the adults in our community lack basic literacy skills and many of them speak little or no English.

What does this mean to Corpus Christi?

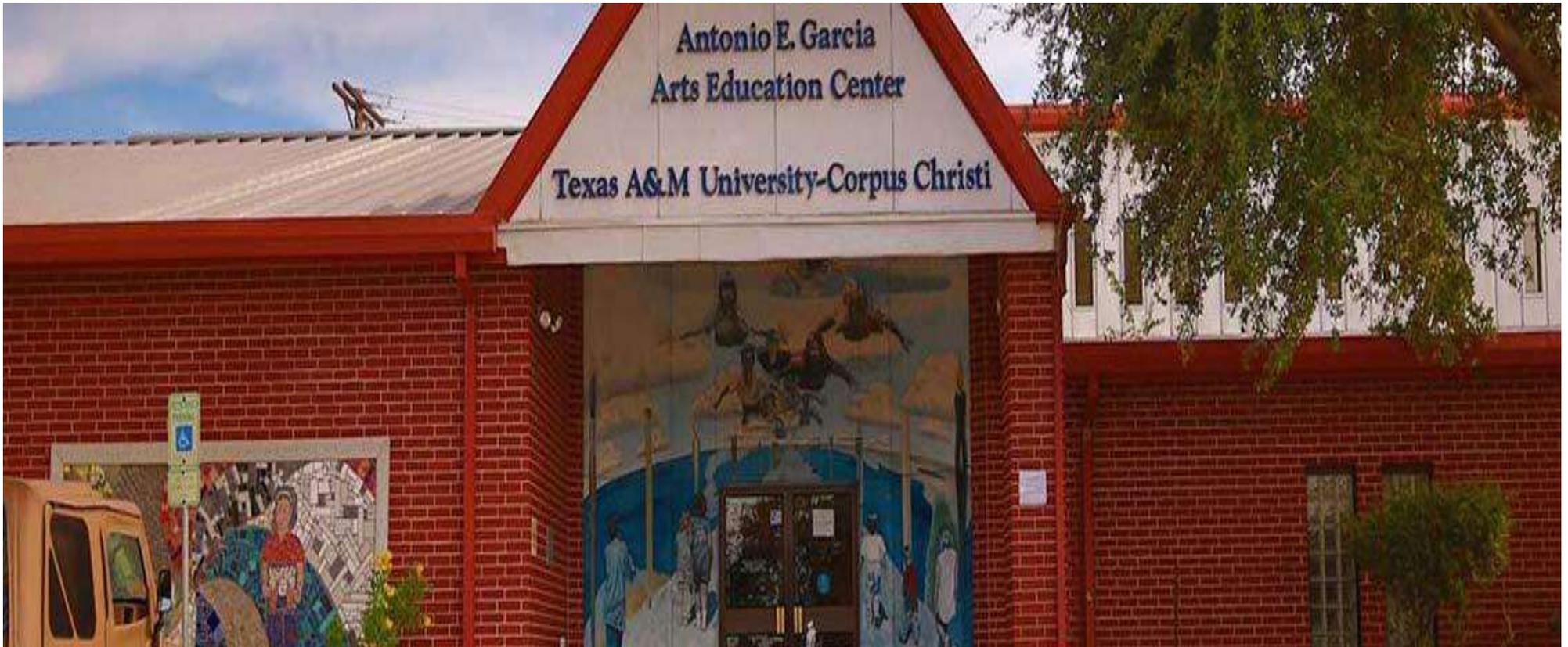
- By promoting adult literacy, we are helping to create a better prepared workforce.
- A more literate workforce attracts business to the city.
- Children will be better prepared for school if they grow up in a literate home.
- Parents will be better able to help children with school work.
- Many students proceed to higher education after coming to CCLC.
- An educated population earns more and is good for the economy.

Class at Corpus Christi Literacy Council



Antonio E. Garcia Center

2021 Agnes Street CC, TX 78405



Class at Antonio E. Garcia Center



Coastal Compass

Palmera Mall, 5488 S.P.I.D. #1572 CC, Tx 78412

MOVING to
6222 WEBER Road, CC, TX 78413
(Old Carroll High School Building)



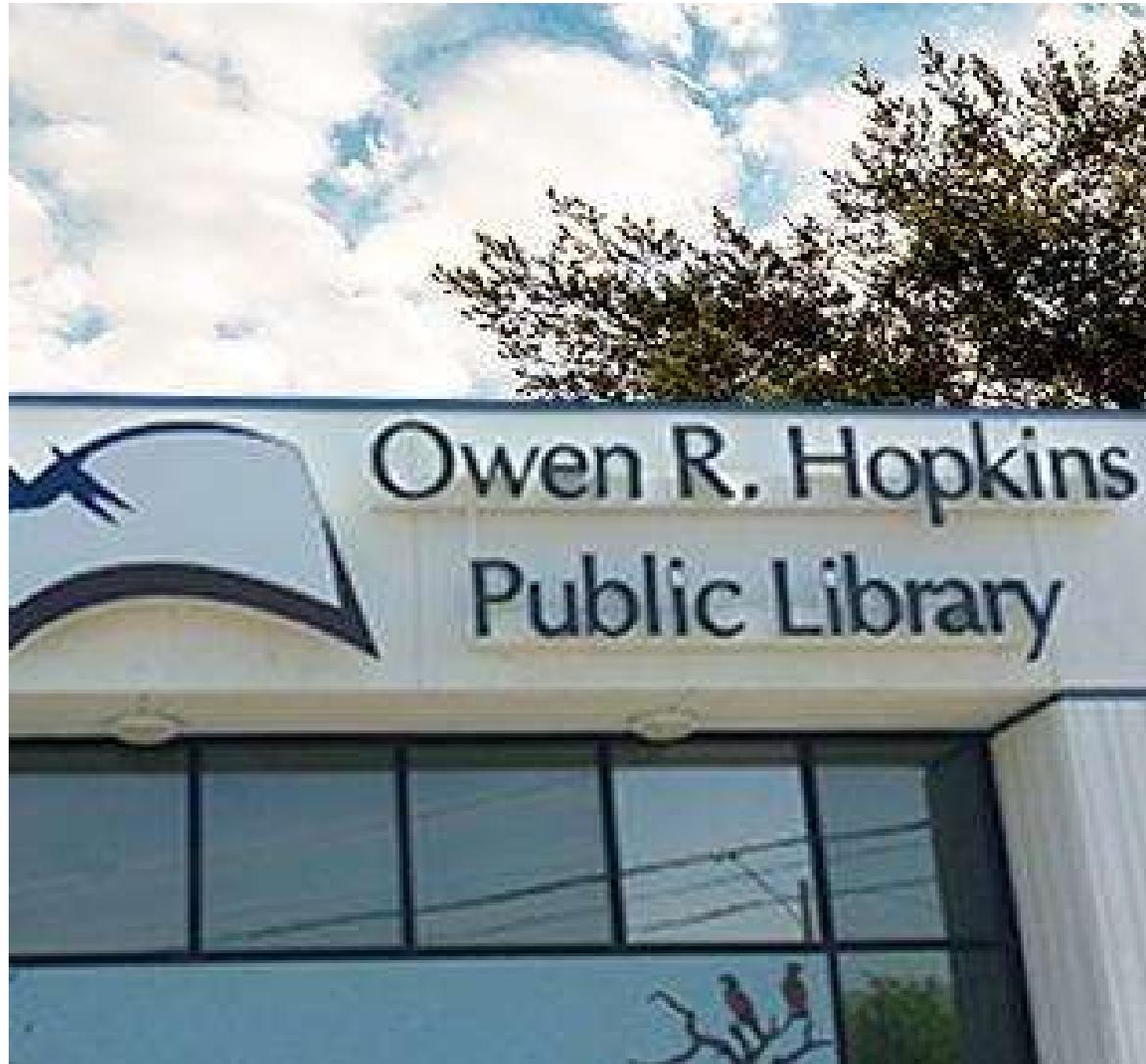
Instituto de cultura hispanica

Heritage Park CC, Tx



Owen R. Hopkins Library

3202 McKinzie Rd., CC, Texas 78410



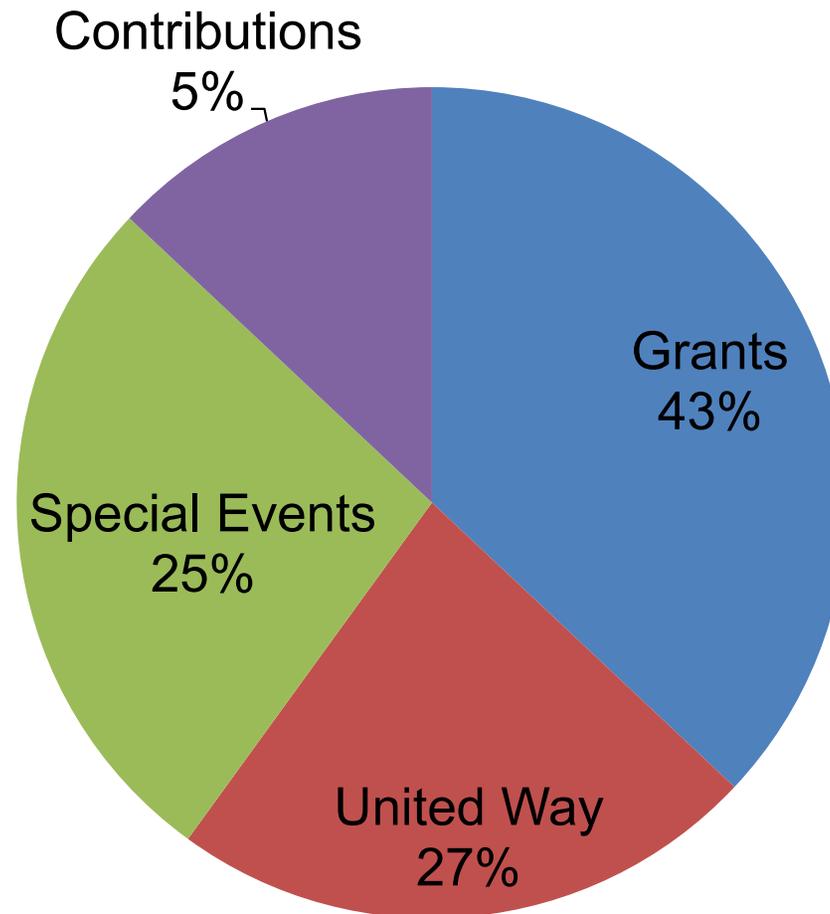
Nueces County Jail

901 Leopard, St., CC, TX 78401



Funding

Funding Sources



2020-2024 GRANTS / Sponsorships

- ❖ AEP
- ❖ Behmann Brothers
- ❖ Charity League of Corpus Christi
- ❖ Citgo
- ❖ Coastal Bend Community Foundation
- ❖ Dollar General
- ❖ Earl C. Sams
- ❖ Ed Rachal Foundation
- ❖ H.E.B.
- ❖ IBC Bank
- ❖ Kenedy Memorial Foundation
- ❖ Methodist Healthcare
- ❖ Nora Roberts
- ❖ Nueces County American Rescue Plan Act
- ❖ NuStar
- ❖ Port of Corpus Christi
- ❖ United Way of the Coastal Bend
- ❖ Valero
- ❖ Walmart
- ❖ Wells Fargo
- ❖ Wish You Well

Partnerships / MOU'S

- CORPUS CHRISTI BEN MCDONALD LIBRARY
- OWEN R. HOPKINS LIBRARY
- FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
- REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
- TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY – CORPUS CHRISTI
- ANTONIO E. GARCIA CENTER
- COASTAL COMPASS
- INSTITUTO DE CULTURA HISPANICA
- NUECES COUNTY SHERRIFF'S OFFICE

VOLUNTEERS

- CCLC is grateful for our volunteers! Volunteers are the heart of our program and critical to the success of the program. Volunteers help in various ways.
 - Teachers
 - Tutors
 - Office / clerical
 - Receptionist
 - Fundraisers / Events

4 Stages of EARLY Literacy

Speaking ~ Listening ~ Reading ~ Writing

1st Stage- Speaking

- Speaking is the Foundation of language development
Can start in infancy (sounds) and nonverbal (sign & gesture)
- ❖ Encourage speaking
- ❖ Play word games (I spy)
- ❖ Narrate daily
- ❖ Environment (supportive, talk, listen, elaborate)

2nd Stage- Listening

- Expose children to a variety of sounds, conversations and stories, listening goes beyond hearing
 - ❖ Read aloud (use different sounds and intonation)
 - ❖ Music and rhyming activities (auditory discrimination)
 - ❖ Encourage active listening (ask questions after reading, check for understanding)

3rd Stage- Reading

- Reading is not just decoding, but understanding
 - ❖ Create a rich print environment at home
 - ❖ Read a diverse range (genres, topics)
 - ❖ Foster a love of books and exploration
 - ❖ Visit the library (free resources)
 - ❖ Discuss stories, themes, and characters in the story

4th Stage- Writing

- Encourage pen to paper and/or fingers to keyboard
- ❖ Express thoughts and ideas thru written words/pictures
- ❖ Once developed fine motor skills to hold a writing instrument and make markings
- ❖ Provide crayons, pencils, paper
- ❖ Draw and gradually introduce letter formation

(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3evqVRXnok>)

Shared stories

- <https://youtu.be/1sQc8AINetM>

- “For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right.



~Kofi Annan

Quote

- Education

is the most powerful weapon
with which you can change the world.

- ~Nelson Mandela

Volunteer for CCLC

What can I do for CCLC?

- With a waiting list, we have a major need for tutors.
- We also have a need for other kinds of Volunteers- occasional clerical assistance in the office, helping with special events, etc.
- If you think you would assist in any of these ways, please contact us at 361-826-7086

Board of Directors & Officers 2025

- Dr. Kelli Bippert, Chair, Tamu-CC Professor
- Darcy Shaw, Treasurer, Business Consultant
- Dr. Edith Diaz, Retired ISD Counselor
- Annette Cortez, Community Advocate
- Dr. David Jimenez, Tamu-CC Professor
- Roxy Johnson, Attorney
- Melissa Madrigal, Attorney
- Enrique Vela, CCISD Principal

- *“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society... an agent of family health and nutrition.... Literacy is, finally, the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential.”*
- — Kofi Annan

THE END

CORPUS CHRISTI LITERACY COUNCIL Staff

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- Nayibe Pena, Program Coordinator

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- Fax: 361-826-7083

- Email: ccliteracy@ymail.com

- www.ccliteracy.org