

# 26TEN: Tasmania's strategy for adult literacy and numeracy 2016–2025

2020 Annual Progress Report



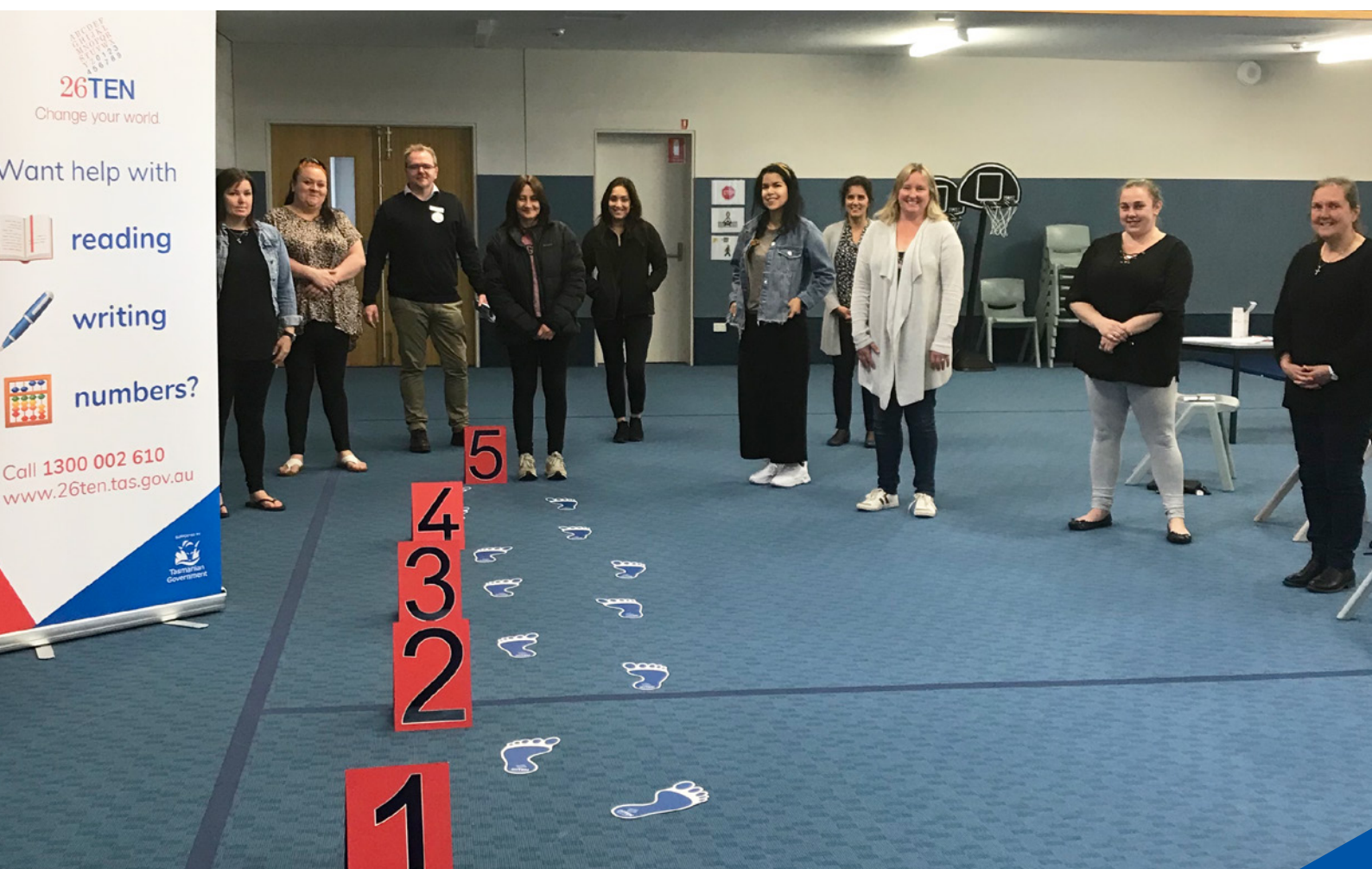
# 26TEN – working together to lift adult literacy and numeracy

Lifting adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania is fundamental to building our state's wellbeing, resilience and prosperity.

Through [26TEN Tasmania: Tasmania's strategy for literacy and numeracy 2016-2025](#), individuals, business, community groups and all levels of government work together to build reading, writing and maths skills. The 26TEN Network is based on collective action where influential business and community leaders, service providers and community members are brought together to collaborate on strategies and implement actions to solve the complex social problem of adult literacy.

The Network includes:

- » the 26TEN Coalition, a group of Tasmanians who represent industry and community sectors and give their time pro bono to develop 26TEN's strategy and advocate for action
- » the 26TEN Team, who provide strategic and operational support, hosted by Libraries Tasmania
- » 1,015 organisational members and individual supporters who want to make a difference. This includes 26TEN grant recipients, service providers, community groups, local councils, government agencies, businesses, educators, and more.



# Assessing the 26TEN Tasmania strategy, planning for the future

This year marked the midpoint of the ten-year, whole-of-government 26TEN Tasmania Strategy.

The goals of this strategy are:

- » everyone knows about adult literacy and numeracy
- » everyone is supported to improve their skills and help others
- » everyone communicates clearly.

A focus of this year's work has been finalising the assessment of the first five years of the Strategy, and planning to build on what has been most effective, over the next five years. The results of this assessment and planning were published in October 2020 in a report titled, [26TEN in 2020: How far we've come as a state towards better adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania, and what we've learned.](#)

The report makes 13 recommendations. They include continuing with the effective collective action approach of the 26TEN Tasmania Strategy, developing greater capacity at the local level in 26TEN communities, improving the effectiveness of the 26TEN Network by giving it more ways to contribute, implementing further campaigns to reduce stigma, and conducting research and evaluation.

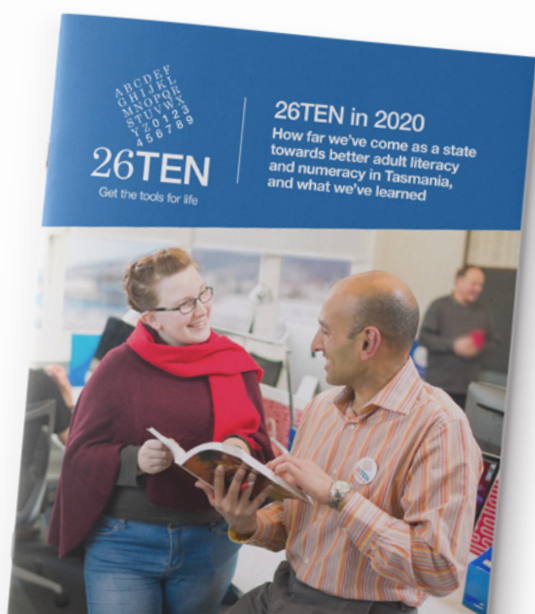
In the report, 26TEN's progress has been measured through statistics and stories, quantitative and qualitative data. For example, in March 2020, the annual survey of Tasmanian community awareness of adult literacy, conducted by Enterprise Marketing and Research Services (EMRS), showed that awareness of 26TEN in the community continues to trend upwards. This trend can be attributed to the increased influence of the 26TEN Network and the vigorous 26TEN marketing campaign on television, print and social media.

The work done on *26TEN in 2020* was also informed by independent research commissioned by 26TEN and released in the second half of 2020.

The first publication, [26TEN: The Socio-Economic Impact of Tasmania's Investment in Adult Literacy and Numeracy](#), was produced by The Institute of Project Management. Results from this report show that:

- » for every dollar invested by government, industry, community groups and individuals in the 26TEN Strategy, at least \$5.20 in benefits was returned to the Tasmanian community in 2018-19
- » ninety per cent of adult learners surveyed reported that literacy support improved their quality of life and their opportunities for employment and education.

The second publication, [Agricultural Language, Literacy and Numeracy in Tasmania](#), by Inspire AG, confirmed that adult literacy is an issue in agriculture and stigma surrounding low literacy is still strong.





# Building stronger communities

The 26TEN Coalition led the development of the *26TEN Communities: Local Literacy for Work and Life Program*, as part of the Tasmanian Government's Adult Learning Strategy.

Launched by Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Education and Training, in November 2020, the Strategy is led by the Department of State Growth.

The *26TEN Communities Program* is designed to significantly boost the capacity of communities to make a difference to adult literacy and numeracy skills. Increasing the amount and length of time of funding for 26TEN Communities, provides the social, cultural and economic impact needed to make lasting change.

The impact of the 26TEN Network at the local level is powerful. Implementing solutions that are collaborative, practical and tailored to the specific needs of each community is how a real difference is made. It enables more people to get practical help where and when they need it, supported by local people and organisations.

The new program allows the flexibility to direct adult literacy and numeracy resources to areas of greatest need, or potential employment opportunities. Also, each community will train people to help others.

In 2020, we began the process to implement two 26TEN Communities in the 2020-21 financial year.



# New 26TEN Coalition members

During 26TEN Week (26 to 31 October 2020), Jeremy Rockliff, the Minister for Education and Training, announced the appointment of four new members to the 26TEN Coalition.

They are:

- » Marta Dusseldorp, representing the arts, culture and media sector
- » Gail Eaton-Briggs, adult learning and trades
- » Richard Warner, agriculture
- » Allyson Warrington, aged and disability care.

The 26TEN Coalition is a group of prominent and influential Tasmanians who recognise the importance of working together to help everyone get the reading, writing and maths skills they need for everyday life. They work to gain support for adult literacy and numeracy in their own industry or community sector, and most importantly, inspire those within their sector to take action.

These new appointments extend the reach and influence of the 26TEN Coalition. Marta, Gail, Richard and Allyson join:

- » Daryl Quilliam, 26TEN Coalition Chair and local government sector representative
- » Siobhan Gaskell, 26TEN Convenor
- » Malcom Wells, education sector
- » Kym Goodes, community sector
- » Tim Tierney, legal sector
- » Mellissa Gray, State Government sector
- » Dr Judith Watson, health sector.

## COVID-19 response – Supporting the 26TEN Network and adult learners

With plans for 2020 disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, 26TEN found ways to support the Network and provide activities that could no longer be held face-to-face. Read more of what we did under each of our three goals.

▼ 26TEN Coalition members and supporters get an insight into adult literacy, at Government House.





## GOAL ONE

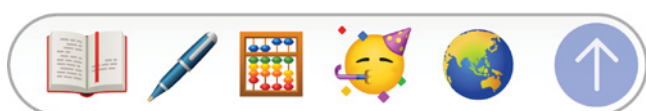
# Everyone knows about adult literacy

## Literacy awareness and the 26TEN Chat

We continued to promote the 26TEN Chat, which is now a standard tool in 26TEN's literacy awareness kit that is available to all Tasmanians. Organisations such as Centrelink, Service Tasmania, TasCOSS and the Tasmanian Health Service continue to support its delivery. In February, all Tasmanian Government electoral offices received information about the 26TEN Chat, encouraging electoral officers and staffers to refer constituents to 26TEN.

The 26TEN Chat is also integrated into literacy awareness workshops of which xx were conducted in 2020. Organisations such as Seafood Training Tasmania, the Beaconsfield Child and Family Centre and the 26TEN Clarence Plains community took part.

Tasmania's unique approach to lifting adult literacy was shared internationally in an online presentation to the World Literacy Summit 2020, originally scheduled to be in England in April.



## The 26TEN Emoji Campaign

26TEN worked with advertising agency, The20, to develop a campaign to encourage people with low literacy skills, aged under 30, to ask for help. The campaign aligned with the aims of the communications strategy to target new audiences and to focus on moving people from being aware of literacy issues, to taking action.

The campaign ran from August to the end of October.

The campaign used emojis in a positive, fresh and friendly way that ran on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram sites that specifically targeted younger adults. The reach of the social media campaign was over 160 000 Tasmanians who were shown an advert an average of 2.4 times. A thirty second advert was broadcast on Channel Seven in free community service announcements.

When comparing the campaign period with the same period last year, visits to the website, calls to the Reading Writing Hotline and participation in the Libraries Tasmania Literacy Service all increased

We will continue to use emojis as they enable us to be direct, but not authoritarian, which is especially important when targeting the hard-to-reach, younger demographic.

## COVID-19 Response – Bringing forward the emoji campaign

26TEN brought forward its campaign encouraging young Tasmanians to ask for help, because we know from past economic downturns that this group will be particularly disadvantaged. The impact of the pandemic showed the need for young people to be able to understand health information, improve skills for getting a job or getting online, and be able to support their children's learning.

It was important to get the message out that practical, friendly help is available, and it's tailored to the needs of the adult learner.

## 26TEN stories

Sharing stories is a key goal of 26TEN because they inspire others to help or ask for help. They demonstrate the impact that improving skills can have not just on an individual, but also on their family, workplace and community. We added over 33 stories to our website and Facebook page in 2020.

In March, the Advocate published a 1300-word article about how Tasmanians are working to improve the State's adult literacy rates. The journalist visited award winning adult literacy teacher, Deb Guntrip, while she delivered training to staff at Peppers Cradle Mountain Lodge. The training was part of a 26TEN Grant.

Throughout the year the work of 26TEN and its Network was also highlighted on ABC Radio, The Mercury and Examiner. Smaller local papers such as Huon News, the Circular Head Chronicle and the Derwent Valley Gazette covered local topics involving 26TEN, such as grant recipients, adult learners, volunteers and events.

## RPH Print Radio – 26TEN's first new member in 2020 shares our stories

RPH Print Radio became a 26TEN member on 7 January 2020. The community radio station provides a reading and information service for people who find it difficult to access printed material or who have a print disability.

As part of their 26TEN Action Plan, Print Radio is raising awareness of the issues surrounding adult literacy and numeracy by regularly broadcasting interviews with people who provide different perspectives on adult literacy and numeracy.

Visit the [print radio website](#) to listen to interviews such as that with 26TEN Coalition Member, Dr Judith Watson, who speaks about the importance of literacy for being able to follow medical advice, or Andrew Badcock from LINK Youth Health Centre discussing the impact of low literacy on young Tasmanians.

Another series featuring more moving and inspiring stories about adult learners, will be broadcast in 2021.

▼ *Broadcaster, Neil Broomfield chats to Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC, at the RPH Print Radio Studio.*



## 26TEN week celebrations

### 2019 – Let’s Talk

In 2019, 26TEN week highlighted the oral communication skills connecting us to our families and friends, workplaces and communities, with the theme Let’s Talk. This also supported the *2019–2022 Department of Education Literacy Framework’s* focus for action on promoting the importance of oral communication. Many members of the 26TEN Network and adult learners from around the state participated in a range of activities.

### 2020 - Let 26TEN change your world

During 26TEN Week, activities and events were held around the state to celebrate the theme; Let 26TEN change your world.

Activities aimed to increase 26TEN’s impact on individuals, organisations and communities, to support building the literacy and numeracy skills that are key to our state’s future.

In particular, 26TEN encouraged young Tasmanian adults to ask for help, and those services that come in contact with young people to be proactive in helping them feel more comfortable talking to someone about literacy.

The Minister for Education and Training published an article in the three major newspapers, celebrating the positive outcomes of Tasmanians who are raising their literacy and numeracy skills across the state. He also thanked the volunteers, trainers, employers, colleagues and friends who support adult learners.

He noted that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of all Tasmanians having the skills they need for work and life.

Many of the 949 members and supporters of the Network displayed posters, promoted 26TEN on social media and made sure their employees and customers know that literacy support is available. For example, Metro Tasmania displayed posters on its bus fleet and the Clarence Plains 26TEN Community held a literacy awareness workshop, well attended by community members.

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AC, Governor of Tasmania hosted an event at Government House to welcome new 26TEN Coalition members and recognise all those involved with work of assessing the first five years of the 26TEN Strategy. The Coalition also announced that a bursary will be awarded in her Excellency’s name to support adult literacy.

And, at a time when clear communication on issues such as health, learning and work are so important, 26TEN partnered with Libraries Tasmania to run several plain English workshops around the state.

In highlighting adult literacy during 26TEN week, we aim to reward those taking action and encourage others to build the skills that are vital for our state’s economic recovery, and our ongoing wellbeing and prosperity.



## GOAL TWO

# Everyone is supported to improve their skills and help others

## Lifting adult literacy at work and in communities with 26TEN grants

26TEN grants support organisations and communities to build their skills in literacy, numeracy and plain English. Recipients from across the state shared over \$500 000 in grants to boost skills in their organisations to improve efficiency and wellbeing. They include for-profit and not-for-profit workplaces in the agriculture, food production, local government, community care, aged care and disability care sectors.

This investment pays off for all Tasmanians because when people improve their literacy and numeracy skills at work, their families and communities benefit.

Employer grants, targeted at lifting skills in the workforce, went to:

- » Fonterra Wynyard
- » Premium Fresh Tasmania
- » Peppers Cradle Mountain Lodge
- » Forager Foods/TasTAFE
- » Glenorchy City Council
- » Geeveston Community Centre Inc.
- » Bucaan Community House Inc.
- » Interact Australia/Work & Training
- » Huon Valley Council
- » Tastex Knitwear/Work & Training
- » Mersey Community Care Association/TasTAFE.

In 2019-20, the following 26TEN community grants were made:

- » Hobart City Mission (Clarence Plains and their One Community Together collective)
- » Rosebery Community House.

The *26TEN Communities: Local Literacy for Work and Life Program*, replaced the Communities Grants program in November 2020. The first communities under the new program will be commissioned in 2021.

## COVID-19 response – allowing grant recipients flexibility

Recognising the disruption caused to businesses and communities, 26TEN contacted grant recipients to offer options, such as extending the grant period, to ensure that they were able to make practical decisions about their project activities and fulfilling their reporting requirements.

## Huon Aquaculture leads the way in adult learning with a 26TEN grant

A 26TEN employer grant has supported Huon Aquaculture to build skills in their workforce and create a culture where there is a high uptake of services among employees to improve reading, writing, oral and digital literacy skills.

Success has come from leading at all levels to build the organisation's understanding of workplace literacy and by making it easy for staff to build their skills. For example, managers were given skills to avoid creating stigma around receiving support.

Other actions included simplifying their employee induction, using videos for learning and giving people the option for one-on-one learning.

At the conclusion of the 26TEN Grant, Huon Aquaculture continued to employ an Adult Literacy Skills Officer to keep on building employee skills.

## Developing the workforce of adult literacy and numeracy practitioners

Developing the workforce of adult literacy and numeracy practitioners is crucial to building the skills of Tasmanians.

26TEN continued working with the Tasmanian Council for Adult Literacy (TCAL) to develop an adult literacy and numeracy workforce development plan to be released in March 2021.

TCAL and 26TEN are also working together to present the Australian Council for Adult Literacy national conference, online in 2021. The theme is Progressive practices; Adapting to change.

26TEN continues to support professional development for adult literacy practitioners, working with 26TEN members, Libraries Tasmania and TasTAFE. We supported TasTAFE's new free, online course for Tasmanians who want to help adults build their literacy and numeracy skills: Teaching Adult Literacy Learners (TALL). Both courses run in 2020 were fully subscribed.

## Responding to COVID-19 - building skills in the adult literacy workforce

Rather than cancelling the free workshop about the big six skills of reading, Anne Bayetto, Lecturer in Education at Flinders University, was able to successfully deliver the course online, from South Australia.

Once we realised the need for trainers to become instant experts in key learning platforms such as Zoom, 26TEN ran three training sessions for Tasmanian adult literacy practitioners.



## GOAL THREE

# Everyone communicates clearly

## Communicating clearly in plain English

During 2020, we delivered plain English training to 155 participants in 18 workshops. A scheduled list of events at libraries around the state was well subscribed, but the pandemic meant these were suspended in March.

We were able to offer several alternatives to face-to-face workshops and these are described below.

Face-to-face workshops began again in September.

*Communicate Clearly*, 26TEN's Guide to plain English continued to be popular, with boxes of copies given to lecturers for first year law students and Tasmanian Legal Practice Course students at UTAS. Business Tasmania also handed out copies in the grant writing workshops.



## COVID-19 response – Getting plain English online

COVID-19 focused attention on the need for organisations to apply plain English principles to their communication with employees and members of the community. Understanding health information, filling in forms, supporting children's learning and finding work became more urgent tasks.

As learning had to be delivered online, 26TEN hosted a live online Business Writing Essentials course for Tasmanian organisations.

We produced a permanent online course for teachers and school administrators to help them communicate clearly with parents and carers.

We ran live Facebook plain English clinics with 26TEN Plain English trainer, Mel Roome, providing tips and answering questions.



## Communicating clearly with parents and carers

26TEN developed its first free online course titled; Writing in Plain English to Parents and Carers. It was designed to give teachers and school administrators skills and practise in communicating clearly with the parents and carers of their students. We liaised with the Department of Education's Public Learning Institute to ensure that the course offered practical advice.

The course supports schools to build their relationship with parents and carers, because, together, they play such a vital role in their children's education.

The principles of plain English are outlined in several short videos and there is the opportunity to practise the skills using worksheets and other resources.

Using plain English increase the chances that parents and carers will understand messages, including those who have difficulty reading, and those who are busy. It makes it easier for people to make decisions and respond appropriately.

Clear communication builds trust between people and organisations.

▼ *Adult learner, Liz, tells Mel why it's important to communicate clearly, for 26TEN's plain English training video.*



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