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26TEN welcomes all who would like to be involved.
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26TEN Tasmania

Tasmania's strategy for adult literacy and numeracy 2016-2025





A long-term strategy for all Tasmania

26TEN Tasmania is a long-term strategy for all of Tasmania. It sets a framework for action by the whole state – business, community groups, government, education and training providers, and individuals who want to live in a state where all adults have the reading, writing, numeracy and communication skills they need for life.



A vision for a Tasmania where we all have the skills we need

Our vision: all Tasmanians have the literacy and numeracy skills they need for work and life.

We live in a great state, with many opportunities for an exciting future. But in 2015, too many adult Tasmanians aren't reaching their full potential. Some of us are held back because our skills in reading, writing, numeracy and oral communication aren't good enough for the demands of daily life and work in the modern world.

26TEN aims to change this. We want a state where:

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

We will use statistics and stories to find out how well we are doing as a community:

- Statistics: We want more Tasmanians to be aware of the challenge of adult literacy and numeracy and more individuals and organisations to do something about it. We want more Tasmanian adults to have the literacy and numeracy skills they need to be full participants in a modern, technological world. We want more organisations to commit to using plain English. Our targets are ambitious, but if we all work together, we can succeed.
- Stories: Through the 26TEN website, we want to collect real stories from real people and organisations about what better literacy and numeracy and clearer communication has meant for them, their families and their communities. Together, these stories will show what these efforts mean for Tasmania in a way that numbers cannot.

Better literacy and numeracy means a better Tasmania for all



Literacy and numeracy are more than being able to read, write and do maths. Having good literacy and numeracy means being able to apply these skills, often in a digital context, along with oral communication and creative thinking, to the demands of the modern world.

Technological advances and increasing demands on workplaces and organisations mean the skills we need are more complex today than they were 50 years ago. We all need to be able to do our own banking, fill in forms, go online, calculate prices and estimate time. From the building site to the office, all workers need sound reading, writing, maths and digital skills to work safely, communicate clearly, use workplace technology and comply with standards.

Good literacy and numeracy skills improve a person's quality of life. They make it more likely for someone to have a job, earn a good income, be in good health and be involved with family and community. The children of parents who have the skills and confidence to read to them and help them learn will do better in school. Communities with higher literacy levels are more resilient and have higher per capita income. Businesses with more literate workforces are more productive.

We know that almost one in two adult Tasmanians lacks the literacy skills they need to engage fully with family, community and work. This means that for almost half of us, life is harder than it needs to be. It means that Tasmania is missing out on the full contribution of its people.

Adults have low literacy for many different reasons. Poverty, disruptions to childhood education such as childhood illness, learning difficulties and lack of practice can all be factors. The reasons people have for seeking help are also varied. Some people are motivated by new technology and requirements in the workplace, some want to get into a course, some their drivers' licence, and others to read to their children.

To make a difference for all these people, we need a practical, flexible approach.

This ten-year strategy is for the whole Tasmanian community. Government alone cannot solve this problem, nor can any one organisation or individual. We must all work together in a truly collective effort, and it will be worth it for every one of us if we do. Together, we can create a community where every individual reaches their full potential and makes the greatest contribution they can to our state.

THE FIRST PLAN 2010-2015:

We raised awareness and built the foundations



In 2010, the first plan to improve adult literacy and numeracy levels in Tasmania was launched with tripartisan support. The Tasmanian Adult Literacy Action Plan 2010-2015 was a response to a 2006 national survey which showed that nearly half of Tasmania's adult population lacked the literacy and numeracy skills they needed for work and life.

The first plan raised awareness and invested in what was needed to begin to address the problem. Its achievements include:

- Getting people talking about adult literacy and numeracy and beginning to break down the stigma of low reading, writing and maths skills
- Establishing 26TEN and beginning to build a network of members and supporters
- Establishing a state-wide network of 23 adult literacy coordinators in LINC Tasmania sites, Community Corrections and Risdon Prison
- Recruiting and training more than 1000 volunteer adult literacy tutors
- Developing a model of literacy and numeracy assistance tailored to meet the needs of each individual learner

- Providing opportunities and encouragement to adult Tasmanians to use and develop their reading, writing and maths outside of formal training
- Establishing a community of practice for adult literacy and numeracy teachers to share information and tools
- Establishing the 26TEN grants program to support communities and employers to take action on literacy and plain English
- Setting up a framework to help build 26TEN communities throughout the state
- Extending literacy and numeracy support provided to apprentices
- Raising awareness of the importance of plain English and communicating clearly

Since 2010, we have provided direct literacy and numeracy support to over 7000 Tasmanian adults through the 26TEN grants program and the LINC Tasmania literacy network, and many more through other service providers. Over 100 organisations and businesses have taken action to improve adult literacy in many different ways.

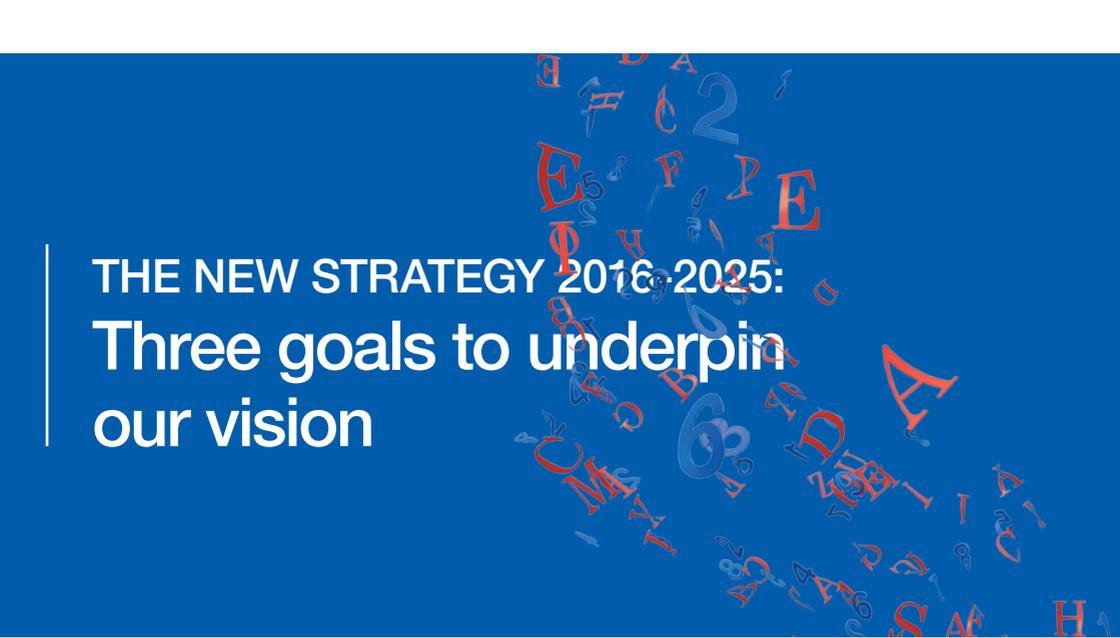
We're building on what we've learnt

This new strategy for 2016-2025 is informed by what we've learnt over five years and by what we know from local and international research.

We know that:

- Improving literacy and numeracy levels takes time and requires long-term commitment
- We need to be open and honest about the problem
- Numeracy is just as critical as literacy; we need to understand and apply mathematical concepts such as measurement and calculation in everyday life
- The needs, desires and motivations of those with low literacy and numeracy are diverse; our responses need to be flexible and designed for each individual

- We need expert adult literacy and numeracy teachers and tutors who can meet the individual needs of adult learners
- Adult literacy and numeracy learners respond best to local, welcoming locations where they can build relationships of trust
- We need better ways to measure the progress of individuals
- One person who improves their literacy and numeracy has a positive ripple effect on their family (particularly children), community and workplace
- Raising the literacy and numeracy of parents improves the educational success of their children
- Many Tasmanians are already aware of the problem and want concrete tools to help them solve it
- A collective effort, by the whole Tasmanian community, is crucial



THE NEW STRATEGY 2016-2025: Three goals to underpin our vision

The three goals which underpin the vision of 26TEN Tasmania are:

1. Everyone knows about adult literacy and numeracy

26TEN represents the 26 letters in the alphabet and the 10 digits we use for counting. It is a way to talk about adult literacy and numeracy without stigma. In its first three years, the brand has been embraced by literacy practitioners and member organisations.

Over the next decade, 26TEN will communicate its message more effectively to become a recognised campaign supported by all sectors of society. An expanded 26TEN Coalition will reach out to new sectors, promoting the need for everyone to understand the adult literacy and numeracy challenge and know what Tasmania can gain by addressing it. Business will engage with the campaign and workplace promotion will increase. The network of 26TEN members and supporters committed to taking action will grow to encompass all sectors of society.

26TEN will work with other organisations that are promoting a cultural change in attitudes towards education, including the Peter Underwood Centre and the early childhood and school sectors. Together, we will promote the importance of raising adult skill levels.

2. Everyone is supported to improve their skills and to help others

26TEN will make it easy for people who want to improve their skills to find out where to go and what to do. 26TEN will support LINC Tasmania's provision of individually tailored one-on-one and group literacy support that lets people learn in the way that is most effective for them. Trained volunteer adult literacy tutors will continue to play a key role.

Through 26TEN, partnerships will be built and strengthened between LINC Tasmania, as a key provider of informal learning opportunities for adults, and the broader training, community and business sectors. These will open pathways for those needing help to reach their training, social or employment goals.

26TEN will give access to expertise and provide resources to business, organisations and communities wishing to take action.

The 26TEN grants program and registers of skilled literacy teachers and plain English experts will support community and workplace programs and expand the range of options available to those seeking help. The number of organisations and businesses taking action will increase.

26TEN will support the adult literacy workforce by hosting a community of practice. 26TEN will offer quality professional development opportunities to ensure Tasmanians have access to the best literacy support.

3. Everyone communicates clearly

Complex and bureaucratic language is a large barrier to participation in society for people with low literacy. Clearer communication and more use of plain English, particularly in official documents, will help us all.

26TEN will encourage a commitment by every part of the State Government and beyond to use plain English. It will work with the legal, health and other service sectors to promote and support clearer communication. It will provide guidelines and training aligned with the best national and international practice.

We will measure success through statistics and stories

LINC Tasmania will prepare an annual report on progress. After five years, we will look at how far we've come as a state and what we have learnt in more detail. This will provide the opportunity to re-assess priorities for action.

We will assess our success through statistics and through anecdotal evidence of the impact of 26TEN.

1. Increased awareness

INDICATOR	BASELINE (Number of members and grant recipients as at 2015)	2025 TARGET	INFORMATION SOURCES
Number of businesses, organisations and individual supporters engaged with 26TEN	110	1000	Register of members and supporters in 26TEN database

2. Increased adult literacy and numeracy levels

Our goal is for a 10% increase in the number of adult Tasmanians with the literacy and numeracy skills they need.

This is an ambitious goal that would put Tasmania above the current national average and ahead of most developed countries. But it is worth striving for.

If we work together as a state, we can make a difference.

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2011 results)	2025 TARGET (2022 results)	INFORMATION SOURCES
Percentage of adult Tasmanians with literacy skills at or above OECD Level 3	49.8%	60%	OECD survey*
Percentage of adult Tasmanians with numeracy skills at or above OECD Level 3	40.4%	50%	OECD survey*

**Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Level 3 skills are those considered necessary for life and work in a technologically-rich world.*

3. Increased commitment to clear communication

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2025 TARGET	INFORMATION SOURCES
Number of organisations committed to plain English	10	200	Commitments in 26TEN member plans and information provided to 26TEN

4. Success stories

The broader impact of improved literacy and numeracy on people's lives is difficult to quantify. People who have received literacy and numeracy support say they become more confident, can advocate for themselves, read to their children and take steps they never thought possible. Businesses report changes to staff morale and better outcomes for clients as well as increased productivity.

We aim to collect a story a month about the journey of one person or organisation to improved literacy and numeracy or clearer communication and the difference it has made. These stories will be collated on the 26TEN website. They will put a human face on the progress made through this strategy.

Everyone needs to be involved



For the strategy to succeed, we need business, community groups, state and local government, training organisations and individuals to work together.

The 26TEN Coalition, a group of influential Tasmanians committed to improving adult literacy and numeracy, will support this collective effort. LINC Tasmania, host organisation for 26TEN and the government agency whose role is to make information and informal learning opportunities available to Tasmanians of all ages, will coordinate the work in this plan. LINC Tasmania will engage other parts of government and consult broadly with partners.

26TEN member organisations and others who become involved will develop their own goals, action plans and targets. LINC Tasmania, working with the 26TEN Coalition, will draw on input from partners and programs to develop two-year action plans to complement the work of 26TEN members. These plans will also outline government action on and investment in adult literacy and numeracy.

Prepared by LINC Tasmania and the 26TEN Coalition, in consultation with Tasmanians committed to adult literacy and numeracy.

LINC Tasmania and the 26TEN Coalition,
26TEN Tasmania: Tasmania's strategy for adult literacy and numeracy 2016-2025,
Tasmanian Government, Hobart, 2015.