

SELECTED RESOURCES in HEALTH LITERACY

I. Adult Literacy (Key issues and statistics)

Executive Summary of Adult Literacy in America: A First Look at the Results of the National Adult Literacy Survey

Irwin S. Kirsch, Ann Jungeblut, Lynn Jenkins, and Andrew Kolstad, 1993

This report provides a look at the results of the National Adult Literacy Survey, a project funded by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. It provides the a detailed portrait on the condition of literacy in this nation -- and on the unrealized potential of its citizens.

<http://nces.ed.gov/naal/resources/execsumm.asp>

Building a Level Playing Field: The Need To Expand and Improve the National and State Adult Education and Literacy Systems

John Comings, Stephen Reder and Andrew Sum

NCSALL Publication (2001)

This document looks at the national workforce of adults between the ages of 18-64 who are neither studying full time or institutionalized. It estimates and describes the adult population that does not have the basic skills and education needed to succeed in the 21st century.

http://ncsall.gse.harvard.edu/research/op_comings2.pdf

For more statistics on literacy in your community:

The State of Literacy in America

Synthetic Estimates of Adult Literacy Proficiency at the local, state and national levels

Washington D.C.: National Institute for Literacy (1998)

This report provides data for states, counties, Congressional districts, and cities with adult populations over 5,000. It is the best estimation to date of how many adults in the U.S. have low literacy skills.

<http://www.nifl.gov/reders/reder.htm>

II. Health Literacy (Key issues, concepts and evidence)

Health and Literacy: A Review of Medical and Public Health Literature

Rima E. Rudd, Barbara A. Moeykens, and Tayla Colton

In J. Comings, C. Smith, and B. Garner (Eds), The Annual Review of Adult Learning and Literacy, Volume 1

San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers (1999)

This document is an examination of the medical and public health literature regarding links between health and literacy. The authors discuss the connection between educational attainment and health, as well as the relationships shown between literacy and health outcomes.

http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/litreview_final.pdf

“A Maturing Partnership” (Handout)

Rima E. Rudd. In *Focus on Basics*, Volume 5, Issue C. February 2002.

World Education /NCSALL

This article sketches out the history of the growing interaction between the fields of adult basic education and public health.

http://ncsall.gse.harvard.edu/fob/2002/fob_5ic.pdf

Center for Health Care Strategies, Inc. – Fact Sheets

These fact sheets show data on the links between literacy and health. They focus on the medical and public health literature and highlight studies that reveal who has health literacy problems and what kind of strategies are suggested to assist low-literate health care consumers.

CHCS also has excellent resource and bibliography lists.

<http://www.chcs.org/resource/hl.html>

Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. November 2000.

Healthy People 2010 presents a comprehensive, nationwide health promotion and disease prevention agenda. It is designed to serve as a roadmap for improving the health of all people in the United States during the first decade of the 21st century.

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/>

III. Assessment and Development of Easy-to-Read Health Education Materials

Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills

Doak, C. Doak, L. & Root, J., Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1996.

Shows readers how to develop different types of patient-teaching materials, assess the suitability of materials, help patients understand health messages, use visuals to communicate, and more.

Beyond the Brochure: Alternative Approaches to Effective Health

Communication. AMC Cancer Research Center in cooperation with CDC. 1994

Guide to assist health educators and health communicators produce educational materials and activities that do not rely solely on the printed word.

The Right to Understand: Linking Literacy to Health and Safety Training.

Szudy, E. and Arroyo, M.G. Labor Occupational Health Program, University of California at Berkeley, 1994.

Provides trainers with tools and practical tips for developing materials and programs with literacy in mind.

Clear & Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-Literate

Readers. National Cancer Institute. NIH Publication No. 95-359, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1994.

Outlines a process for developing publications for people with limited-literacy skills.

Writing and Designing Print Materials for Beneficiaries: A Guide for State

Medicaid Agencies, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HCFA Publication Number 10145. October 1999.

Includes detailed checklists for assessing print materials and a directory of additional resources.

Mosenthal, Peter B., & Kirsch, Irwin S., "A New Measure for Assessing Document Complexity: The PMOSE/IKIRSCH Document Readability Formula," *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 41:8, May 1998.

This article provides detailed information on a new document readability formula.

IV. Featured Health Literacy Resources Websites: Demo.

Health Literacy Studies Website

This website includes definitions and an introduction to health literacy; a literature review, and regularly updated annotated bibliography of literacy-related publications in medicine and public health; research reports on health and literacy; innovative health education materials, *a 'How To' section on creating and evaluating written materials*; innovative adult/health education curricula; highlights of presentations, and news items; *and links to web sites related to health and literacy.*

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/>

Health and Literacy Special Collections (Website)

This website includes a number of resources on health and literacy. It is mainly for anyone interested in teaching people with limited literacy skills. *The "Quick References" section provides information on organizations and agencies involved in health literacy work, as well as some basic health and literacy facts and statistics.*

<http://www.worlded.org/us/health/lincs/>

