



# The Need for Adult Education Services

The Central Texas Workforce is Falling Behind...





# The Need for Literacy Services

## LITERACY IN CENTRAL TEXAS: A SNAPSHOT OF CONDITIONS

### PART I: THE NEED FOR ADULT EDUCATION SERVICES

#### ***NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA***

**164,452 (14%)**

Adults 18 and older in Central Texas **without**  
a **high school diploma or GED<sup>®</sup>**  
*and*

**THOUSANDS** of high school seniors expected  
to graduate from Central Texas schools each  
year end up **dropping out** instead.

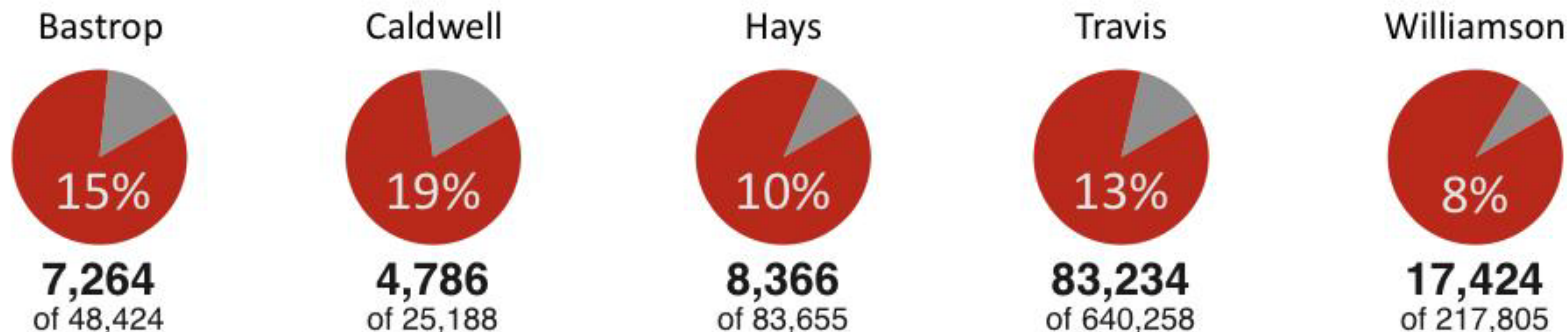
# The Need for Literacy Services

## ***ADULT BASIC EDUCATION & LITERACY***

**121,074 (11.9%)**

Adults age 16 and older in Central Texas who **do not** have the **minimum literacy skills necessary** to enroll in a GED<sup>®</sup> test preparation class.

### County Estimates of Low Literacy\*



\*This assessment measures various English literacy skills among American adults age 16 and older.  
SOURCE: 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy; County Aggregates



# The Need for Literacy Services

## ***LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY***

**147,180 (12.1%)**

Adults 18 and older in Central Texas who  
**struggle** with the English language.

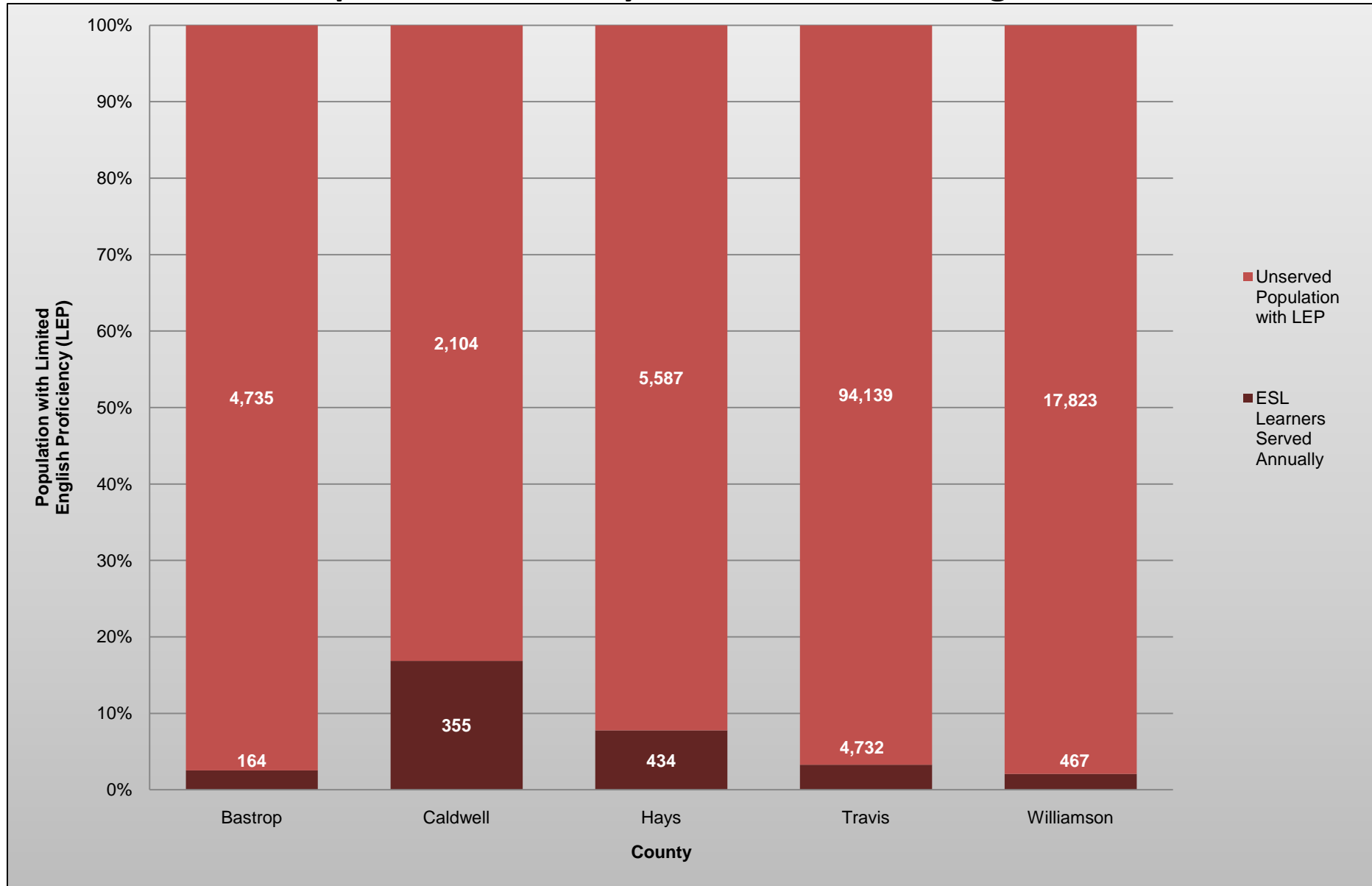
*and*

The young non-English speaking population is **growing**.

**45,477 (17.9%)** students in Central Texas counties  
*do not speak English in their homes.*

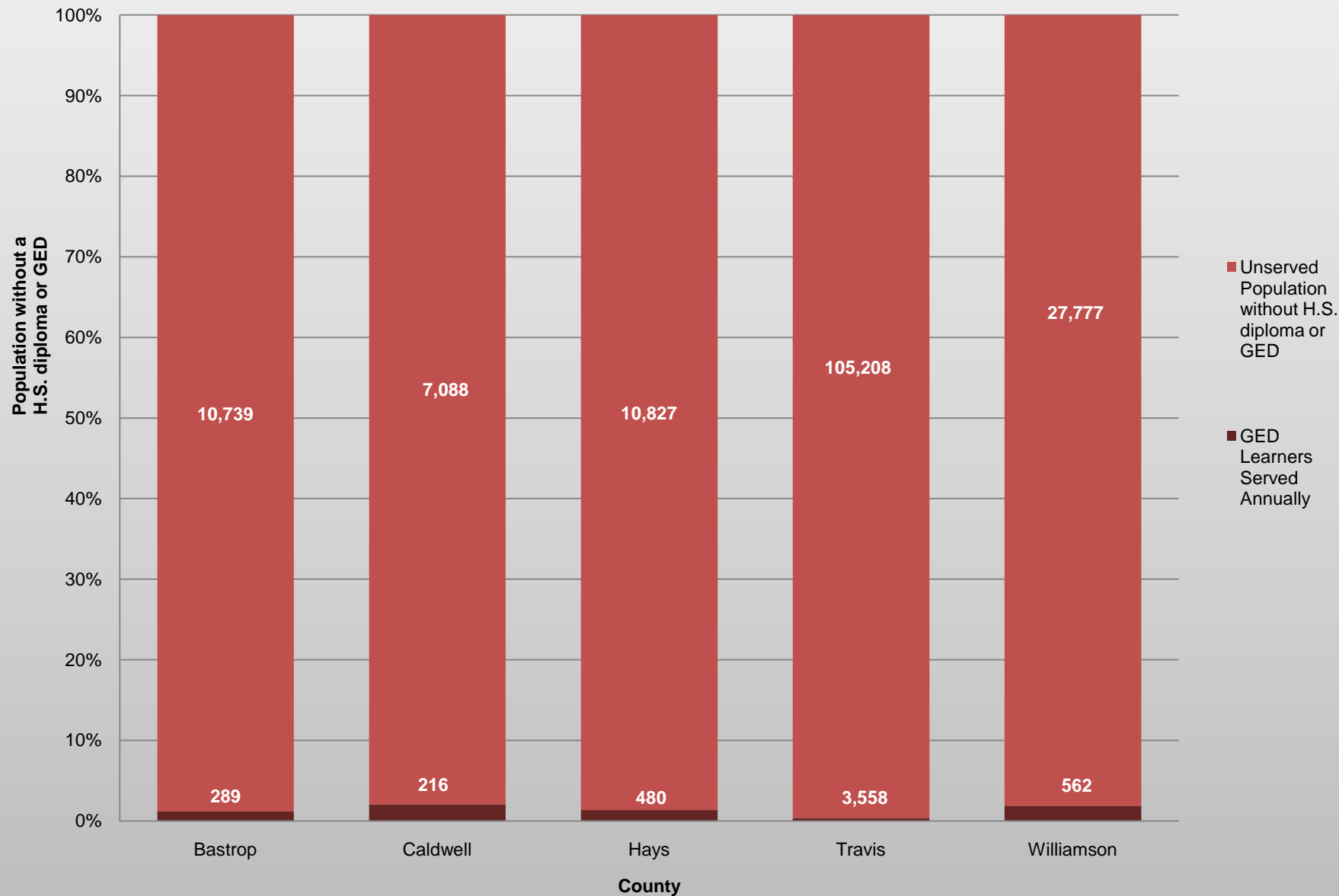
# Estimated Regional Service Capacity

## Population Served by Central Texas ESL Programs



# Estimated Regional Service Capacity

## Population Served by Central Texas Adult Basic Education / Adult Secondary Education Programs



# Alarming Future Trends

The Texas Workforce Investment Council recently released a report that predicts that the need for basic adult education services will increase dramatically in the next thirty years, even as our labor market requires higher levels of education.

By 2040, trends indicate that **321,00 Central Texas adults will be eligible for adult education services** based on the federal definition, as compared to 161,500 currently eligible. This is a % increase. (*Office of the State Demographer*)

See full reports, available at <http://governor.state.tx.us/twic/work/>.



# Why get involved?

## ***ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY***

Adults with the lowest level of literacy skills earn a median income of approximately \$240 per week, compared to \$681 for those with the highest level of literacy skills.

Limited literacy skills cost businesses and taxpayers approximately \$20 billion a year in lost wages, profits, and productivity.

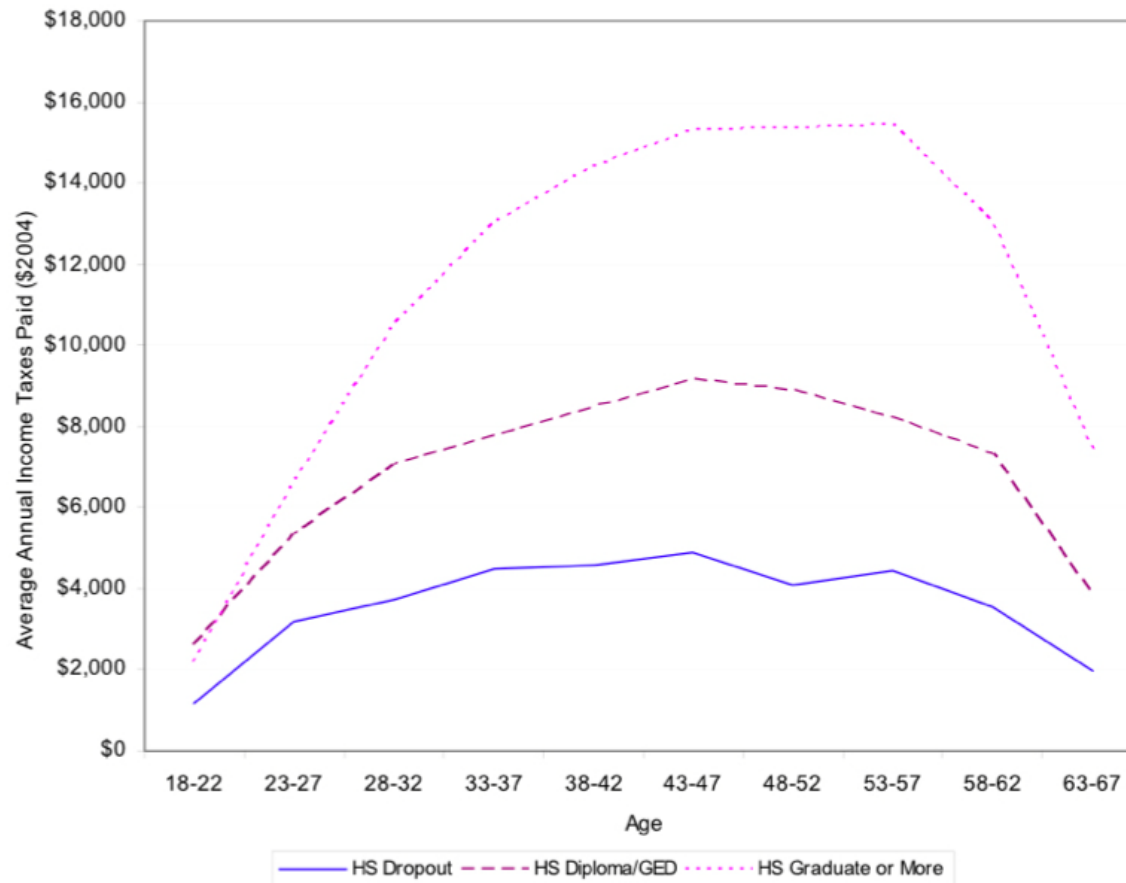
### **Imagine...**

If just 5% of the Austin area adults without a HS diploma received a GED, the potential annual increase in individual earnings for the five county area for those adults would be \$73,974,088 (8,081.95 x \$9,153).

# Why get involved?

## ***ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY***

Average Annual Income Taxes Paid by Age and Educational Attainment



Source: "The Labor Market Consequences of an Inadequate Education" (Rouse, 2005)



# Why get involved?

## *LITERACY LINKED TO OTHER PROBLEMS*

### POVERTY

- Adults with lower literacy skills are **more likely** to be **reliant on public assistance**, including TANF and Medicaid (Kirsch et al., 1993)
- In 2003, **43%** of adults with the lowest level of literacy skills were **living in poverty**, compared to only 4% of those with the highest level of skill (Kutner et al., 2007)

# Why get involved?

## *LITERACY LINKED TO OTHER PROBLEMS*

### HIGHER CRIME RATES

- Low literacy and low educational attainment are **highly correlated** with **higher crime rates and more violent crimes** (NAAL, 2003)
- In Central Texas, an average of 60% of incarcerated adults **do not have** a **high school education** or the equivalent (Executive Services, 2008)

# Why get involved?

## *LITERACY LINKED TO OTHER PROBLEMS*

### ADULTS AFFECT CHILDREN

- Adults with lower literacy skills are **less likely** to read to their children (NALS, 2003)



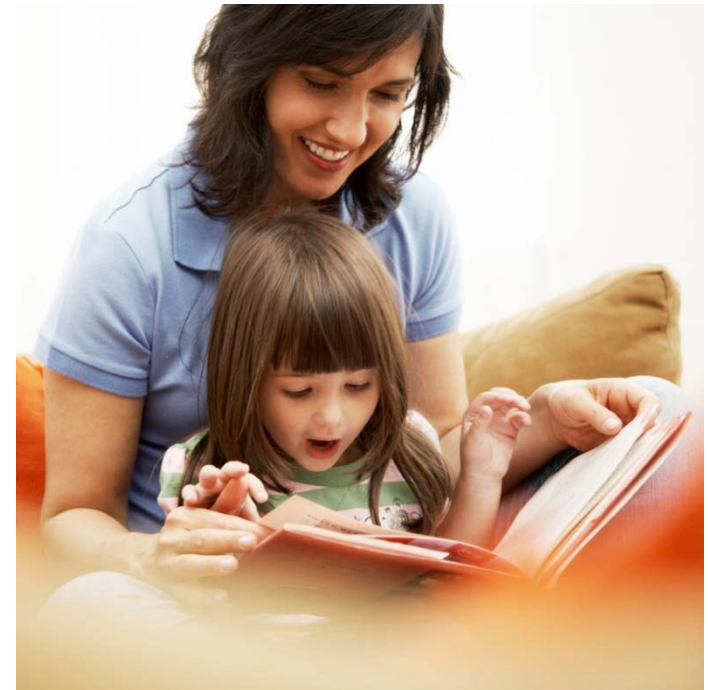
- Children who have not already developed basic literacy practices when they enter school are **3 to 4 times more likely** to drop out of school in the long run (Reder, 2006)

# Why get involved?

## *LITERACY LINKED TO OTHER PROBLEMS*

### ADULTS AFFECT CHILDREN

- A mother's literacy level is **one of the most significant predictors** of a **child's future success in school** (NIFL, 1996)
- Children of adults who participate in literacy programs **improve** their **grades and test scores**, **improve** their **reading skills**, and are **less likely** to **drop out of school** (NIFL, 1996)





# Successful Initiatives – What Works?

- Holistic Approach
- Support transitioning to the next credential/degree
- Incentives to finish programs
- Partnerships with employers
- Concurrent language and job skills training

# Successful Initiatives – What Works?

**Challenge**: Students' changing needs in a complex and changing world, and programs struggling to meet those needs.

**Solution**: A body that coordinates services and leverages resources.

## **The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas...**

- Literacy Services Hotline
- Outreach to those in need
- Volunteer recruitment and referral
- Instructor Trainings
- Networking Events



# What can CAN partners do to support a rise in literacy rates?

- Mentoring opportunities for adult learners
- On-site literacy programs, partnering with an area provider
- Train staff of direct government assistance programs to better identify those who might have literacy needs – and have them direct people to the LCCT toll-free Hotline for program referrals



# What can CAN partners do to support a rise in literacy rates?

- Tuition Reimbursement... flexibility in what educational programs are reimbursed AND provide the cash benefit up front, so adults can afford books, registration, etc.
- Offer flexible schedules and time-off for employees furthering their education



# What can CAN partners do to support a rise in literacy rates?

## ***PROVIDING TANGIBLE RESOURCES***

Build the capacity of area programs by...

- Providing space for classes
- Donating refurbished computers
- Increasing social service contract investment in literacy programs
- Asking your area programs for a wish list of tangible needs to see what you might have to offer!

For more information, please visit our web site at  
[www.willread.org](http://www.willread.org)

**Or contact Meg Poag, at [mpoag@willread.org](mailto:mpoag@willread.org)**

