

THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

The goal of the Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning (LSAL), conducted by Dr. Stephen Reder, PhD, was to bring to light the long-term outcomes and benefits realized by adults who participate in an adult education program as they relate to economic outcomes, literacy growth, high school equivalency attainment, postsecondary engagement, and voting activity.

METHODOLOGY

GOAL

The research outlined the long-term outcomes for adults when literacy programs are accessible and adequately funded. Positive long-term outcomes for adults correlate with a positive impact on so many socioeconomic issues affecting the U.S.

RESEARCH

- Randomly sampled 1,000 high school dropouts from Portland, Oregon
- Followed both participants and nonparticipants of adult basic skills (ABS) programs
- Conducted over a 10-year period
- The ages of the study population ranged from 18–44

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

- Economic outcomes
- Literacy growth
- High school equivalency attainment
- Postsecondary engagement
- Voting activity

ECONOMIC GAINS

ABS Participants with more than 100 hours of instruction averaged **\$10,000 MORE** in annual income.



Participants showed mean income gains of

53%



Nonparticipants' income dropped

2%



LITERACY GROWTH

Individuals who were active in literacy programs were more likely to show an increase in literacy skills than those who were not.



ABS participants, with 100 or more hours in active instruction, improved literacy skills by

19%

HSE ATTAINMENT

Participants in ABS programs were



35%

more likely to obtain an HSE (high school equivalency) credential than nonparticipants.

POSTSECONDARY ENGAGEMENT

Most ABS participants and nonparticipants indicated interest in additional postsecondary education, but participants showed much greater progress toward this goal.



ENROLLED IN COURSES

22% **31.3%**



NONPARTICIPANTS PARTICIPANTS

EARNED POSTSECONDARY CREDITS

11.9% **19.7%**



NONPARTICIPANTS PARTICIPANTS



VOTING ACTIVITY

Voting rate of ABS participants grew throughout the research timeframe.



BEGINNING OF STUDY

nonparticipants voted **41.7%**
participants voted **46.9%**

END OF STUDY

nonparticipants voted **54.5%**
participants voted **65.2%**