

THE STATUS OF LITERACY IN MONTEREY COUNTY

JANUARY 2004



PREPARED FOR:
COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP
MONTEREY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

PREPARED BY:
TELLUS/DÍGANOS CENTER FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH
80 GARDEN COURT, SUITE 230
MONTEREY, CA 93940
(831) 645-9295

For further information regarding this report please contact:

Irene Cole
Management Analyst
Monterey County Community Action Partnership
(831) 796-3584
colein@co.monterey.ca.us

Larry Imwalle
Research Director
Tellus/Díganos Center for Community Research
(831) 645-9295
limwalle@tellusdiganos.org

***Tellus/Díganos Center for Community Research
Report on the Status of Monterey County Community Literacy***

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Acknowledgements

The completion of this report was made possible through the hard work, dedication, and support numerous individuals and their organizations. Ellen Correa and Irene Cole of the Community Action Partnership (CAP) provided both vision and project management for this study. The research design, data collection, and report development was conducted by Tellus/Díganos Center for Community Research staff: Stephen Ramirez, Sherra Clinton, Terrence Seid, and Larry Imwalle.

We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to all the community members who, in a variety of ways—providing data, participating in the focus groups, and completing the on-line survey, assisted in the completion of this report on literacy in Monterey County. The participation of the following individuals and their organizations from the educational and literacy services in the county were invaluable to this research effort:

Paulette Bumbalough, *Hartnell College*
Linda Coyne, *Soledad Adult School*
Maureen Girard, *Monterey Peninsula College*
Judy Maura, *Seaside Adult School*
Chris Myers, *Hartnell College*
Julia Orozco, *Salinas Public Library*
Imelda Pacheco-Perez, *Salinas Public Library*
Corinne Price, *Salinas Adult School*
Rosaleen Ryan, *Monterey Peninsula College*
Julie Thorpe, *Casa de la Cultura*
Sally Torres, *Head Start*
Kristy Wolter-Warmerdam, *Hartnell College*
Rita Zanzinger, *Monterey County Free Libraries*

Executive Summary

Language and Literacy

- 53% of Monterey County residents aged five and over indicated that English was the only language spoken at home.
- 47% indicated that they spoke some other language either in addition to English or as their only language.
- Of those who spoke a language other than English, 84% spoke Spanish, 9% spoke Asian or Pacific Island languages, and 7% spoke other Indo-European languages.
- The areas with the highest combination of adults aged 18 to 64 that speak a language other than English and who indicated that they spoke English not well or not at all were Greenfield: 47%, Soledad 41%, and King City 37%.
- The areas with the highest combination of adults aged 65 and over who indicated they spoke a language other than English at home and reported they did not speak English *well or not at all* were (why change the syntax from the entry above?) Soledad 40%, Gonzales 29%, and Greenfield 25%.
- In Monterey County approximately 31% of Spanish speaking households, 24% of Asian-Pacific Island language households, 11% of European language and 10% of all other non-English speaking households are considered linguistically isolated,

Focus Group Discussion with Literacy Program Administrators

- Policy makers must view literacy as a core need and priority service for provision to local residents. It must be comprehensive and linked to other local community support services.
- There was consensus on the importance of providing additional literacy services to rural County residents.
- There was concern about the lack of literacy programs that service Spanish-speaking populations.
- Solutions to the challenges and barriers identified among Community Literacy programs included revising policies and transitioning categorical and narrow funding sources into a system that emphasizes comprehensive strategies to improve and support community literacy.
- Misperception exists among the public that literacy programs are only for immigrants and non-English speakers; and that literacy programs only teach reading and literacy.

Literacy Service Providers On-Line Survey

- 55% of respondents ranked “coordination among service providers” as most important challenge to improving literacy
- “Inability to speak English” was most frequently ranked as the most important barrier (55% of respondents) faced by consumers who access literacy services.
- Improving bilingual services, improved assessment processes, and funding were most frequently mentioned as recommendations to improve the methods of literacy instruction.
- Several respondents provided recommendations related to creating and working as a network or collaborative of service providers as a recommendation they would make to improve outreach efforts by literacy services in the community.
- Respondents clearly saw collaboration with a wide range of community organizations as important on literacy issues. The public school system (82%) and public libraries (82%) received the highest percent of respondents indicating that collaboration with these groups is essential.

Local Literacy and Language Program Data

- Thousands of county residents are enrolled in local language and literacy programs each year.
- Consistent with the demographic characteristics of the county, a majority of students are of Hispanic or Latino origin, and identify Spanish as their native language.
- Most students indicated they did not have a high school diploma or GED
- Students cite a variety of educational goals including: improving their basic skills, improving English skills, earning a GED, and obtaining employment.
- Students are entering literacy programs at all levels of instruction, from beginning, to intermediate, and advanced.

Data Gaps and Future Research

- There is an absence of data on literacy levels of persons that do not speak English as their primary language. Future research should focus on collecting information on this particular segment of the population.
- Data is also absent regarding literacy levels of persons who speak English only, and this too should be part of future community literacy research efforts.
- The number of respondents to the survey implemented for this report was quite limited, and therefore should be expanded in future studies in order to obtain a sample representative of literacy service providers on community literacy issues.

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

This research project on community literacy was initiated in the fall of 2003 by the Monterey County Community Action Partnership (CAP), an anti-poverty program that functions under the auspices of the Monterey County Department of Social Services. The idea for the study came from CAP efforts to raise funds to sustain the “Workforce Literacy Project,” a comprehensive program of literacy services that was funded for several years by the Department of Social Services and administered by CAP. In Spring 2003 the state funding supporting the program expired and the Community Action Commission, community volunteers who as advisors to the CAP program, expressed interest in raising private funding to continue providing the successful literacy services.

It was in the midst of planning the fundraising strategy that it was discovered that local information on the state of literacy in Monterey County did not exist. Potential funders and donors to the “Workforce Literacy Project” would understandably want to know the extent of the problem we were addressing. There was no data that could describe the extent of the issue, identify the people in need of services, or even map the services already in existence. CAP staff and Commissioners realized that this kind of information is crucial to attracting funding to literacy programs, and to planning and implementation of improved services.

The limited time and funding available did not allow for a full scope study to be conducted. We offer this report as a beginning, a glimpse of the status of literacy in Monterey County. Our hope is that this information will generate interest and support to conduct a more comprehensive investigation that will address the data gaps and recommendations outlined in Part V of this report.

“The Workforce Literacy Project” has been severely reduced due to dwindling funding, but continues to serve South County residents through the efforts of the Soledad Unified School District. We look forward to using the information in this report and subsequent studies to help attract resources to community-based literacy services such as this one, and to help grow and improve literacy programs throughout the County.

Methodology

The CAP contracted with Tellus/Diganos, a local non-profit research organization, to develop the research design and to coordinate data collection and report development. The research process focuses on four key areas of data relevant to understanding the status of literacy and literacy services in Monterey County: demographic and economic characteristics; population-based language and literacy data; local literacy service provider focus group and survey data; and available local program service data.

In Part I, we present a variety of demographic and economic data in order to understand the context of community literacy locally. The topic of literacy, and intervention strategies aimed at improving literacy levels, cannot be understood in isolation. Instead, they must be examined within the broader socio-economic and cultural contexts of the county. Therefore, this report looks at several key pieces of U.S. Census information that are relevant to the literacy issue beyond language and literacy – education, employment, income, poverty, and race/ethnicity.

In Part II, we provide a summary and analysis of population-based language and literacy data in order to illustrate the status of English literacy in Monterey County. The information presented in this section is derived primarily from U.S. Census data elements that address language spoken at home and English language skills. From the onset, it is important to note a significant gap in this data – it does not address Spanish language literacy. Although Spanish literacy is an integral part of understanding the literacy issues in Monterey County there is a lack of available data on this particular aspect of community literacy, since U.S. Census data focuses on English language literacy.

Part III of the report presents information obtained from local literacy service providers through a focus group conducted in October 2003, and from on-line surveys conducted in December 2003 and January 2004. This data reflects the opinions and perceptions of literacy providers in Monterey County on the principal issues, challenges, barriers, and solutions to the community goal of improving literacy.

Part IV of this report provides local data on the services provided to address the community literacy needs in Monterey County. The section utilizes available enrollment based data from local adult schools, community colleges, and other literacy programs to provide a profile of the local students that are working to improve their language skills.

The concluding section of the report, Part V, addresses remaining gaps in information needed to fully understand the critical issues facing community literacy in Monterey County, and provides some recommendations on future literacy research.

Part I: The Demographic and Economic Context of Community Literacy

Introduction

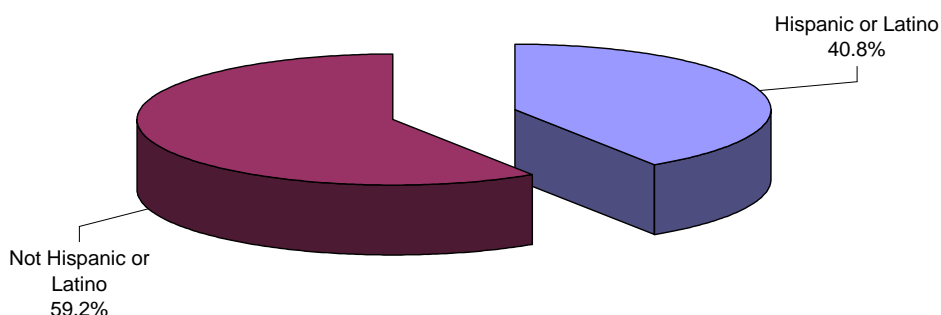
In reviewing this section the reader will undoubtedly notice the tremendous variation across different communities in the county along several dimensions. If effective strategies are to be developed to address any issue, including literacy, on a countywide basis, it is critical that we understand the unique nature of each community within this county. Therefore, we present data in this report at both the county level and at the community level. The community level data in this report is based upon U.S. Census county subdivisions (CCDs). Monterey County is divided into 13 distinct (not over-lapping) CCD's, and most of these are associated with a specific urban center and its surrounding area.¹ We believe the CCD level of detail is particularly useful for this report since these geographic areas are likely to be similar to the different service areas for adult education and literacy services in the county.

Demographics

In 2000, Monterey County had a total population of 401,762 according to the U.S. Census, and increased to 416,000 by January 2003. The adult population (those age 18 years and older) was 287,712, or 72% of the county's population in 2000. However, there was a high degree of variability among the county's communities. The adult population ranged from a low of 62% in the Greenfield area to a high of 86% in the Carmel area. The majority of county residents lived in the Salinas (41%) and Monterey-Seaside (28%) areas, which accounted for nearly 7 out of every 10 county residents.

In 2000, 41% of the adults in Monterey County reported they were Hispanic or Latino. The racial composition of adults in Monterey County in 2000 was: 59% White; 7% Asian; 4% Black or African-American; 1% American Indian or Alaska Native; Less than 1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; 25% some other race, and 4% two or more races.

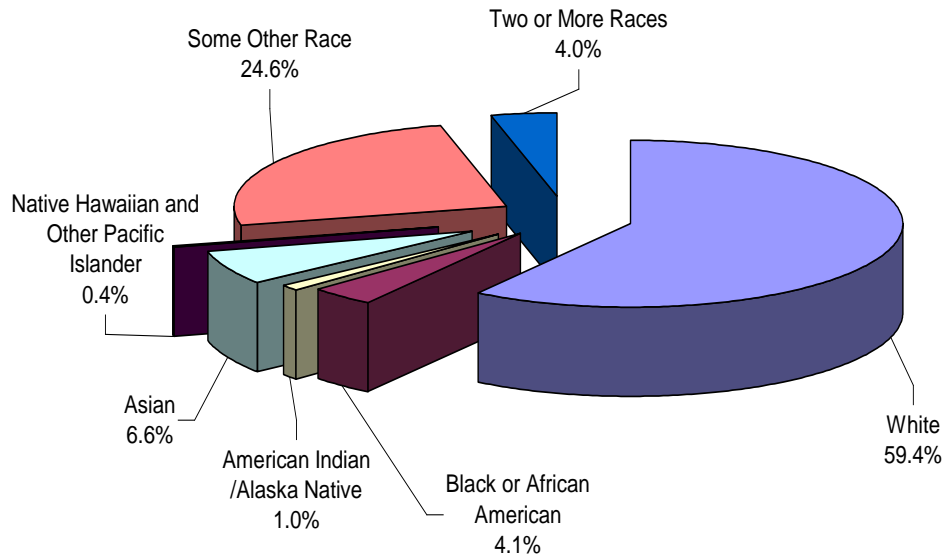
ADULT POPULATION BY HISPANIC OR LATINO



Source: United States Census Bureau, Census 2000.

¹ The Monterey-Seaside CCD includes the city of Marina

ADULT POPULATION BY RACE



Source: United States Census Bureau, Census 2000

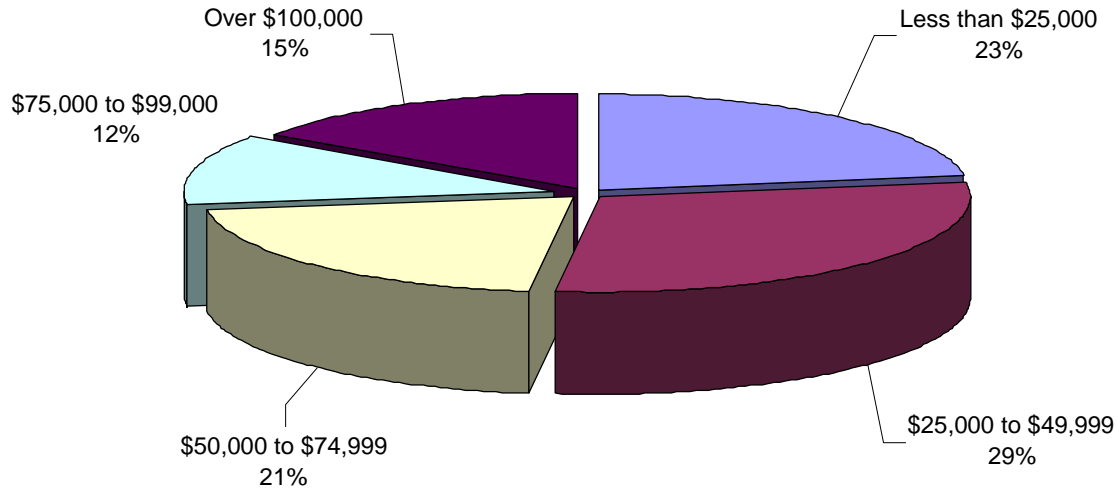
The race categories utilized by the 1990 U.S. Census differ from those utilized in 2000. Therefore, it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the 1990 and 2000 data on race categories. However, comparisons can be made for Hispanic or Latino origin. In 2000, 41% of Monterey County adult residents indicated that they were of Hispanic or Latino origin, compared to 29% in 1990.

Economics

The California Economic Development Department reported that Monterey County's labor force in 2001 numbered 195,800 persons. Of this total, 177,000 persons were employed, and 18,100 (9%) were unemployed. The largest industries, in terms of employment, are agriculture and services (which includes hospitality workers). In 2001, the agriculture sector employed 38,600 persons and the service sector employed 37,100.

The pie chart below illustrates the percentage of the population who fell in various income ranges. It demonstrates that 23% of the population made less than \$25,000 and 29% made under \$59,000 in 1999. The areas with the highest median income in 1999 were the Toro CCD (\$89,300), Carmel Valley (\$70,313), and Carmel (\$65,647). The San Ardo (\$37, 212), Greenfield (\$37, 563), and King City (\$39,541) areas had the lowest median household incomes in Monterey County in 1999. There was a \$52,088 difference between the CCD's with the highest and lowest median incomes in the county.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN MONTEREY COUNTY, 1999



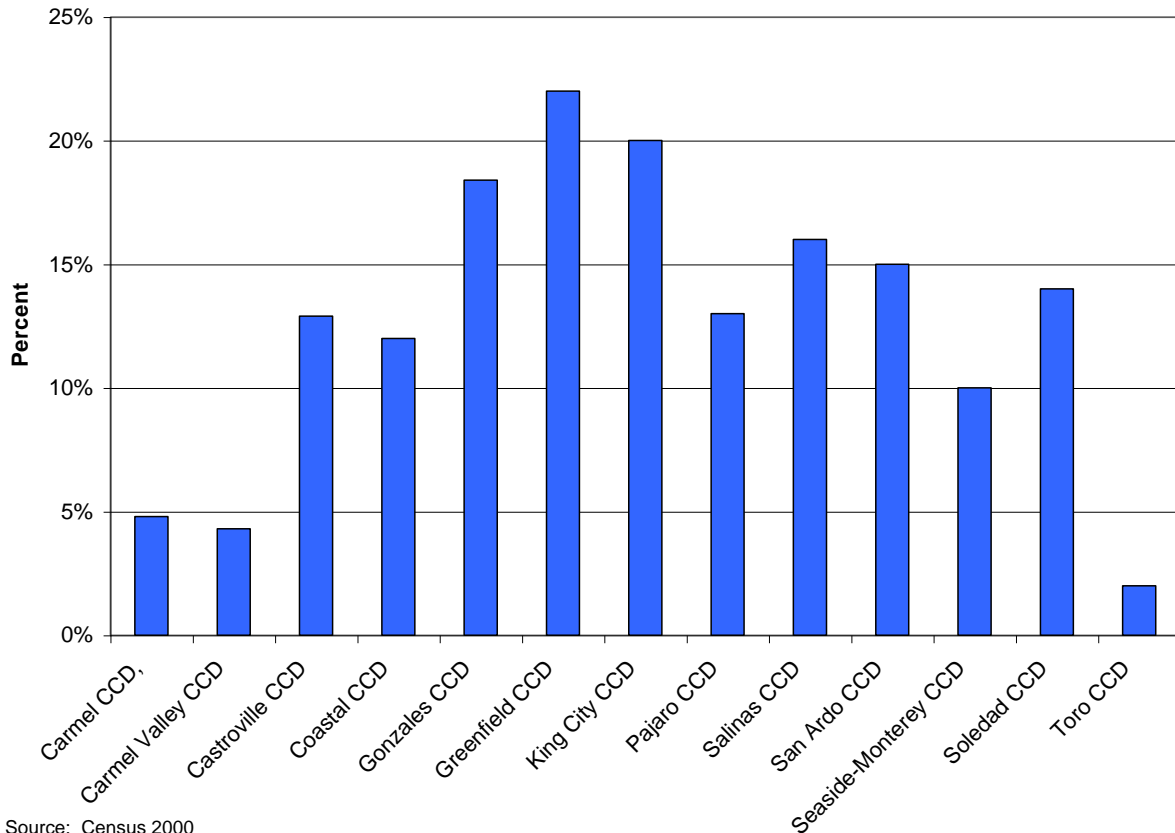
Source: United States Census Bureau, Census 2000.

In Monterey County in 1999, 12% of individuals age 18 and over and 7% of individuals age 65 and older fell below the federal poverty level². In the same year, 10% of all Monterey County families fell below the poverty level. The overall poverty rate among all individuals aged 18 and over increased in Monterey County between 1989 and 1999. The percentage of individuals age 18 and over who were below the federal poverty level rose from 10% in 1989 to 12% in 1999. The poverty rate for the 65-and-over population remained at 7% over the same period. Among Monterey County families, 9% had incomes below the poverty level in 1989, compared to 10% in 1999.

² Poverty data reported by U.S. Census Bureau uses the federal government's measure of poverty. The federal government measures poverty by comparing an individual or family's income to the income threshold for that family type. Income thresholds are determined by multiplying the cost of a minimum diet by three (to estimate the cost and include the cost of non-food items.) Family type is defined by the number of persons and the number of children under 18 in the family. The standards are the same for all parts of the country; no adjustment is made for regional, state, or local variation in cost of living.

The following graph illustrates the percentage of individuals that fell below the poverty threshold by CCD.

Individuals Below Poverty Line by CCD



Source: Census 2000

As is indicated in the above graph, the communities that had the highest percentage of *Individuals* in poverty were: Greenfield (22%), King City (20%), and Salinas (16%). The communities with the lowest percentage of *individuals* in poverty were: Toro (2%), Carmel Valley (4%), and Carmel (5%). The communities that had the highest percentage of *families* in poverty (not graphed) were: Greenfield (18%), King City (16%), Soledad (14%), and Gonzales (14%). The communities with the lowest percentage of *families* in poverty were: Carmel (2%), Toro (2%) and Carmel Valley (3%).

The poverty rates for families with children were even higher. Approximately 14% of Monterey County families with children were below the poverty line according to Census 2000 data. The areas with the highest percentage of families with children below the poverty line were: King City (22%), Greenfield (20%), Soledad (18%) and Gonzales (17%). By contrast, the Toro, Carmel, Coastal, and Carmel Valley areas all had less than 10% of the families with children below the poverty line.

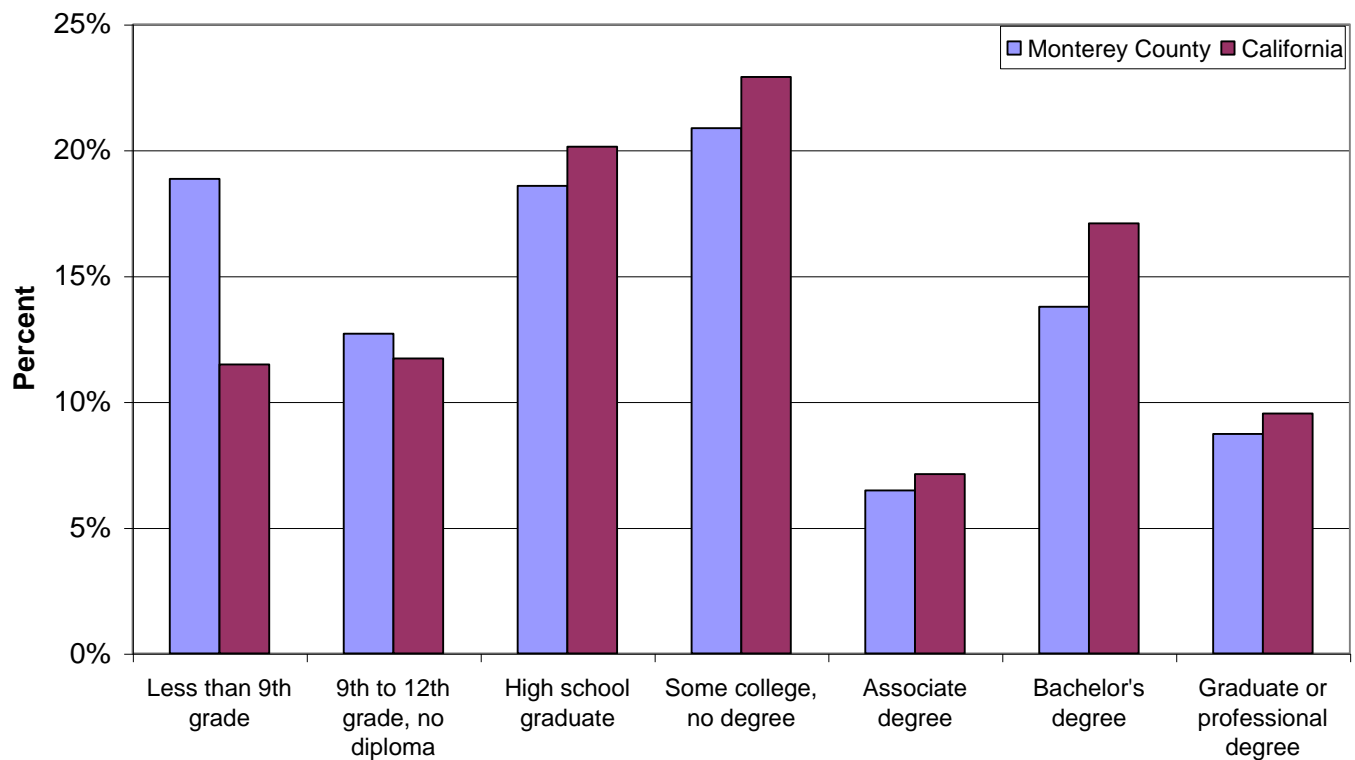
Education

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Monterey County residents reported the following about their educational achievement:

- 19% of residents age 25 and older completed less than a ninth-grade education
- 13% had some high school but no diploma
- 19% were high school graduates
- 21% had some college but no degree
- 7% had an associate degree
- 23% had completed a bachelor's degree or higher

In 2000, 12% of California residents age 25 and over reported that they had completed less than a ninth-grade education, compared to 19% in Monterey County. This information is compelling, and speaks to the potential need for literacy services in the county— since persons with less than a 9th grade education are likely to be in need of, and most likely to benefit from available literacy services.

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED



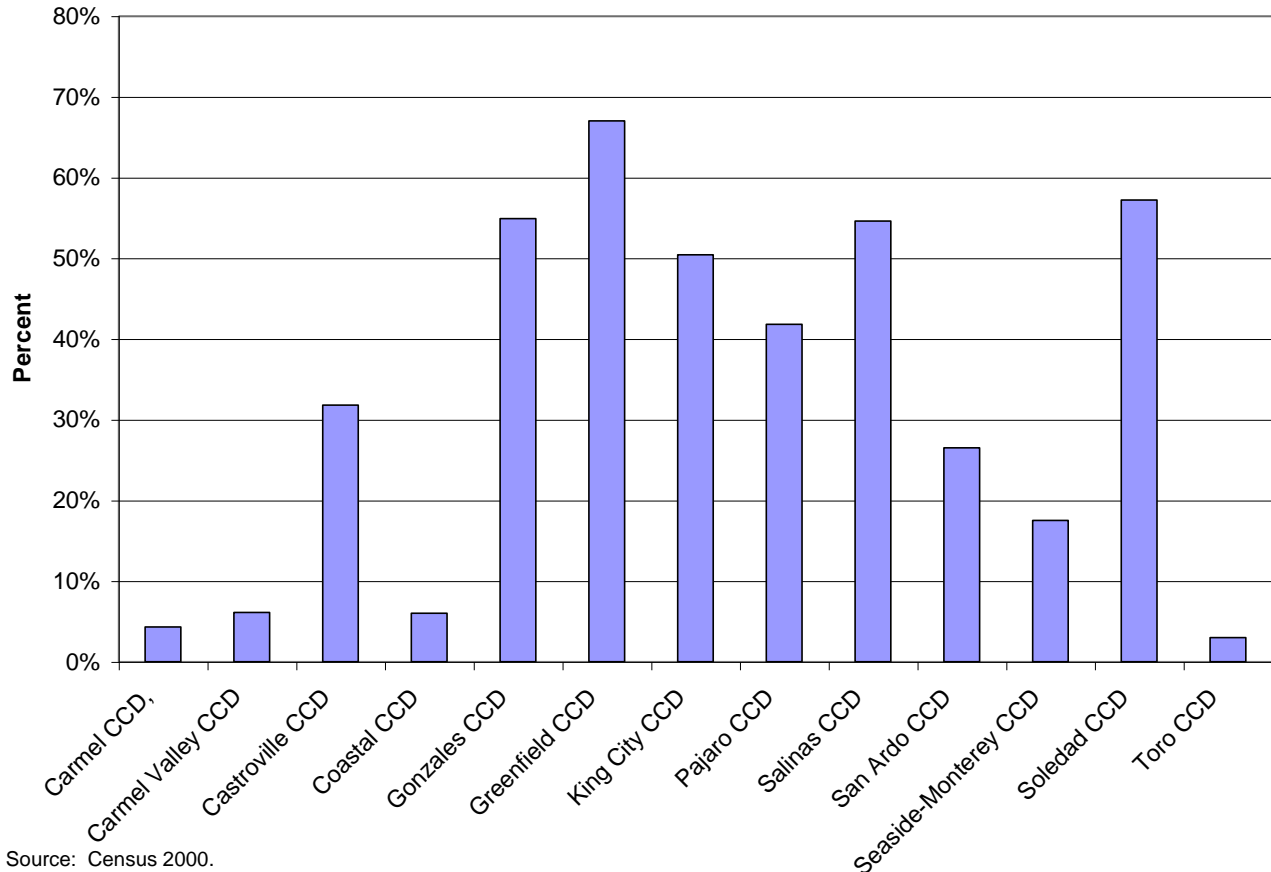
Source: United States Census Bureau, Census 2000

The percentage of Monterey County residents who completed less than a ninth-grade education was 3% higher in 2000 than in 1990. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of residents who graduated from high school increased by 2%, and the percentage of residents who had a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 1%.

The percentage of California residents who reported that they were high school graduates was 20%, similar to the 19% reported in Monterey County. In Monterey County, 23% of residents reported that they had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 27% statewide.

The following graph illustrates the percentage of Monterey County population, 25 and over, that has not received a high school diploma or GED in each community.

Percentage of Adults Over 25 That Do Not Have a High School Diploma or GED.

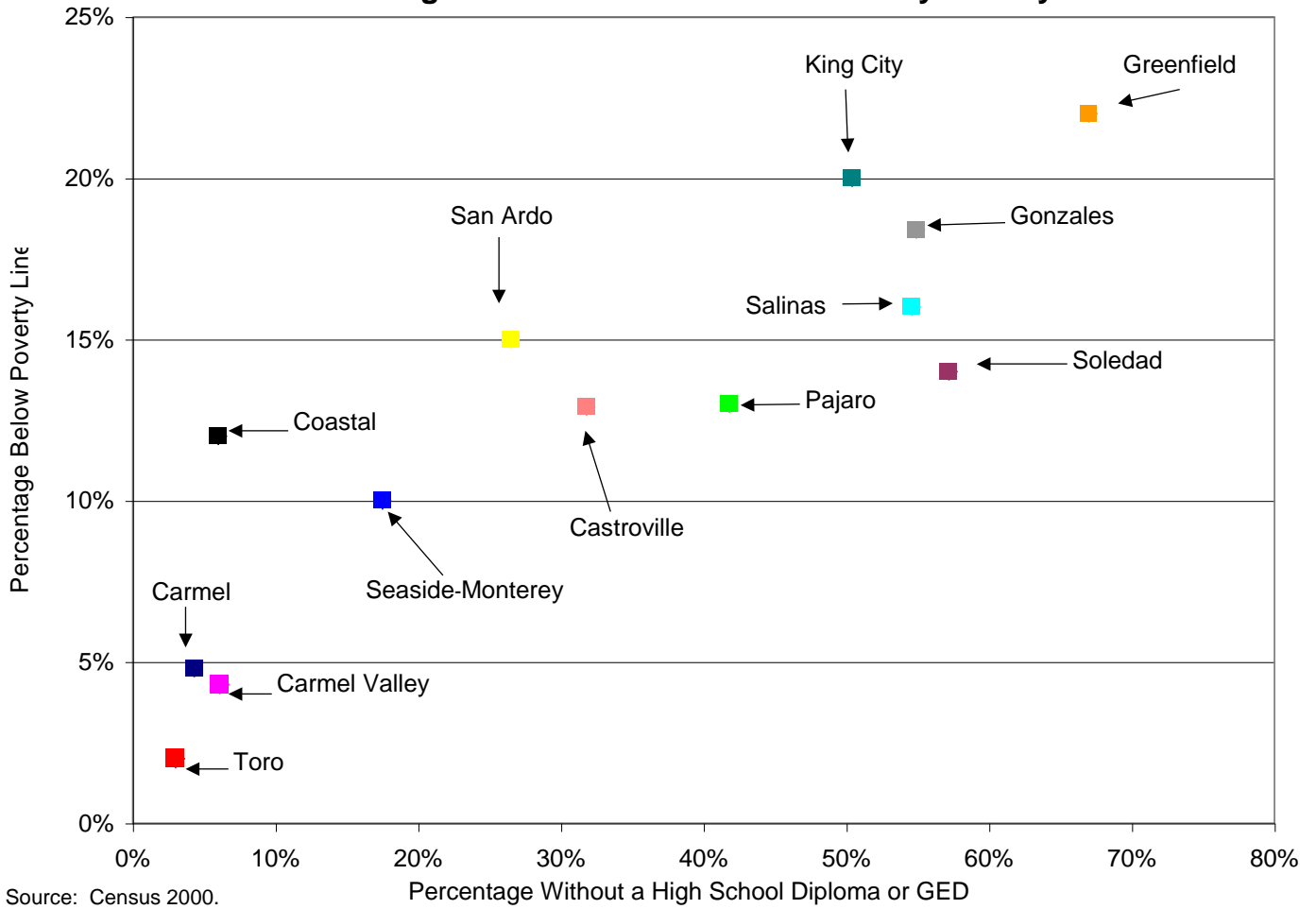


Source: Census 2000.

The above graph shows that many South County communities have significant percentage of populations who have not graduated from high school. The following communities have the highest percentage of their population without a high school degree:

- Greenfield: 67% of the population has not achieved a high school degree or the equivalency.
- Soledad: 57% of the population has not achieved a high school degree or the equivalency.
- Gonzales: 55% of the population has not achieved a high school degree or the equivalency.
- Salinas: 55% of the population has not achieved a high school degree or the equivalency.

Percentage of Residents Without a High School Diploma or GED Versus Percentage of Residents Below the Poverty Line by CCD



Part II: Population-Based Language and Literacy Data

Introduction

This section of the report presents available population-based data on language and literacy in Monterey County. The intent of this section is to quantitatively describe the language and literacy characteristics of Monterey County's population. In particular, it should be useful in estimating the potential need or demand for literacy services, and designing services to fit the particular characteristics of the community it serves.

In reading this section one must keep in mind the particular limitations of the data presented. First, the National Adult Literacy Survey was conducted in 1992, and the demographic characteristics of the county have changed considerably in the last decade, so the results may not be representative of the current population. Second, the U.S. Census data does not address literacy among English speaking households. As a result, there is an absence of local data on the literacy levels of English-only speaking persons in the county. Similarly, the U.S. Census does not provide data on the literacy levels of persons who speak a language other than English in their primary language. For example, data is not available on Spanish language literacy levels among Spanish speaking persons.

The Census does collect self-assessed English literacy information from persons who speak a language other than English. This measurement shows how the residents themselves view their own literacy capabilities, however it may not be a measurement of actual literacy skills. A host of social factors may influence individuals to assess themselves inaccurately, either too low or too high. For example, cultural and native language literacy may play a role in developing different assumptions and understandings about what it means to speak English. Therefore, this measurement can best be understood as a proxy to adult literacy. Despite this limitation, the Census self-assessment provides valuable information on the magnitude of adult English illiteracy.

1992 National Adult Literacy Survey

The Adult Education Amendments of 1988 required the U.S. Department of Education to submit a report to Congress defining literacy and measuring the extent of literacy among the adult American population. In 1992, the U.S. department of education surveyed 13,600 individuals age 16 and older throughout the country; to complete a concurrent California State Adult literacy survey, and additional 1,000 adult Californians were surveyed. From the survey results and analysis, 28,977 Monterey County residents were statistically estimated to be at low literacy levels.

According to the survey estimates, African-American adult men were 0.3% and African American women were 0.4% of the estimated population with low literacy skills. Asian/Other men and women were 2% and 3%, respectively. Hispanic/Latino men were 49% of population with low literacy skills, and Hispanic/Latino women were 42% of the population with low literacy skills. White men were 3% of the population with low literacy skills and white women were 1%.

Another literacy survey similar to the 1992 survey was conducted in 2003 by the U.S. Department of Education, and the results should be available soon.

Language

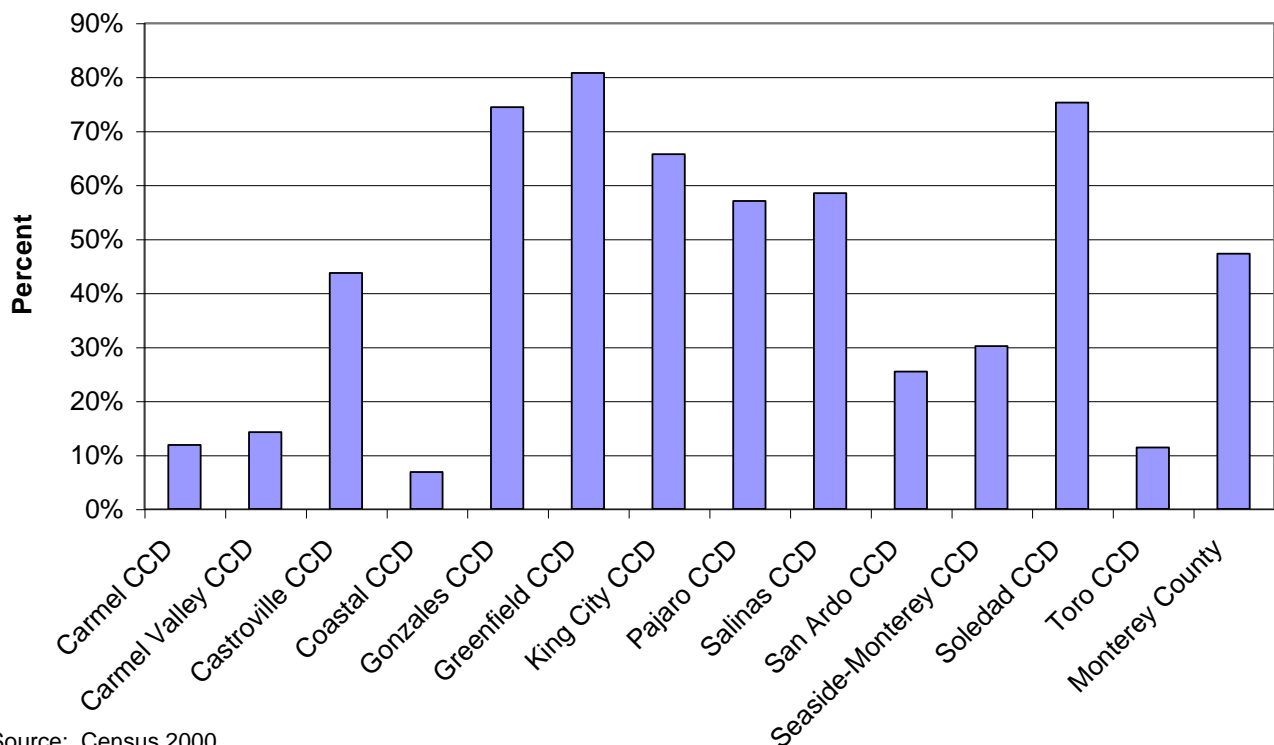
According to 2000 U.S. Census data, 53% of Monterey County residents age five and older indicated that English was the only language spoken at home. The remaining 47% indicated that they spoke some other language either in addition to English or as their only language. Of those who spoke a language other than English, 84% spoke Spanish, 9% spoke Asian or Pacific Island languages, and 7% spoke other Indo-European languages.

In Monterey County, 36% of residents spoke a language other than English at home in 1990, compared to 47% in 2000. Among residents who spoke a language other than English at home, the percentage speaking Spanish rose from 75% in 1990 to 84% in 2000. The percentage of residents who reported speaking Asian or Pacific Island languages declined, from 14% in 1990 to 9% in 2000.

The graph below shows:

- The number of adults in each CCD that speak a language other than English at home, as a percentage of that CCD's population.

Population that Speaks a Language Other Than English At Home by CCD

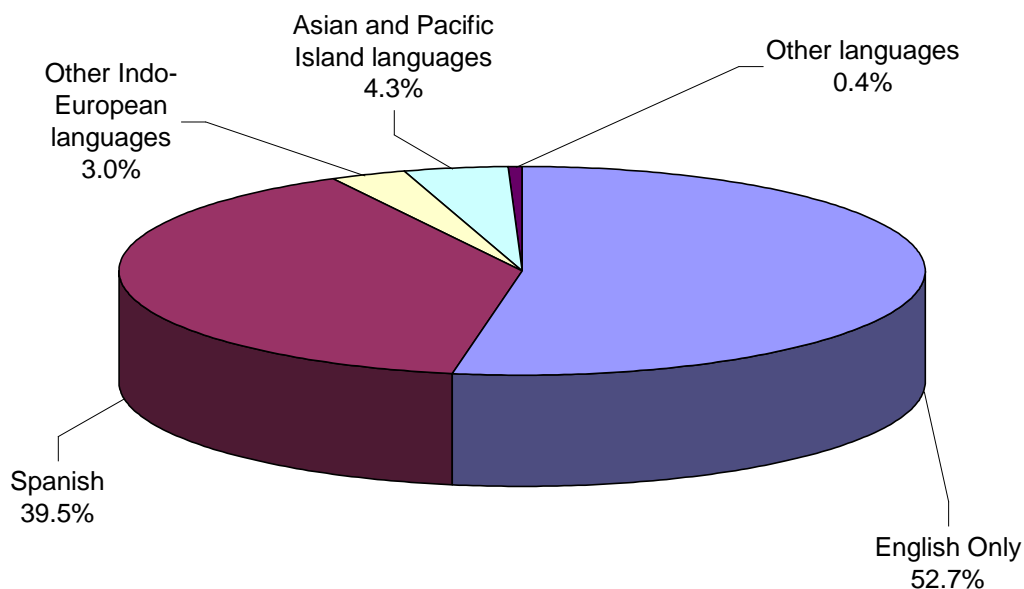


Source: Census 2000.

The Greenfield, Gonzales, Soledad, King City, Pajaro, and Salinas CCDs all report more than 50% of their residents spoke a language other than English at home. Less than 20% of the populations of the Carmel, Carmel Valley, Coastal and Toro CCDs spoke a language other than English at home.

Statewide, 61% of residents spoke only English at home in 2000, compared to 53% in Monterey County. This indicates that, compared with residents statewide, a lower percentage of Monterey County residents spoke English only.

LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME



As reported above, 53% of persons age 5 and over in Monterey County speak English only. Of the remaining 47% that speaks a language other than English, 84% speak Spanish, 9% speak an Asian-Pacific Island language, 7% speak a European language, and less than 1% speak other languages. These percentages vary considerably across the three age groups reported in the Census 2000 data. Among persons aged 5 to 17 that spoke a language other than English, 93% reported that they spoke Spanish, compared to 83% of such persons aged 18 to 64, and 48% of persons aged 65 and over.

Literacy Self Assessment

The Census 2000 asked respondents that indicated they spoke a language another than English at home, how well they spoke English. The following table displays responses as a percent of total Monterey County residents, within three age groups: 5 to 17, 18 to 64, and 65+.

HOW WELL DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?	% OF POPULATION WITHIN AGE GROUPS		
	5 TO 17	18 TO 64	65+
Very well	49.8%	40.8%	44.2%
Well	27.4%	17.4%	22.9%
Not well	15.8%	18.9%	16.6%
Not at all.	7.0%	22.8%	16.3%

Literacy Self Assessment: Age 18 to 64

As noted above, the Census 2000 asked respondents that indicated they spoke a language another than English at home, how well they spoke English. This information can be broken down to see the responses by CCD for adults 18 to 64. The following table shows the percent of total residents aged 18 to 64, who reported they spoke a language other than English at home, by CCD and the percent of total responses in each category of the residents aged 18 to 64 that reported they spoke a language other than English at home, by CCD.

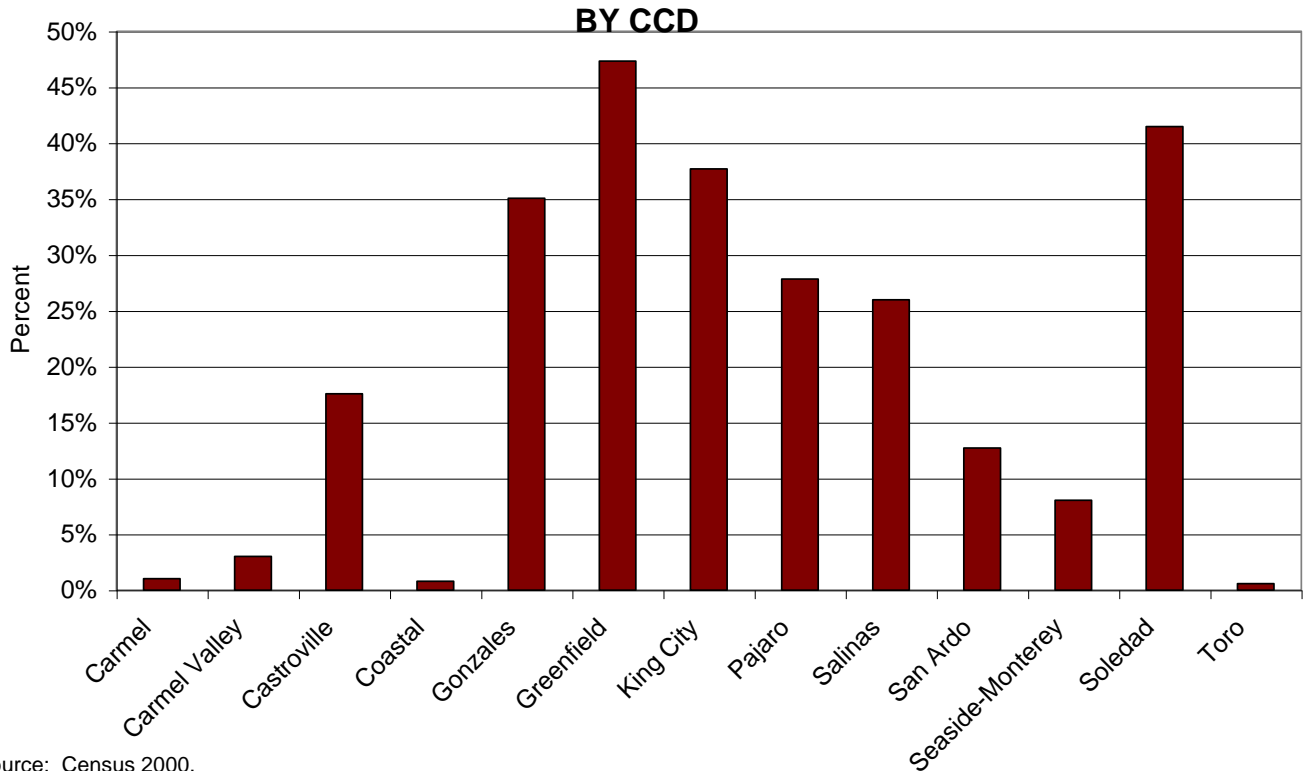
	Percent of residents (age 18-64) who reported they speak a language other than English at home				
		Very well	Well	Not well	Not at all.
Carmel	13.6%	72.7%	19.9%	6.1%	1.4%
Carmel Valley	16.2%	66.1%	15.3%	16.1%	2.5%
Castroville	43.5%	40.4%	19.3%	20.5%	19.9%
Coastal	7.3%	75.4%	13.8%	10.8%	0.0%
Gonzales	73.2%	33.3%	18.8%	22.8%	25.1%
Greenfield	83.2%	29.8%	13.3%	23.3%	33.6%
King City	66.6%	30.4%	12.9%	18.6%	38.0%
Pajaro	56.1%	37.2%	13.2%	19.4%	30.2%
Salinas	58.9%	38.8%	17.2%	18.5%	25.6%
San Ardo	25.7%	36.0%	14.4%	20.2%	29.3%
Seaside-Monterey	31.4%	52.4%	22.0%	18.9%	6.7%
Soledad	77.8%	35.4%	11.4%	19.0%	34.3%
Toro	12.1%	71.8%	23.4%	4.8%	0.0%

One method to better understand this data, and to estimate the potential need for literacy services, is to identify who speaks a language other than English at home and who self assess their English abilities as low. To estimate the overall English literacy level rates of the community we multiply the percent of residents who reported they spoke a language other than English at home and indicated they spoke English not very well or not all. The communities that had the highest combinations of adults aged 18 to 64 that speak a language other than English and who indicated that they spoke English not well or not at all:

- Greenfield: 47% of adults 18 to 64 (83.2% * (23.3% + 33.6%))
- Soledad 41% of adults 18 to 64
- King City 37% of adults 18 to 64

The lowest levels were in the areas of Carmel, Carmel Valley, Coastal, and Toro where less than five percent of adults aged 18 to 64 speak a language other than English and who indicated that they spoke English not well or not at all. The graph below presents the rates for all Monterey County CCDs.

**ADULTS (18-64) WHO SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH
AT HOME AND SPEAKS ENGLISH "NOT WELL" OR "NOT AT ALL"**



Literacy Self Assessment: Age 65 and Over

The following tables shows:

- The percent of total residents age 65 and over, which reported they spoke a language other than English at home, by community (CCD).
- The percent of total responses in each category of the residents age 65 and over that reported they spoke a language other than English at home, by community (CCD).

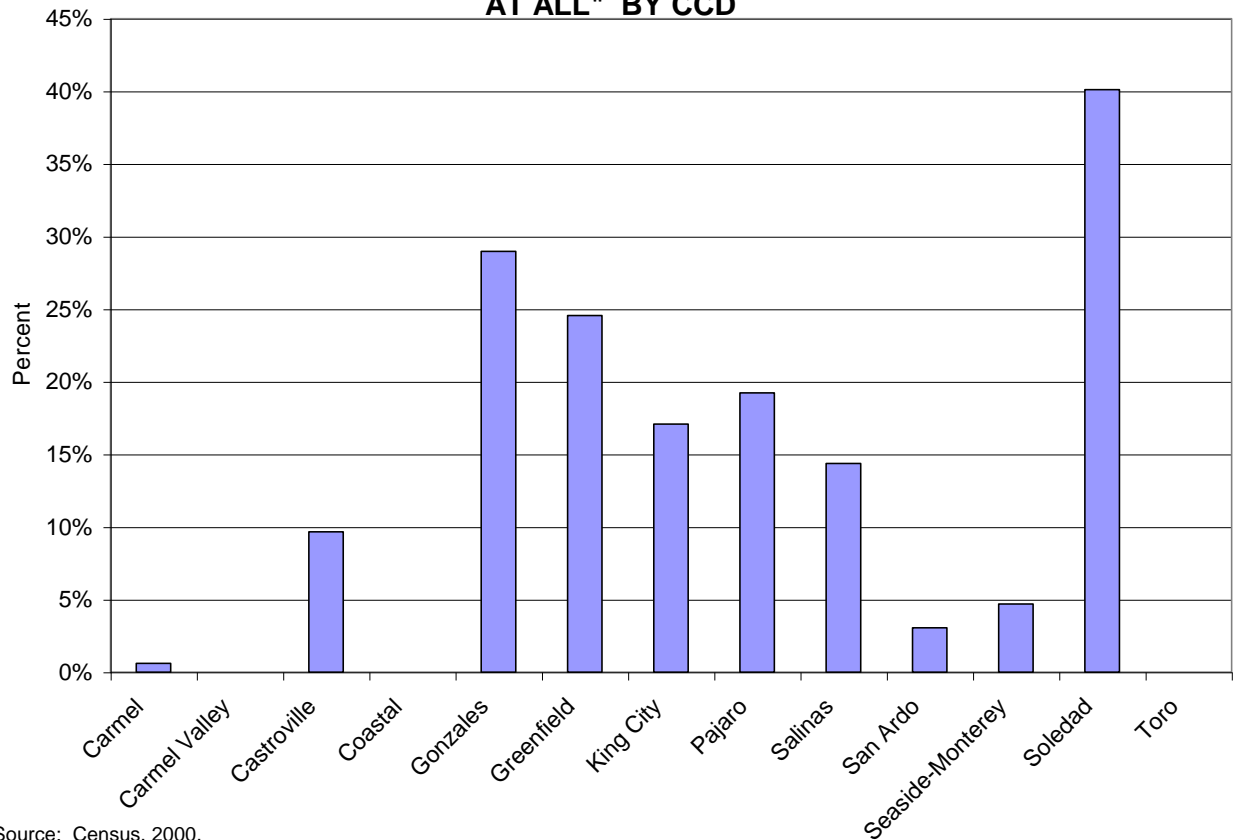
	Percent of residents age 65+ who reported they spoke a language other than English at home	SPEAK ENGLISH			
		Very well	Well	Not well	Not at all.
Carmel	10.0%	71.7%	22.2%	3.3%	2.7%
Carmel Valley	6.0%	87.1%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Castroville	30.0%	44.1%	23.7%	15.4%	16.8%
Coastal	7.8%	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Gonzales	60.0%	31.9%	19.8%	13.0%	35.3%
Greenfield	52.7%	34.1%	19.3%	15.3%	31.3%
King City	40.3%	27.4%	30.2%	24.1%	18.3%
Pajaro	41.0%	30.0%	23.1%	22.9%	24.0%
Salinas	10.9%	127.8%	74.2%	68.0%	63.8%
San Ardo	8.5%	44.0%	20.0%	8.0%	28.0%
Seaside-Monterey	23.5%	56.3%	23.7%	13.9%	6.1%
Soledad	66.3%	19.9%	19.6%	17.9%	42.6%
Toro	11.9%	63.5%	36.5%	0.0%	0.0%

The communities that had the highest numbers of adult respondents aged 65 and over who indicated they spoke a language other than English at home and reported they did not speak English *well or not at all* were:

- Soledad 40% of adults 65 and over
- Gonzales 29% of adults 65 and over
- Greenfield 25% of adults 65 and over

The estimated adult population aged 65 and older in each CCD in the county that spoke a language other than English at home and reported they did not speak English *well or not at all* were is graphed below.

ADULTS (65 and Older) WHO SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME AND SPEAKS ENGLISH "NOT WELL" OR "NOT AT ALL" BY CCD



Source: Census, 2000.

Linguistic Isolation by Household Language

According to the Census definition, a linguistically isolated household is one in which no member 14 years and over (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English "very well". In other words, a linguistically isolated household is a household in which all members of the household age 14 and over have at least some difficulty with English.

In Monterey County, approximately 30% of Spanish speaking households are considered linguistically isolated by this definition. The communities of King City (35%), Salinas (32%), and Soledad (32%) had the highest percent of linguistically isolated Spanish language households; while the Toro (9%) and Carmel Valley (13%) areas had the lowest percentages.

In households where Asian-Pacific Island languages are spoken, approximately 24% are considered linguistically isolated. The communities of Gonzales (55%) and Soledad (41%) had the highest percent of linguistically isolated Asian-Pacific Island language households; while the Greenfield (0%) and Coastal (0%) areas had the lowest percentages.

For the entire county, 11% of European language households in the county are considered linguistically isolated. The communities of Greenfield (47%), and King City (30%) had the highest percent of linguistically isolated European language households, while the Carmel Valley (0%) and Pajaro (5%) areas had the lowest percentages.

LINGUISTIC ISOLATION BY AREA AND LANGUAGE SPOKEN

Area	Language			
	Spanish language	European languages	Asian Pacific Island languages	Other languages
Carmel CCD	14.7%	8.9%	25.5%	14.9%
Carmel Valley CCD	12.9%	0.0%	24.4%	0.0%
Castroville CCD	22.8%	6.7%	19.3%	0.0%
Coastal CCD	15.8%	13.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Gonzales CCD	26.6%	23.8%	54.8%	0.0%
Greenfield CCD	31.4%	47.1%	0.0%	0.0%
King City CCD	35.2%	29.6%	35.7%	32.0%
Pajaro CCD	30.3%	5.1%	22.9%	0.0%
Salinas CCD	31.7%	10.0%	22.6%	15.0%
San Ardo CCD	29.9%	10.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Seaside-Monterey CCD	30.1%	11.6%	24.4%	7.8%
Soledad CCD	31.6%	7.5%	40.9%	0.0%
Toro CCD	8.7%	7.4%	14.9%	0.0%
Monterey County Totals	30.5%	11.0%	23.8%	9.5%

Critical Indicators

The following section provides a snapshot of the key Census 2000 data on demographics, economics, and language/literacy by county subdivision.

The U.S Census reported the following information in 2000:

Carmel

- 1.3% of adults (over 25) living in the Carmel CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 2.7% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 5% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 14% of residents, ages 18-64, spoke a language other than English at home and 8% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not well or not at all.

Carmel Valley

- 2.7% of adults (over 25) living in the Carmel Valley CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 3.4% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 4% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 16% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 19% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Castroville

- 20% of adults (over 25) living in the Castroville CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 12% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 13% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 44% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 41% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Coastal

- 3% of adults (over 25) living in the Coastal CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 4% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 12% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 7% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 11% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Gonzales

- Almost 40% of adults (over 25) living in the Gonzales CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 16% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 18% of individuals living in the Gonzales CCD fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 73% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 48% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Greenfield

- 49% of adults (over 25) living in the Greenfield CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 18% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 22% of individuals living in Greenfield CCD fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 83% of adults age 18 to 64 living in Greenfield CCD spoke a language other than English at home and 47% of these individuals self reported that they spoke English not very well or at all.

King City

- 35% of adults (over 25) living in the King City CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 15% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 20% of individuals living in King City CCD fell below the federal poverty level.
- 67% of adults age 18 to 64 living in King City CCD spoke a language other than English at home and 37% of these individuals self reported that they spoke English not very well or at all.

Pajaro

- 30% of adults (over 25) living in the Pajaro CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 12% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 13% of individuals living in the Pajaro CCD fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 56% of adults age 18 to 64 living in the Pajaro CCD spoke a language other than English at home and 47% of these individuals self reported that they spoke English not very well or at all.

Salinas

- 38% of adults (over 25) living in the Salinas CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 17% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 16% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 59% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 45% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

San Ardo

- 12% of adults (over 25) living in the San Ardo CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 15% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 15% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 26% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 49% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Seaside-Monterey

- 7% of adults (over 25 living in the Seaside-Monterey CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 11% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 10% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 31% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 26% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Soledad

- 43% of adults (over 25 living in the Soledad CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 14% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 14% of individuals living in Soledad CCD fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 78% of adults age 18 to 64 living in Soledad CCD spoke a language other than English at home and 61% of these individuals self reported that they spoke English not very well or at all.

Toro

- 1% of adults (over 25 living in the Toro CCD achieved under a 9th grade education.
- 2% of adults (over 25) achieved 9th to 12th grade but do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 2% of individuals fell below the federal poverty threshold.
- 12% of adults age 18 to 64 spoke a language other than English at home and 5% of these individuals self reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

Synopsis

This report presents information on Monterey County adult English literacy and other social and economic factors that often surround the condition of illiteracy. It appears in this information that outcomes of low education and poverty are associated with individuals who report speaking a language other than English at home and speaking English not very well or at all. In particular, educational outcomes may be a contributing factor to the result of individuals reporting a low capacity of English. This can be seen in Greenfield where 49% of adults have received a 9th grade education or less. Out of the 83% of adults in Greenfield that reported they spoke a language other than English at home, 57% of these individuals reported they spoke English not very well or at all.

The factors of low education, poverty, and low self-assessments of English capacity cluster in the South County areas of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City. The community outside of South County that also had poor outcomes for poverty, education, and self-assessment literacy was Pajaro in North County. It is important to note that these communities have a higher concentration of immigrant communities, where there may or not be adequate literacy in native languages.

Part III: Focus Group and On-line Survey Data

Another important element in this report on community literacy is new primary data collected from local community literacy service providers. Two methods were used to collect data from local providers, a focus group and an on-line survey.

Focus Groups Overview

As part of the plan to collect information regarding Community Literacy, a focus group consisting of Adult Literacy program administrators in Monterey County was held on October 8, 2003. The purpose of the focus group was to gather perspectives from administrators regarding challenges their literacy programs have in relationship to access, service barriers, program and policy needs. In attendance were five individuals representing four programs in Monterey County. The meeting was facilitated by Tellus/Díganos and was divided into two segments of questions.

The first segment consisted of questions that focused on program and policy issues faced by administrators of literacy services. The second segment addressed community and consumer issues. The following summarizes major points and areas discussed by the focus group participants in response to the questions discussed in each segment.

Focus Group Segment I – Program and Policy Issues

The first focus group question asked participants to list at least three major challenges/issues confronting Community literacy programs. The following responses were provided:

- A lack of funding exists which severely curtails their program's ability to serve the community, and to attract and retain qualified staff.
- There is a fundamental lack of understanding among policy makers regarding the problem of literacy in the community. This lack of understanding translates into policies of funding literacy services that is narrow and categorical. The categorical nature of funding does not allow literacy programs to establish a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system that would benefit consumers.
- There is a lack of continuity of services especially for populations residing in rural areas of Monterey County.
- There is a need for a more coordinated approach to services among local agencies in Monterey County.
- There is a need for literacy services for Spanish speakers. (Spanish Literacy)

The second question asked focus group participants to identify and describe at least three major program/policy needs for Community literacy programs. The following responses were provided:

- There is a need for more research to assist policy makers in decision making for funding programs. In particular, research on the literacy needs of populations with learning

disabilities is critical. Key research findings must be widely disseminated to educate policy makers and the general public.

- Policy makers must view literacy programs as a priority and core service.
- There is a need to increase support services for adults and families with special needs.
(E.g. learning disabilities)
- There currently exists a lack of coordination among service providers which contributes to the fragmentation of services
- Vocational skills programs must be given a higher status in K-12 settings as a positive alternative for individuals that may not want to attend college or university programs.
- Current policy needs to be adapted and revised to allow funding of literacy programs for Spanish speaking populations.

The third question in this segment asked participants what they would propose as potential solutions to the challenges and needs they identified? The following responses were provided:

- Develop better assessment tools to measure educational levels of immigrants.
- Expand and promote vocational career opportunities as a quality option for students and adults.
- Work locally to coordinate services and create a database of information identifying programs and populations served by geographic region.
- Work to reduce the categorical nature of funding and emphasize to policy makers the importance of local decision-making and control in use of resources.
- Work with policy makers to restructure allocation and distribution of State funding to accurately consider local and regional differences in population sizes.
- Encourage more public/private collaborations and solicit agricultural industry and other key employment sectors to be an active partner and contributor to local literacy efforts.

Focus Group Segment II- Community and Consumer Issues

For this segment of the focus group discussion, the first question asked participants to describe what they see as the most common misperceptions among the community about literacy programs? The following responses were provided:

General Program Misperceptions

- Literacy programs only teach reading.
- Literacy classes are assumed to be offered primarily in public libraries.
- Continuing education is only for children and not parents.

- Literacy programs are only for non-English speakers and new arrival immigrants.
- Literacy is a problem for the educational and school system to solve.
- There is not a significant literacy problem among adults in our community.

General Misperceptions about consumers of literacy services

- Students are not motivated as learners and represent only low-income populations.
- The majority of students are immigrants.

The next question asked participants to identify and describe the most significant barriers faced by the community and consumers in accessing literacy programs. The following responses were provided:

- Many people are ashamed to admit that they need assistance because there is a “stigma” attached to those who seek literacy services. The stigma serves as a barrier for people that can use these services.
- There is a lack of services in rural areas and for languages other than English.
- Transportation and childcare are major barriers for people to attend programs.
- There are cultural/gender barriers preventing some women from seeking literacy services. (ignore these changes. I erroneously tried to correct quoted responses.)
- There are inadequate assessment services to identify people in need of literacy programs.
- There are limited outreach activities and public information available to assist people in locating literacy services and programs.

The final question asked participants what could be done in working with consumers and the community to overcome barriers and improve local literacy programs? The following responses were provided:

- Major media and public awareness campaigns are needed to present the problem and also focus on literacy in a positive light with local success stories and the benefits to individuals, families and society from quality programs.
- Targeted outreach to local racial, cultural, ethnic and special needs populations including undocumented immigrants and homeless people.
- Literacy programs must be flexible in their schedules and locations of service and adapt to the needs of the various communities and targeted populations.
- Programs must be coordinated to provide a more holistic (comprehensive) approach to service delivery.

- Establish training programs for volunteers to promote literacy and assist in outreach and service activities.
- Health Literacy is a topic to include in the general literacy programs available in our community.

Focus Group Summary

The focus group discussion and responses indicate some themes and issues that consistently emerge. In the program and policy arena, participants in the focus group concur that legislators and policy makers require additional research, data and information to increase their knowledge of the scope and complexity of the literacy problems in our community. Focus group participants believe this lack of information results in policies and programs that do not encompass the multiple needs of the community accessing literacy services. In their view, policy makers must view literacy as a core need and priority service for provision to local residents. It must be comprehensive and linked to other local community support services.

Another area of consensus among the participants was the importance of providing additional literacy services to rural County residents. The lack of transportation and program sites contribute to the problem of ensuring access to those most in need of these services in the rural communities.

An additional topic area of concern among participants was the lack of literacy programs that service Spanish-speaking populations. It was their belief that policy change is needed to allow for funding these types of program for local residents.

There was consistency among some of the ideas that emerged through the group regarding solutions to the challenges and barriers identified among Community Literacy programs. These included revising policies and transitioning categorical and narrow funding sources into a system that emphasizes comprehensive strategies to improve and support community literacy.

In the category of general misperceptions that the public may have about literacy programs and the consumers who access these services the common themes were: the perception among the public that literacy programs are only for immigrants and non-English speakers; literacy programs only teach reading; and literacy programs are primarily available through public libraries.

In the area of consumer misperceptions, the major issues cited by focus group participants were that the public believes that students attending literacy classes are not self motivated and represent primarily low socioeconomic income groups.

To reduce the level of misperception and lack of understanding among the general public regarding literacy programs and the consumers who attend them, focus group participants believe community wide media, public awareness and educational campaigns would be of most value. It was recommended that these campaigns focus on the positive aspects and benefits of community literacy programs and emphasize success stories and the diversity of consumers who participate in local programs.

On-Line Survey Summary and Analysis

In conjunction with the Community Action Partnership, Tellus/Díganos developed and implemented an on-line survey of community literacy service providers that addressed issues of challenges, barriers, and collaboration in improving community literacy. The survey was first launched during a ten-day window in December 2003, and once again in January 2004. There were a total of 11 responses from community literacy services providers across Monterey County. Given the small number of responses, the survey results will not necessarily be representative of literacy services providers in the county, and readers should be cautious in interpreting the results. The complete survey results with frequency distributions are provided in the appendix.

While the number of respondents was small, there was considerable variety in roles in their literacy program. The survey was completed by teachers, administrators, assistants, and volunteers (see results for Question 1 in the Appendix). Overall, the respondents reported that they had been working in literacy programs for several years. Only one respondent reported less than 3 years of experience, while 6 of the 11 respondents reported in excess of 10 years experience. Collectively, the survey respondents indicated that they work in most areas of the county. The notable exception appears to be the North County area—there were no respondents that indicated they work in Prunedale, Pajaro, or Castroville.

In response to the question (#4), which asked respondents to rank the challenges to literacy programs that need to be addressed, 55% identified “coordination among service providers” as most important. In addition, 18% identified “increasing the number of volunteers” as the most important challenge and another 45% thought it was the second most important challenge.

When asked (question #5) to rank specific barriers faced by consumers who access literacy services, “inability to speak English” was most frequently ranked as the most important (55%). This is notable in that the very condition that students are trying to improve (their language skills) makes it difficult to access services. The next highest ranked barriers to accessing service were “transportation” and “do not know where to go” with 36% ranking each as most important.³

There was a wide range of responses to the open-ended question (#6) asking respondents to identify one specific recommendation they would make to improve the methods of instruction provided by the programs. However, multiple respondents provided suggestions related to improving bilingual services, improved assessment processes, and funding. The full list of responses is provided in the appendix with the survey results.

There was also a wide range of responses to the next open-ended question (#7) asking respondents to identify one specific recommendation they would make to outreach efforts by literacy services in the community. Several respondents provided recommendations related to creating and working as a network or collaborative of service providers.

On the theme of collaboration, survey respondents were asked to identify, in their view, the importance of participation of various community organizations, agencies and groups in collaborative efforts to address literacy needs (question #8). Survey respondents clearly saw collaboration with all of the 10 categories of organizations as important, strongly important, or

³ Respondents were able to rank multiple items the same if they believed they were equally important, therefore percentages reported will sum to more than 100%.

essential. Only the hospitals, and colleges/universities provided responses indicating that their participation in collaborative literacy efforts were only somewhat important or not essential. The public school system (82%) and public libraries (82%) received the highest percent of respondents indicating that collaboration with these groups is essential.

The final open-ended question (#9) asked respondents to identify, in their opinion, the greatest barrier to increasing collaborative efforts among community literacy providers in the county. As was the case with the other open-ended questions, the responses were quite diverse.

However, a number of respondents identified resource constraints such as staff shortages and limited funding as the greatest barrier to collaboration.

Part IV: Available Program Data

The local adult schools, community colleges, libraries, and other literacy programs in the county help individuals of all literacy levels to improve their language skills. With help from some of the Adult Literacy programs in the County, a portrait of some available services is presented below. The sample includes three local adults schools, one library literacy program and two public community college ESL and basic skills improvement programs,. While the data presented below represents only a sample of the programs in the county, it reflects a strong cross section of the different types of literacy services available to, and utilized by county residents.

SALINAS ADULT SCHOOL⁴

For the 2003-2004 academic year, Salinas Adult School reported that they provided instruction to a total of 4,260 students. Of these students, 51% were men and 49% were women. Approximately 57% of the enrolled students were under 30 years of age. The majority (75%) of students were enrolled in the ESL program. Among students overall, 48% indicated they were employed, 32% were unemployed, 18% were out of the labor force, and 1% were retired. Most of the students served by the Salinas Adult School (76%) indicated less than a high school education, while only 15% had a High school diploma or GED. Most (95%) of the students identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino in ethnicity, and Spanish was the native language for 90% of the students.

Adult Basic Education Program:

For the Adult Basic Education program, student enrollment was 687. In terms of gender, 48% were men and 52% were women. The average age was 27, and 76% of the students were under 30 years old. In terms of employment status, 53% indicated they were unemployed, while 42% held a job. The majority of enrolled students (74%) did not have a high school diploma or equivalent. When asked about their ethnicity/heritage, 78% indicated Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Approximately 55% of the students were native English speakers, and 43% were native Spanish speakers. When asked what they hoped to gain by taking the ABE class 52% of the students reported obtaining a high school diploma or GED as their primary goal for course enrollment, 16% wanted to improve their basic skills, 3% wanted to improve their English skills, 4% hoped to enroll in college, 4% hoped to get a job, and 2% took the course to achieve a personal goal.

ESL Program:

There were 3,194 students enrolled in the English as a Second Language course during the 2002-2003 school year, with 52% of students being men and 48% women. The average age for the students was 31 and 55% were under 30 years old. In terms of employment status, 52% of the students were employed, 31% were unemployed, 21% were out of the labor force, and 1% was retired. Approximately 75% of the students indicated they do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Most (98%) of the students reported Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, and 98% indicated they were native Spanish speakers. Among ESL students, 43% enrolled at the beginning level of ESL instruction.

SOLEDAD ADULT SCHOOL

⁴ The data included are for the 2003-2004 academic year, and were collected on 1/20/2004. As a result, the data may not capture all students enrolled during the 2003-2004 school year.

From July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003, Soledad Adult School served 330 students from the surrounding area. In terms of gender, 37% were men and 63 % were women. Most of the students (94%) were enrolled in ESL classes. Among enrolled students, 98% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino, and 96% indicated they were native Spanish speakers. Nearly one-half (46%) of the students were under age 30. Thirty percent were employed, 59% were unemployed, and 11% were out of the labor force. Approximately 76% of the students reported that they do not have a high school diploma or GED.

Adult Basic Education Program:

The Soledad Adult School provided instruction to 21 students in the ABE program, of which 5 were men and 16 were women. A majority of the students (14) indicated they were unemployed, and only one was employed. All students identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino in ethnicity. Most of the enrolled students (18 of 21) indicated they did not have a high school diploma or GED. When asked about their primary goal for the program, 27% wanted to improve their basic skills, 36% wanted to improve their English skills, 12 % hoped to earn a GED, 9% hoped to get a job, and the remainder (16%) did not specify a goal.

ESL Program:

Soledad Adult School reported an enrollment of 309 students in the ESL program. In terms of gender, 38% were men and 62% were women. Among ESL students, 98% identified themselves as being of Hispanic/Latino origin, and 96% of students reported Spanish as their native language. In terms of employment status, 32% of the enrolled students were employed, 57% were unemployed, and 11% were out of the labor force. Nearly one-half (47%) of the students were under 30 years of age. Approximately 75% of students indicated they did not have a high school diploma or GED. When asked about their primary goal for the program, 28% of the students wanted to improve their basic skills, 64% wanted to improve their English skills, 2% wanted to earn a GED, 2% hoped to get a job, and 3% were taking the class to achieve a personal goal. Among ESL students, 49% enrolled at the beginning level of ESL instruction.

SEASIDE ADULT SCHOOL

The Seaside Adult School reported an enrollment of 1,155 students who indicated their primary goal was to improve their English skills. Three classes, the Adult Basic Education class (ABE), the English as a Second Language (ESL) class, and the Literacy Level ESL class, help the students achieve this goal. Language instruction covers four key areas: Reading, listening, speaking and writing. The Comprehensive Adult School Assessment System (CASAS) test is given to all enrolled students, before classes start, to assess the baseline student skill level. After approximately 80 hours of instruction, the students receive the CASAS posttest to measure student improvement. The student, teacher and class analyze the posttest results. The ABE and ESL tests are scored on a different scale and should not be compared.

Mean pretest scores provided by the Seaside adult school present a profile of the average student enrolled in the ABE, ESL and Literacy Level ESL programs. The mean pretest CASAS score for students in the ABE class was 233.39. According to the CASAS scale, the mean ABE class score correlates to Advanced Basic skills level: The student can handle most routine reading, writing and computational tasks related to their life roles. Persons at the upper level can begin GED preparation. The mean pretest CASAS score for ESL students was 200.78. According to the CASAS scale, the mean ESL class score correlates to Low Intermediate ESL skills level: A student at this level can satisfy basic survival needs and routine social demands. The mean pretest CASAS score for the Literacy Level ESL class was 181.02, which correlates

to Low Beginning ESL skills level. A student at this level can recognize and write the alphabet and has very limited verbal communication skills.

MONTEREY COUNTY FREE LIBRARIES

The Monterey County Free Library runs a literacy service that currently serves 78 adults : 52 women and 25 men. The students primarily reside in Seaside, while 2 students come from Marina and 5 come from the Greenfield area. Nearly all (90%) of the students are employed and the remaining 10% reported a combination of retired, stay at home mothers, or disabled. In terms of race/ethnicity, 71% of the students are Hispanic, 15% are Asian, 3% are white, 3% are African American or Black, and the remainder was unknown. In terms of age, 15% of the students are under 30 years of age, 37% are between 30 and 39 years, 21% are between 40 and 49, and 20% are over 50 years old. The project offers one-on-one tutoring for adult learners in the program that reinforces the personal goals identified by the learner. The program also concurrently supports learners that are enrolled in other literacy programs at local adult schools, community colleges or other certificate programs.

LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE ESL PROGRAM DATA

MONTEREY PENINSULA COLLEGE:

Monterey Peninsula College provided instruction to 1,084 students in the ESL program for the 2002-2003 academic year. Ten percent of the students were enrolled in the beginning ESL (level one) classes, 22% were in ESL level two classes, 29% were in level three classes, 18% were in level four classes, and 22% were in highest level (five) ESL classes. The total number of enrolled ESL students decreased from the 1,165 that enrolled in the 2001-2002 academic year, which represents a 7% decline in enrollment. From academic year 2001-2002 to 2002-2003, student enrollment in ESL level one classes, level two classes, and level three classes declined by 34%, 27% and 14%, respectively. For the same time period, enrollment in the ESL level four classes increased by 26% and by 42% for the ESL level five classes.

HARTNELL COLLEGE:

In the 2002-2003 academic year, Hartnell reported 1,845 students enrolled in ESL classes.⁵ This represents a 13% increase from the 1,637 enrolled for the 2001-2002 academic year. Students with the least knowledge of English were designated Beginning English Learners and enrolled in the ESL 120 class sequence; there were 358 students in 2001-2002 and 397 in 2002-2003. Intermediate English learners were placed in the 130 level classes. And in 2001-2002, 482 students took 130 level classes, and in 2002-2003, 571 students took 130 level classes. The 130 classes had the most students of all the levels. Advanced English Learners were enrolled in the 140 level classes and there were 452 students in 2002-2003, which was down 3% from the 465 enrolled in 2001-2001. The 140 class level was the only one where enrollment declined from the 2001-2002 academic year to the 2002-2003 academic year, the rest increased by more than 10%. The 150 level is the Extended English Practice sequence, for more adept English students. In 2001-2002, there were 237 students, the number increased by

⁵ The preparatory level ESL classes are divided into five levels that teach English to students at different levels of English comprehension. From beginning level to advanced level, the classes are: ESL level 120 (125, 125L, and 127), ESL level 130 (135, 135L, 136, 137, 138), ESL level 140 (145, 145L, 146, 147, 148), ESL level 150 (155, 155L, 158) and ESL 101 (101F and 101FL). The student is placed, based on his/her English ability and skills, in one of the class levels. If the student completes the sequence, he/she is able to take academic classes in English.

34% to 317 in the 2002-2003 academic year. And the capstone ESL level is ESL 101, also known as Grammar and Composition. In 2001-2002, there were 95 students, the enrollment number increased to 108 in the 2002-2003 academic year.

Recommended course placement for ESL learners is determined through counseling and a placement test. In 2002, 616 students took the ESL placement test, and 591 students took the test in 2003. In 2003, 18% of the ESL test-takers were recommended for placement at the 120 level classes, 40% in 130 level classes, 21% in 140 level classes, 18% in level 150 classes and 2% in ESL 101. This illustrates that many of the students coming to Hartnell for ESL classes already have a fundamental understanding of the English language.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE BASIC SKILLS IMPROVEMENT:

The California Community College system tracks and reports the percent of students that take classes to improve their English skills. If a student completes a Basic English skills course and then successfully completes an upper level English course within three years, the student is counted as improved. The table below shows the number of students who completed the Basic English skills class in 1997-1998 academic year as well as the 1998-1999 academic year, as well as the number and percent of them that took an advanced class to further their English skills. The percent improved shows how many students at each college completed an upper level English class within three years of completing the Basic English skills class. Some Community Colleges in Monterey, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties were included because some students living in Monterey County may commute to colleges that were in other counties and were geographically closer.

BASIC ENGLISH SKILLS IMPROVEMENT CLASSES						
	1997/98-1999/00			1998/99-2000/01		
Location	Total English	Improved English	% Improved	Total English	Improved English	% Improved
Hartnell	1,876	673	36%	1,698	610	36%
MPC	2,893	978	34%	3,048	1,122	37%
Cabrillo	1,435	535	37%	1,442	523	36%
Gavilan	1,099	267	24%	1,158	270	23%
California	292,219	74,422	25%	306,053	77,868	25%

For both the 1997-1998 class and the 1998-1999 class, Hartnell and MPC had a greater percent of students with improved English skills than the state as a whole. The total number of Basic English students enrolled at Hartnell declined by 9% from 1997-1998 to 1998-1999; enrollment at MPC increased by 5% in the same time period. The number of students that improved their English skills declined by 9% at Hartnell and increased by 15% at MPC, between the 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 academic years. It is encouraging that many of the local students chose to continue their English literacy education.

Part VI: Data Gaps and Future Research

As mentioned at the onset, this research effort represents a first glimpse on the status of literacy in this county. In this study, we were able to pull together and analyze a variety of existing secondary data sources on literacy and implement two brief primary data collection efforts (focus group and on-line survey). A thorough and thoughtful analysis of the data and information presented in this report is useful not only in advancing our understanding of the status of literacy in Monterey County, but also in identifying our gaps in knowledge. Hopefully, this report provides a useful foundation from which to build the future research agenda on community literacy in Monterey County.

As a result of our research efforts we identified the following data gaps:

- There is an absence of data on the literacy levels of persons that do not speak English as their primary language. This group constitutes a considerable number of Monterey County residents—particularly in the communities of the Salinas Valley. Future research should focus on collecting literacy data on this particular segment of the population.
- Recent data is not available regarding the literacy levels of persons who speak English language only, and this too should be part of future community literacy research efforts.
- The adult school and literacy program data in this report is incomplete since some agencies were not able to provide data within in the time allocated to complete this project. It would be worthwhile to collect complete information on all literacy programs, across a common set of data elements, to demonstrate the total scope and volume of literacy services provided across the county.
- There is an absence of direct information on the factors that prevent persons in need of literacy services from accessing those services. The focus group discussion with program administrators explored barriers and challenges to consumers accessing services, but it would be useful to hear directly from the community.
- The number of respondents to the survey implemented for this report was quite limited, and therefore should be expanded in future studies in order to obtain a sample representative of literacy service providers on community literacy issues.

This certainly does not represent a comprehensive list of data gaps and research recommendations. As you read this report and discuss it with your colleagues you will undoubtedly discover additional gaps in data and develop your own ideas for new study. It is our hope that this study proves useful in stimulating such discussion, and helps focus further attention to improving literacy in Monterey County.

Part VI: Appendix

Report References:

- U.S. National Census, 2000.
- National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992.
- Hartnell Community College, 2004
- Monterey Peninsula Community College, 2004.
- Soledad Adult School, 2004.
- Salinas Adult School, 2004.
- Seaside Adult School, 2004.
- Monterey County Free Libraries, 2004.
- California Community College Chancellor's Office, 2004.

Appendix: On-Line Survey Results

Q.1 Please identify your role in the literacy program:		
Position	Responses	%
Salaried teacher/instructor	3	27%
Volunteer who works with a local literacy	1	9%
Member of an affiliated advisory Group	1	9%
Administrator of a literacy group	2	18%
Literacy Assistant of a literacy group	1	9%
Administrator assistant	1	9%
College administrator	1	9%
Library Branch Manager	1	9%

Q. 2 I have been working (staff/volunteer in literacy programs for :		
Length of work	Responses	%
Less than 1 year	1	9%
1-2 years	0	0%
3-5 years	2	18%
6-9 years	2	18%
10 or more	6	55%
Other	0	0%

Q. 3 I work in the following areas, check all that apply		
County Area	Responses	%
Countywide	2	10%
Castroville	0	0%
Gonzales	2	10%
King City	2	10%
Marina	1	5%
Monterey	1	5%
Pacific Grove	1	5%
Pajaro	0	0%
Prunedale	0	0%
Salinas	5	24%
Seaside	3	14%
Soledad	2	10%
Monterey Peninsula and Salinas	1	5%
South County	1	5%

Q. 4 Please rank the following challenges to literacy programs in order that they need to be addressed						
Potential Responses:	RESPONSES					
	Most Important (1)	2	3	4	5	Least Important (6)
Extension of Literacy Program into rural parts of the County	3	2	2	2	0	2
Coordination among service providers	6	1	2	1	1	0
Increasing the number of volunteers	2	5	1	1	2	0
Decreasing staff turnover rates	1	1	2	1	2	3
Creating programs for "special" needs groups	0	4	3	3	1	0
Teaching classes in the students' native language	1	3	1	0	3	3
Potential Responses:	PERCENTAGE					
	Most Important (1)	2	3	4	5	Least Important (6)
Extension of Literacy Program into rural parts of the County	27%	18%	18%	18%	0%	18%
Coordination among service providers	55%	9%	18%	9%	9%	0%
Increasing the number of volunteers	18%	45%	9%	9%	18%	0%
Decreasing staff turnover rates	9%	9%	18%	9%	18%	27%
Creating programs for "special" needs groups	0%	36%	27%	27%	9%	0%
Teaching classes in the students' native language	9%	27%	9%	0%	27%	27%

Q. 5 Please rank the following barriers faced by consumers who access literacy services from one to seven, using each number only once.							
Issues	RESPONSES						
	Most Important (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Least Important (7)
Transportation	4	2	1	2	0	2	0
Culture/Gender Issues	2	1	4	1	1	0	5
Childcare	3	4	0	2	1	0	0
Work Schedule	4	3	2	0	2	0	0
Inability to speak English	6	0	1	1	1	1	0
Do not know where to go	4	2	1	1	1	2	0
Residency status	3	0	2	0	1	1	3
Issues	PERCENTAGE						
	Most Important (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Least Important (7)
Transportation	36%	18%	9%	18%	0%	18%	0%
Culture/Gender Issues	18%	9%	36%	9%	9%	0%	45%
Childcare	27%	36%	0%	18%	9%	0%	0%
Work Schedule	36%	27%	18%	0%	18%	0%	0%
Inability to speak English	55%	0%	9%	9%	9%	9%	0%
Do not know where to go	36%	18%	9%	9%	9%	18%	0%
Residency status	27%	0%	18%	0%	9%	9%	27%

Q. 6. Please identify one specific suggestion/recommendation you would make to improve the methods of instruction provided by the programs.

- Make more grants available
- Unify the services with centralized phone numbers, locations and comprehensive programs.
- Develop better assessment tools to measure the educational levels of students enrolled in literacy programs to include pre and post tests
- Bilingual instruction or at least understanding of the language and culture.
- Have more literacy classes available in the areas where the people are, in different levels
- Qualified bi-lingual instructors.
- An academic needs assessment to include the cooperation of county programs that can test adult students for special needs literacy such as for second language learners and for learning disabled students and then the developing of programs to meet those specific needs if they are not already in place.
- Individualized instruction/Learner centered.

- The short exposure I have had with the one-on-one teaching seems to work perfectly. Maybe an improvement would be twice a week rather than once.
- Sufficient funding to maintain literacy programs without interruption.
- Ability to work with smaller groups, using volunteers, or daily "pull-out" program for students who need extra help

Q. 7. Please give one specific suggestion/recommendation you would make to improve outreach efforts by literacy services in our community.

- Create a network among the services
- Enlist the aid of employers to help them understand how they would benefit from the improved literacy rates of their employees
- Literacy programs should be viewed as a priority and every effort needs to be made to reach those in need. Maybe the use of a "roaming van" would help in reaching those that are living in isolated rural locations in the county.
- I will have quarterly open house at the libraries. I will encourage people to use the library
- Go to where the people are. Advertise the literacy program specific
- Have one south county meeting of all players just to see what everyone is doing for what ages, where, when, etc. or do email. I would volunteer the new Hartnell College King City Center as one of the first meetings so everyone can see the new center.
- That all literacy-providing agencies work in collaboration with businesses. The literacy agencies would first be linked together by a massive mail and media campaign. All services would then be listed and made available to major employees in each region of the county. Then the campaign would continue by mailing a list of common literacy problems that workers face on the job to each major company in the region asking how literacy agencies can help their employees to improve their literacy skills thereby helping the companies too.
- Act as network -Established referral system
- Not focus on libraries as a meeting place and information place. Include doctors/dentists/schools/low end retail stores (Kmart) stores. Places that everyone goes to
- Ongoing literacy section to appear in all county newspapers as a regular weekly column.
- I think our adult school has done and is doing an excellent job in its effort to reach the community. I can't think of any other ideas.

Q. 8 How important is the participation of the following organizations, agencies, and groups in collaborative efforts in our community to address literacy needs?

RESPONSES

AGENCY	Collaboration is ESSENTIAL	Collaboration is STRONGLY IMPORANT	Collaboration is IMPORTANT	Collaboration is SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	Collaboration is NOT ESSENTIAL
Public School System	9	2	0	0	0
County Health Dept. and Social Services	6	4	1	0	0
Public Libraries	9	2	0	0	0
Hospitals	3	4	2	2	0
City/County Governments	5	3	2	1	0
Local Foundations or Advocacy Groups	4	5	2	0	0
Colleges/Universities	5	0	3	1	1
Non-Profit Human Service Agencies	4	5	2	0	0
Business/Private Sector	7	3	1	0	0
Legislators/Elected Officials	7	3	1	0	0

PERCENTAGE

AGENCY	Collaboration is ESSENTIAL	Collaboration is STRONGLY IMPORANT	Collaboration is IMPORTANT	Collaboration is SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	Collaboration is NOT ESSENTIAL
Public School System	82%	18%	0%	0%	0%
County Health Dept. and Social Services	55%	36%	9%	0%	0%
Public Libraries	82%	18%	0%	0%	0%
Hospitals	27%	36%	18%	18%	0%
City/County Governments	45%	27%	18%	9%	0%
Local Foundations or Advocacy Groups	36%	45%	18%	0%	0%
Colleges/Universities	50%	0%	30%	10%	10%
Non-Profit Human Service Agencies	36%	45%	18%	0%	0%
Business/Private Sector	64%	27%	9%	0%	0%
Legislators/Elected Officials	64%	27%	9%	0%	0%

Q. 9. In your opinion, what is the greatest barrier to increasing collaborative efforts among community literacy service providers in the county?

- Funding - more staff is needed to concentrate on collaboration
- A lack of communication and awareness of the dire need for such services, compounded by a lack of knowledge of the services currently available.
- Ego. Agencies wanting to do their "own thing" rather than sharing, because of this attitude it is the student/client who ends up losing in the long run.
- Staff shortage.
- Make them more aware of the literacy problem in the county.
- Getting everyone together when they are already over tasked and under budgeted
- That all literacy-providing agencies work in collaboration with businesses. The literacy agencies would first be linked together by a massive mail and media campaign. All services would then be listed and made available to major employees in each region of the county. Then the campaign would continue by mailing a list of common literacy problems that workers face on the job to each major company in the region asking how literacy agencies can help their employees to improve their literacy skills thereby helping the companies too.
- Size of county-geography & issues related to that
- Each group thinks they are more important than the other. All should be unified to focus on the common purpose
- Not having the time to fully participate in collaborative efforts. We at the library are pushed for time. Budget cuts have reduced number of people previously used to maintain and extend services. Extending services is really not possible for our program any time soon.
- Getting the public to be aware of the problem, and its potential role in the solution

Q. 10. Feel free to provide any additional comments on your experiences, the survey design and questions, or anything else!

- This is a step towards collaboration which has been badly needed
- There is a lot that needs to be done in this area. We need to collaborate as agencies and stay focused on the goal to eliminate illiteracy in this county, one person at a time.
- I think literacy is very important if we want to improve quality of life in the county. Cutting literacy programs will increase poverty and violence. Literacy is a basic need.
- It would have been easier to access this site if I had known that it was necessary to type the entire super long URL.
- Have tried over the years to support Literacy Alliance. Only few providers have joined, and only when there is funding and or grants attached. School districts and other agencies too large, too many internal issues -too busy, etc.
- Need for ESL and Literacy programs is at a crisis level as far as I can see throughout California and especially in Monterey County. With small volunteer base in South County literacy needs cannot be easily met. One-on-one tutoring is the best possible support individuals can receive. Next to that I believe small group sessions would work in a community unable to support a volunteer literacy Program.