20.4% of adults in Rhode Island have low literacy
Rhode Island ranks 31 out of 50 in the U.S.

1 in 5 counties in Rhode Island have populations where 25% or more of the residents have below basic literacy.

How does low literacy affect equity and quality of life?
In counties where at least a quarter of the population have below basic literacy, we see that many health, economic, and educational outcomes fall short.

Unemployment
- 7.6% low literacy counties
- 5.7% other counties
- 6.1% state

Median Income
- $55,233
- $76,408
- $63,296

Adults Without a High School Degree
- 15.5%

No Access to Healthcare
- 8.1%

Residents Below the Poverty Line
- 16.7%

Demographics

The percent of 4th graders with below basic reading by race
- White: 25%
- Latinx/Hispanic: 50%
- Black/African American: 49%
- Asian: 29%
- State Average: 34%

Households Where Limited English is Spoken
The percentage of households where no adult speaks English "very well."
Below basic literacy is defined as scoring level 1 or below on the PIAAC International Adult Literacy Survey. 4th grade reading scores come from the NAEP reading assessment. 4th grade ELA test performance data comes from edopportunity.org. Self-Reported health comes from the Community Health Status Indicators. All other data comes from the American Community Survey. PIAAC data is not available by city. Visit map.barbarabush.org for county-level PIAAC data.