



Rural Youth & Adult Literacy Trust

Literacy Tuition for Rural/isolated Adults & Teenagers



Tenā koutou katoa and welcome to the first newsletter for RYALT in 2024!

Cheers to Our Amazing Volunteers: The Heartbeat of Our Mission!

We extend a heartfelt appreciation to all those who generously dedicate their time, expertise, and passion to support our mission of empowering rural and isolated youth and adults through free literacy assistance. Our literacy coaches serve as the cornerstone of our efforts, providing essential support to our students week after week.

Additionally, we are immensely grateful for the diverse talents and contributions of our behind-the-scenes volunteers, who play equally vital roles in our organization. Thank you for being the driving force behind our success.

Chairperson's Report

Low literacy creates a silent form of isolation, often overlooked in the shadow of more visible struggles like hunger or physical trauma. Yet, its impact is just as profound, leaving individuals feeling disempowered and excluded from opportunities. In today's fast-paced world, the inability to read or write proficiently closes doors and stifles personal growth. As one of our students poignantly expressed, it's about more than literacy—it's about the ability "to be someone."

Reflecting on the challenges of 2022, it was undeniably a trying time for the Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust. While the nonprofit sector breathed a collective sigh of relief as the grip of COVID and lockdowns eased, the aftermath left a lingering financial strain. Despite securing some relief through wage subsidies and resurgence payments, continued funding reductions posed significant hurdles. Staffing shortages further compounded our challenges, requiring our dedicated team to achieve remarkable feats with limited resources.

Looking ahead, the path forward is clear but demanding. The development of a social enterprise promises greater financial stability, aiming to reduce our dependence on external funding. Though progress was slowed by staffing constraints, we're committed to launching the enterprise in beta form by the end of Term 1, with full implementation slated for the end of Term 2.

The urgency of securing better funding in 2024 is paramount. With robust systems in place and unwavering support from technology grants, we're poised to leverage our resources effectively. Our network of dedicated volunteers, spanning a multitude of skills and expertise, continues to be the cornerstone of our operations, providing invaluable support to both students and staff alike.

As we navigate the road ahead, it's imperative that we come together to address the critical issue of low literacy and its far-reaching consequences. By investing in literacy education and community empowerment, we can unlock the full potential of individuals and foster a brighter future for all.

Strategic results Community Outreach

Aiming for 140 new learners was an ambitious goal. Unfortunately, very low funding caused the service to be cut back, resulting in the addition of only 82 new students to the roll. Under difficult circumstances, this is a good result and we owe a huge debt of gratitude to staff.

Work on improving the coach training to be more culturally responsive was started during 2023 but proceeded slowly because of over-stretched staff.

Recruitment of more Māori and Pasifika coaches continues to be slow, primarily due to understaffing and the necessity to prioritize essential tasks. The recruitment numbers align with the proportions of Māori and Pasifika within the population.

Students/Tuition

Seventy percent of student goals were met. Due to a funding deficit, student intake had to be reduced. A total of 152 students were tutored by RYALT throughout 2023. Record-keeping of hours met a challenge. Charges for the texting service we used to collect volunteer hours became untenable, so we changed to using automated emails. This also adds the answers to each student and coach record into Salesforce.

Staff

Far from increasing hours, staff hours were reduced. Low funding for wages reduced core staff by one.

Onboarding workflows include:

- Pathways Awarua Pasifika Cultural Capability module
- Pathways Awarua Māori Cultural Capability module
- The Dyslexia Awareness Induction course on RYALT's training site.

Volunteers

RYALT is fortunate to attract a large number of high-quality volunteers. The coach training update was delayed by understaffing but is on track to deliver a greatly improved, more interactive and culturally responsive training experience by mid-2024.

Enquiries

Systems were monitored throughout the year to ensure neither students nor coaches fall through the cracks.

Funding

One of the unfortunate repercussions of low staffing is that there is less time to apply for grants. During 2023, development of the social enterprise (which will mitigate shortfalls in funding) was completed to the testing stage. This was not as far as we had planned to get but, as in 2022, availability of staff to drive the development was restricted through the lack of funding.

We are very grateful to those funders and donors who stood by us through the last few difficult years. This ensured our survival, and with that, continued literacy support for rural isolated teens and adults.

Richard Winch
Chairperson



Face-to-face
LITERACY COACH NEEDED

No teaching experience? No problem!
We provide comprehensive training.
Make a Difference. Be a Literacy Coach!

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Rural Youth & Adult Literacy Trust

Introducing our new Student Coach Coordinator, Kaye Healey!

Hi everyone, I would like to introduce myself to you all and tell you a little about myself

My name is Kaye, and I am really excited to be working with you all. I come from an education background and have recently returned to New Zealand after living and teaching in the United Arab Emirates for the last 12 years.



Teaching overseas enriched my life both personally and professionally. As an educator, literacy has been my passion. Teaching overseas gave me extensive experience in working with English as a second language students, as well as students who are neurologically diverse in their learning styles.

After hours, I worked as a tutor for students (youth and adults) who struggled to read and write. Many of these had not had the opportunity of a formal education or had slipped through the cracks in the education systems around the world.

Working with all of you is my dream job. I am here to support you in any way that I can. I hope that I can enrich your passion for Literacy through some professional development and workshops where ideas are shared.

“Literacy Is A Right- Not A Privilege. It Unlocks The Door To Life Long Learning.”

How to get involved - A call for action!

As reported by our Chairperson and Manager, we urgently need support to ensure the Trust can continue providing its essential service of free reading and writing coaching to youth and adults with low literacy levels, particularly in rural and isolated areas.

We rely on the generous support of our community and their contributions through volunteering, donations and fundraising.

Here are some ways you can show your support for **Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust**.

Become a Friend of RYALT

and make a weekly donation of \$5 per week to help towards sponsoring a student, or make a one-time donation. Even small donations can make a big difference in helping the Trust continue to provide its much-needed services around New Zealand.

<https://www.adultliteracy.ac.nz/become-a-friend/>

Donate

those old devices for our students to use for their lessons and practice. Perhaps you know of a business or organisation that update their computers every few years that might be able to donate those devices to the Trust for our students.

Spread the Word:

Help raise awareness of the Trust and our mission by sharing information about our services and activities on social media, through word of mouth, or by helping to distribute flyers and other promotional materials. Become an official Community Ambassador for your local community - Chat to Lillian today!

By showing your support for the Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust, you can help make a difference in the lives of those who struggle with low literacy levels, and help them to achieve their full potential.

Student Back Stories

We are grateful to consistently receive tales of achievement and feedback from students, coaches and families. In this newsletter, we would like to also share some of our students' back stories when they contacted RYALT this year for help.

This was messaged to us via Facebook: I have spent my whole life struggling with reading, spelling etc. I'm positive I have dyslexia and ADHD. I left school at a young age and have suffered from low self esteem and having no confidence in applying for jobs if it had anything to do with having to read or write. I've tried to get help in the past while I was living in Australia but never really got the help I need. It would mean the world to me if I could learn the basic reading and spelling skills and to have the confidence we all deserve to have in life.

Another student was referred to us from Fulton Hogan: In their initial interview with us, they said that they had a course coming up and said to the tutors that they have difficulty with reading and writing & was told "They might need to find a different job" They are obviously very stressed about the course. 52 years old

Student from late last year: In their interview, told our student interviewer that they had to resign from their supervisor role as the role was starting to require more reading and writing than what they could do. They were

too embarrassed to let them know they couldn't read or write so resigned instead. Now they are in a physically hard role that because of their age, won't be able to do in a few years so they are keen to upskill. 47 years old

One enquiry I have just had today was from someone who picked up one of our cards from Kaitaia Courthouse and contacted us about his brother for reading and writing help. In his words, his brother is illiterate and can only probably identify 20 out of the 26 letters of the alphabet. He is a 35 year old solo dad to 2 boys and obviously struggles daily with his reading and writing. He is ready now to make an improvement for himself and be an example for his sons.

J couldn't get into school because he got into fights (once he moved from Tauranga to North Shore). Has basically been at home since then playing on playstation. Dad said they tried to get help when he was 16 & the school said no. Quite hard to understand reading ability as sounds quite isolated.

Low literacy affects everyday life for people whether it is reading a note sent home from school, writing an email or complaint, reading instructions for medication or the simple pleasure of reading a book for pleasure. These stories above aren't ones that we've made up, but real people with real literacy problems. A lot of them have been dealing with it for a long time in their lives.

Waikato Coffee Meetup

RYALT are hosting our first Coffee and Chat for 2024 in the Waikato for our volunteers.

We're thrilled to announce that, thanks to the generous sponsorship we've received from The Coffee Club, coffee will be on us!

This meetup presents a fantastic opportunity for our volunteers to mingle, share experiences, and forge valuable connections with fellow Waikato RYALT volunteers and staff members whether you're a seasoned volunteer or new to our community.

Date: Monday, 8th April 2024 Time: 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Coffee Club Chartwell (located downstairs by Countdown)

Please RSVP by Thursday, 4th April, to confirm your attendance to admin@adultriteracy.ac.nz



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FACE-TO-FACE
LITERACY COACH NEEDED

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Rural Youth & Adult Literacy Trust

Port Waikato Bookfair - June 2nd 2024

The Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust (RYALT) is thrilled to invite you to our inaugural Port Waikato BookFair, a celebration of literature, creativity, and community! Set against the picturesque backdrop of Sunset Beach, Port Waikato, this event promises to be a delightful gathering for book lovers of all ages.

Here's a glimpse of what you can expect at our BookFair:

Book Swaps: Bring along your well-loved books and participate in our book swap! Exchange your favorites for tokens, which you can then use to discover new literary treasures.

Art & Crafts: Create your own personalised bookmark for your new books at our Art & Craft station.

Book Auction: There will be a silent book auction featuring select titles. Proceeds from the auction will support our literacy initiatives.

Free Face Painting: Embrace the magic of imagination with free face painting, courtesy of a talented local artist. Don't forget to grab a green balloon to add a splash of color to your day!

Local Children's Book: We will be inviting children from local schools to share their stories on the theme of "The Best Day Ever Was..." Selected entries will be compiled into a special booklet, available for purchase at the BookFair. It's an opportunity for budding authors to see their words come to life in print!

Mark your calendars and join us for a day of books, creativity, and community spirit. Together, let's celebrate the joy of reading and ignite a passion for literacy.

Date: Sunday 2nd June (King's Birthday Weekend)

Time: 10am-2pm

Location: Sunset Beach Community Hub, 1 Ocean View Rd, Port Waikato

Contact: Lillian 0800 891 339 or email admin@adulthoodliteracy.ac.nz if you are interested in volunteering at the BookFair.

Auckland Volunteer Coffee Meetup

RYALT are hosting our first Coffee and Chat for 2024 in the Auckland for our volunteers.

We're thrilled to announce that, thanks to the generous sponsorship we've received from The Coffee Club, coffee will be on us!

This meetup presents a fantastic opportunity for our volunteers to mingle, share experiences, and forge valuable connections with fellow Auckland RYALT volunteers and staff members whether you're a seasoned volunteer or new to our community.

Date: Friday, 3rd May 2024

Time: 1pm-2pm

Location: The Coffee Club Manukau SupaCentre, Corner of Lambie & Cavendish Drive, Manukau City, Auckland,

Please RSVP by Monday 29th April to confirm your attendance to admin@adulthoodliteracy.ac.nz

FACE-TO-FACE
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Adult Literacy Trust

**Whāia te
mātauranga
hei oranga mō
koutou**

**If you follow the
path of learning,
the world will be
your oyster**