

Reading Writing Hotline

1300 6 555 06



MEDIA RELEASE

Australians without computer skills seen as being left behind – national poll

Almost 90 per cent of Australians believe people who can't use computers are being left behind, according to a national poll released by the Reading Writing Hotline today on International Literacy Day.

"Today, more and more everyday tasks require the ability to use a smart phone, tablet or computer. Australians without digital skills face real challenges completing vital tasks that others find second nature," said Reading Writing Hotline National Manager, Vanessa Iles.

The Reading Writing Hotline is a free, not-for-profit telephone service that helps adults with reading, writing and digital skills.

"Important tasks like applying for a job or paying a bill increasingly require online skills and access to technology.

"Even if people can get online, those with low levels of literacy struggle with the reading required to complete online tasks.

"Our poll found that 90% of Australians agree knowing how to use a computer is essential to many important activities, such as applying for a job.

"The poll also found 79% of Australians believe young people find all aspects of online activities, such as emailing and texting, easy.

"While most Australians believe young people have no trouble with digital skills, young people who struggle with reading actually face real stumbling blocks when completing online tasks.

"The Reading Writing Hotline has been helping adults of all ages with reading and writing skills for decades and now we're also helping them with digital skills," Ms Iles said.

For help with reading, writing or digital skills call the Reading Writing Hotline on

1300 6 555 06

Poll results and more information overleaf.

Poll results

	Total agree	Total disagree
Most day-to-day tasks, such as banking, finding addresses, and applying for a job, are now done online by most Australians	87%	6%
Knowing how to use a computer is essential to many important activities, such as applying for a job.	90%	5%
Young people find all aspects of online activities, such as filling in online forms and job applications, easy.	79%	14%
Organisations such as banks and local councils rely too much on online communication with their customers and the community.	61%	27%
People who can't use computers or smart phones are being left behind as more and more daily tasks require digital skills.	88%	6%
Keeping in touch with friends and family requires digital skills, such as uploading photos and text messaging	70%	24%

The biggest stumbling blocks for people who struggle with digital literacy are:

- School emails, paying fees and making appointments
- Applying for jobs electronically
- Communicating with Government agencies such as Centrelink
- Managing increasingly complex password requirements
- Understanding and managing privacy issues on social media