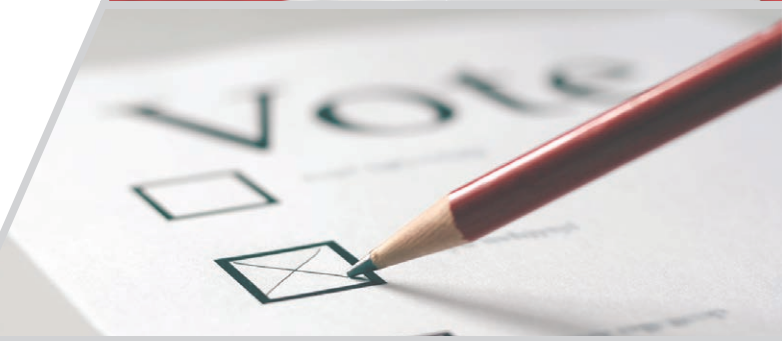




What is Civic Literacy?

Civic literacy means having the knowledge and skills you need to participate in making change in your community. In Canada, this includes voting, knowing how the government works, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens and elected members of government. When you have strong civic literacy skills, you know how to make your voice heard by all levels of government—before, during and after an election.



Civic Literacy in Canada

- If a person votes in the first election after they turn 18, they will probably be a lifelong voter. On the other hand, those who do not vote in that first election are unlikely to pick up the habit later in life. (*Youth Voting Trends in Canada – Elections Canada, 2023*)
- Learning about civics increases interest in voting in future elections. Canadians who have learned about institutions and governments and current events have a much stronger intent to vote in upcoming elections. (*Canadians Lack Basics of Civic Education and It's Impacting Our Democracy – Abacus Data, 2023*)
- A third of Canadian adults don't recall learning anything about civics in school. And the results for several key aspects of civic education are also quite poor. Only a third recall learning about current events (39%), how institutions and governments work (38%), and the roles and responsibilities of being a citizen (37%). Only 1 in 10 Canadians say they were taught how to discuss controversial issues. (*Canadians Lack Basics of Civic Education and It's Impacting Our Democracy – Abacus Data, 2023*)
- Canadians who did not learn civic engagement skills in school are much less likely to enjoy discussing social issues with their friends and family. Among Canadians who recall learning at least one civic engagement skill, 74% say they like discussing social issues with family and friends. This drops to 62% for those who cannot recall learning about civics in school. (*Canadians Lack Basics of Civic Education and It's Impacting Our Democracy – Abacus Data, 2023*)
- More civically literate citizens are less likely to be influenced by negative and divisive campaigning. More civically literate citizens are also more tolerant of others and their political views. Greater openness and acceptance of different political views can lead to politics where more voices and opinions are heard. (*Investing in Canadians' civic literacy: An answer to fake news and disinformation – The Samara Centre for Democracy, 2019*)