

# 2026 Summer Reading Report

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## Introduction

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The 2026 Summer Reading Program began on Friday June 12<sup>th</sup> and ended on Saturday August 1<sup>st</sup>. The theme for this year was “Plant a Seed, Read.” All materials and some of the programs followed the farming, gardening, and planting theme.

This year saw the introduction of a soft launch registration event, which was held on June 12<sup>th</sup> while the annual kick-off happened on Saturday June 13<sup>th</sup>. Each Saturday - except for Fourth of July - held events that all members of the public were welcome to attend. The only program excluded from this was the Coalinga Reptile Ron finale event based on the crowd size at the 2025 event.

The Summer Reading Program is one that members of the community look forward to each year. The data below show where the district succeeded and where improvements can be made. Overall, the data show that the program was successful.

## The 2026 Summer Reading Program Statistics

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### Signups and completion rates

The total number of signups has significantly gone up in both locations.<sup>1</sup> Based on the figures in the Summer Reading Signups chart below, that is a 42.42% increase in Coalinga and a 185% increase in Huron.

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<sup>1</sup> The percent figures were calculated with the percent increase formula. Percent increase =  $\frac{\text{New Figure} - \text{Old Figure}}{\text{Old Figure}} \times 100$ .

## Summer Reading Signups

| Category                  | 2025       | 2026       |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Coalinga</i>           |            |            |
| Children (Ages: 0-11)     | 107        | 152        |
| Young Adult (Ages: 12-17) | 25         | 40         |
| Adults (Ages: 18+)        | 66         | 90         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>198</b> | <b>282</b> |
| <i>Huron</i>              |            |            |
| Children (Ages: 0-11)     | 9          | 26         |
| Young Adult (Ages: 12-17) | 2          | 9          |
| Adults (Ages: 18+)        | 9          | 22         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>20</b>  | <b>57</b>  |

If broken down by age category, there was a dramatic increase when compared to 2025. Statistically, there was a 42.05% increase in Coalinga and 188.89% increase in Huron for the Children's category. For Young Adult, there was an increase of 60% in Coalinga and 350% in Huron; as for adults, the increase was 36.36% in Coalinga and 144% in Huron.

Although there was an increase in people signing up for all age groups, the rate of completion was mixed.<sup>2</sup> Compared to the 2025 summer reading final totals, the number of people who completed the program went down in Coalinga for all age categories, but increased for Adult and Children in Huron, while the Young Adult completion rates decreased in Huron. The data suggests that the finishing rate differs for each location and by age group.

<sup>2</sup> The percent figures were calculated by dividing the number of people who finished with the total amount that signed up.

### Summer Reading Completion Rates

| Age Category              | 2025      | 2026       |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Coalinga</i>           |           |            |
| Children (Ages: 0-11)     | 44        | 61         |
| Young Adult (Ages: 12-17) | 5         | 7          |
| Adults (Ages: 18+)        | 30        | 35         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>79</b> | <b>103</b> |
| <i>Huron</i>              |           |            |
| Children (Ages: 0-11)     | 5         | 15         |
| Young Adult (Ages: 12-17) | 2         | 6          |
| Adults (Ages: 18+)        | 5         | 21         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>12</b> | <b>42</b>  |

## Programs and Attendance

Every year, both libraries host special Saturday programming for summer reading except for the weekend of Fourth of July. The 2026 Summer Reading Program did have one more event than the 2025 Summer Reading program and a soft launch event was introduced in 2026; for the Coalinga programming, the 2026 program did have an off-site event that was not the finale for the first time.

## Program Attendance

| Program                | 2025              | 2026              |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b><i>Coalinga</i></b> |                   |                   |
| Soft Launch*:          | N/A               | 46                |
| Program 1              | 88                | 24                |
| Program 2              | 80                | 46                |
| Program 3              | 109               | 25                |
| Program 4**            | 8                 | 28                |
| Program 5              | 17                | 10                |
| Program 6***           | 79                | 26                |
| Program 7              | N/A               | 66                |
| <b><u>Total</u></b>    | <b><u>381</u></b> | <b><u>271</u></b> |
| <b><i>Huron</i></b>    |                   |                   |
| Soft Launch*           | N/A               | 5                 |
| Program 1              | 8                 | 9                 |
| Program 2              | 9                 | 0                 |
| Program 3              | 21                | 0                 |
| Program 4              | 0                 | 3                 |
| Program 5              | 0                 | 2                 |
| Program 6              | 79                | 2                 |
| Program 7              | N/A               | 9                 |
| <b><u>Total</u></b>    | <b><u>41</u></b>  | <b><u>30</u></b>  |

\*: Soft-Launch was introduced in the 2026 summer reading program

\*\*: Program 4 for the 2026 Summer Reading Program in Coalinga was the off-site Rock Decorating program at the Pierce Street Community Garden

\*\*\*: Program 6 for the 2025 Summer Reading Program was the finale as that year's program started a week later, on Saturday June 21. For the Coalinga 2025 Summer Reading Finale, it took place at Reel Time Movie Theater.

The total program attendance in 2026, compared to the previous year, has decreased as seen in the chart above.<sup>3</sup> Coalinga's program attendance decreased by 28.87% while Huron had decreased by 26.83%. There are many possible reasons why this happened. This includes the fact that the initial schedule of events flyers had TBA in lieu of times and program titles, and events being scheduled at the same time as others.

An example of this is that the lowest attended program in Coalinga - the Scratch Art program - competed with the grand opening of Ross Dress for Less. Meanwhile the TBAs and the constant updating of the events flyer may have not only confused participants but also made it difficult for them to plan to attend these events. The most interesting thing about the attendance decrease is that it even shows up for Reptile Ron, which did a program for both the 2025 and 2026 Summer Reading Program. The 2026 Reptile Ron program in Coalinga was a ticketed finale due to the number of people who attended in 2025 (listed under Program 3 in the chart above).<sup>4</sup> Huron, which did not have a ticketed finale, showed an attendance decrease for Reptile Ron. There are many reasons for the low turnout at Reptile Ron; for example, the heat wave advisory on August 1<sup>st</sup> or even waning interest because it was offered the previous year could have caused the low turnout.

However, this decrease does not reflect the total number of participants that signed up for the program. Attending programs is not required to complete the summer reading program, even in this year's YA Bingo Card, there was a square dedicated to attending any library program, but this square included year-round programs like the Crochet class, Gaming Mondays, or Code Club. The optional programs offer the community a place to be on a Saturday during the summer.

## The 2026 Figures and the Future of Summer Reading

The increase in signups does show that the community is interested in participating in the summer reading program. However, the decreases in the number of people finishing and program attendance show where the library can improve for future summer reading programs.

Having promotional materials and programs ready prior to the start week will help with program attendance. There are many activities and events that happen during the duration of summer reading such as summer camps, travel sports, and family vacations that will affect attendance numbers, all of which should be considered when planning programs. Another way to increase attendance would be to rotate, if possible, presenters, performers, and other program ideas and not have the same programs every year to keep things fresh.

Increasing completion rates is more challenging. Especially for teens and adults, people have other commitments during the summer, which could cause difficulty for some to finish the program. One way to increase rates for both young adults and adults is to have the age groups read fewer items for the reading logs (if this method is used) or for both collection specialists to specify to staff what can or cannot be considered appropriate materials that can be

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<sup>3</sup> The decrease figures were calculated by using the formula: Old Figure - New Figure/Old Figure x 100 = percent.

<sup>4</sup> The maximum number of people the program room can hold is 55.

included. For example, the adult specialist can make it clear to staff that adults, especially those with small children, can include children's books. Meanwhile, the young adult specialist can explain to staff and all patrons that all online and app-based platforms such as Webtoon do count as e-book sources.

Another way is to meet the age groups where they are. For example, the 2026 Young Adult Bingo card was written with the help of the High School volunteers. In the past, anytime a Bingo card was used for the Young Adults, it was only focused on reading-based activities. The 2026 card had taken a more summer learning approach as the volunteers advised incorporating the theme with the stuff they were already doing (such as hearing about books on social media and watching videos on any device). While completion rates decreased for this age group at both libraries, the raw number of teens who finished the program still grew. Meeting young adult participants where their interest lies can increase the category's completion rates.

## Summer Reading Impact on the Library and Community

Summer reading is beneficial to the library as an institution. Because it is one of the library's most popular offerings, Summer Reading can show where the library is doing well and what it can improve. The 2026 data show that people are interested in coming into the library to signup, but it shows where the library can improve in terms of programming and getting people to finish the program.

The data suggests that there was an increase in people coming into the library during the program. Although many of the participants are already library users, signup growth suggests that the program is reaching new users. Partnering with the community - whether with the Pierce Street Community Garden or Worth Farms - promoted the library through programming.

Summer Reading does not only benefit the library. It benefits literacy for all children and teens. It promotes early literacy for infants and toddlers, provides a way to help school aged children and teens to avoid the summer slide, and helps teens incorporate learning with the activities that they are already doing. Even adults benefit from this program as the signup increase suggests that adults see that summer reading is not only offered for children and teens, and that adults can still have fun while improving their literacy skills.

## Conclusion

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The 2026 Summer Reading Program was a great success. This year saw an increase in the number of signups, a decrease in program attendance, and depending on the library and age category, both a decrease and increase in participants completing the program compared to last year. The 2026 data is useful for program improvements such as clarification on reading logs, program ideas, and meeting the needs of the participants.

The program has a beneficial relationship with both the library and the community. It helps with promoting literacy for all ages. The library's partnerships with members of the community help with promoting the library to those who wouldn't otherwise be attending library programs and events.

## Further information

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