

YOUTH SERVICES NOTES

Week of August 17, 2015

No. 217

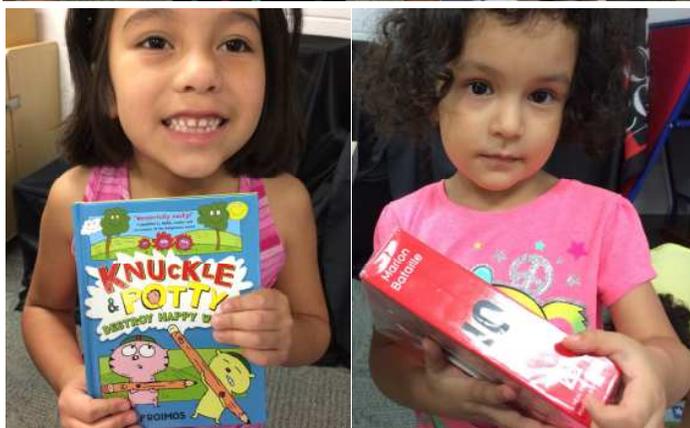
Loudoun County Public Library

Thank You, Soho Center

Thank you for your support of the Summer Read & Feed program at Sterling Library! We served over 1200 Summer Snacks through the USDA Summer Food Program. In addition to feeding our children's bodies, we were also able to feed their minds thanks to the **Soho Center**. Your generous donation of books was instrumental in sharing the love and joy of reading in our community. The photos are of just a few of the children who have benefitted from your efforts. Your generosity is greatly appreciated,

Heather J. Ketrone

Branch Manager, Sterling Library
Loudoun County Public Library 



American Library Association

Connect and Plug In With Your Library Card—September is Library Card Sign-up Month

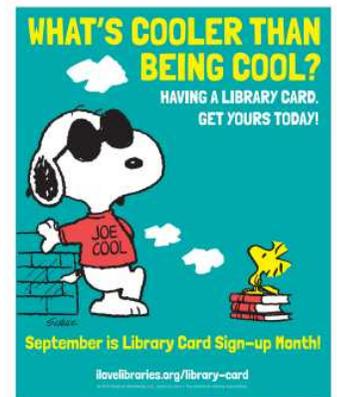
September is Library Card Sign-up Month, a time when the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country promote the value of a library card and library services.

From finding a job, starting a new business, to getting homework help and becoming more engaged in your community, a library card offers limitless opportunities to transform lives through education and lifelong learning.

With a library card, patrons can check out so much more than books. No longer just repositories for printed materials, today's libraries are serving as tech hubs, community centers and DIY spaces that are more about connecting and plugging in.

"A free library card is essential to people of all ages," said **ALA President Sari Feldman**. "Through our support of education, employment, entrepreneurship, engagement and empowerment, libraries are transforming to create individual opportunity and community progress. Libraries have proven to be a safe haven in times of crisis, a bridge across the digital divide and a catalyst for content creation through nontraditional resources such as 3D printers, recording studios, culinary classrooms and lendable tools."

Libraries are excellent places to learn about technology. For example, the Denver Public Library



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Youth Services Notes

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The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Through grant making, policy development, and research, IMLS helps communities and individuals thrive through broad public access to knowledge, cultural heritage, and lifelong learning. This newsletter project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.



Thanks for the photos and information!

- ◇ Heather Ketrone, Loudoun County Public Library
- ◇ The usual resources—ALA, ALSC, YALSA



Dates to Remember

Virginia Conferences

October 21-23, 2015..... Virginia Library Association Annual Conference..... Richmond

National Conferences

November 6-8, 2015..... YALSA'S 2015 Young Adult Symposium..... Portland
 April 5-9, 2016..... Public Library Association 2016 Conference..... Denver
 June 23-28, 2016..... American Library Association Annual Conference..... Orlando
 September 15-17, 2016..... ALSC National Institute 2016..... Charlotte

Workshops / Early Literacy Activity Center (ELAC) Exchanges

September 9-10, 2015..... Library of Virginia Fall Youth Services Workshop..... Richmond
 September 16-17, 2015..... Library of Virginia Coaching Workshop..... Burke
 October 1, 2015..... STEM Training..... Wytheville
 October 2, 2015..... STEM Training..... Chatham
 October 9, 2015..... STEM Training..... Franklin
 October 27, 2015..... STEM Training..... Bedford
 November 5, 2015..... STEM Training..... Chesterfield
 November 6, 2015..... STEM Training..... Fishersville
 November 13, 2015..... STEM Training..... King George

Online Courses

September 7–October 2, 2015..... Importance of Play..... online

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month

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offers DevCamps, free week-long sessions that pair teenagers with professional Web developers who expose them to HTML, CSS and JavaScript. Also, in an effort to help library users navigate new technology and help residents connect across generations, the library in Spokane, Washington, trained local teenagers to teach older adults how to use mobile devices.

To meet the changing needs of patrons, libraries across the country are transforming beyond their traditional roles in order to better serve the public.

When the public library in Red Hook, New York, heard from residents that a lack of public transportation was keeping people from accessing services, the library borrowed a van to take its programs directly to neighborhoods that need them the most. This summer, the van visited a local recreation park camp with its Red Hook Makes program to help children construct cardboard robots with moving parts attached to circuits and battery packs.

Another example of libraries turning outward and responding to community need by partnering with organizations is the library in San Jose, California. After residents told the library the dirty streets were damaging to civic pride, the library started a litter pick-up day and a neighborhood task force to make the Seven Trees neighborhood cleaner and safer.

Joining the ALA in efforts to increase library card registrations is Library Card Sign-up Month Honorary Chair Snoopy, the world-famous beagle from the beloved Peanuts comics. Snoopy is appearing in digital and print PSAs promoting September Library Card Sign-up Month.

Since 1987, Library Card Sign-up Month has been held each September to mark the beginning of the school year. It is a time when the ALA and libraries nationwide join together to remind parents, caregivers and students that signing up for a library card is the first step towards academic achievement and lifelong learning.

For more information on Library Card Sign-up Month, please visit

<http://www.ilovelibraries.org/library-card>. 

“If past history was all there was to the game, the richest people would be librarians.”

~ Warren Buffett ~
U.S. business executive

Association for Library Services to Children

Registration Open for Fall 2015 ALSC Online Courses

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) encourages participants to sign up for Fall 2015 ALSC online courses. Registration is open for all courses. Classes begin Monday, September 14, 2015.



One of the courses being offered this semester is eligible for continuing education units (CEUs). The American Library Association (ALA) has been certified to provide CEUs by the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET). ALSC online courses are designed to fit the needs of working professionals. Courses are taught by experienced librarians and academics. As participants frequently noted in post-course surveys, ALSC stresses quality and caring in its online education options. **For more information on ALSC online learning, please visit:** <http://www.ala.org/alsced>

It's Mutual: School and Public Library Collaboration

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/its-mutual-school-and-public-library-collaboration>

(6 weeks, September 14–October 23, 2015)

Instructor: Rachel Reinwald, School Liaison/Youth Services Librarian, Lake Villa District Library

Both schools and public libraries have the same goal to help people become lifelong learners and effective and efficient users of information. There are many mutual benefits of collaborating with your area public schools. You already have the same audience. Why don't you reach them more effectively and benefit all involved? We will look at past successful collaborations. You will have a toolkit of sample forms to help you reach out to your fellow school district and/or public library.

Storytelling with Puppets

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/storytelling-puppets>

(4 weeks, September 14–October 9, 2015, CEU Certified Course, 2.2 CEUs)

Instructor: Steven Engelfried, Youth Services Librarian, Wilsonville Public Library

From "Ask Mister Bear" to Elephant and Piggie, telling stories with puppets can bring new levels of creativity and excitement to storytimes and school presentations.

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Registration Open for Fall 2015 ALSC Online Courses

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And it's not as hard as you think. This 4-week online course will give participants practical strategies for bringing stories to life with puppets; techniques for using puppets with various ages, from toddlers to early elementary students; tips for adapting folktales and picture books into puppet presentations; strategies for rehearsal, planning, and development of puppet stories; and background about how puppet tales develop narrative skills and reading motivation from the audience.

The Newbery Medal: Past, Present and Future

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/edcareers/profdevelopment/alscweb/courses/newberymedal>

(6 weeks, September 14 - October 23, 2015)

Instructor: KT Horning, Director, Cooperative Children's Book Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison

What does it mean when we recommend Newbery Award winners to the children in our communities? Should the ALA seal of approval stand for 100 years? Why is that gold medal often considered the "kiss of death" by kids? How can we help parents and teachers understand what the Newbery Medal is - and isn't? This 6-week online course will give participants a solid grounding in the history of the Medal and how it's changed over time; an opportunity to read, discuss and consider past and present Newbery winners with their colleagues from across the nation; a chance to talk to former Newbery Committee members and a Newbery author, and suggestions for programming using Newbery-winning books.

Detailed descriptions and registration information is available on the ALSC website at
<http://www.ala.org/alsced>.

Fees are \$115 for personal ALSC members; \$165 for personal ALA members; and \$185 for non-members.

Questions? Please contact ALSC Program Officer for Continuing Education, Kristen Sutherland at ksutherland@ala.org, or 1-800-545-2433, ext. 4026.

Posted by Dan Bostrom, August 10, 2015 

“The library is the temple of learning, and learning has liberated more people than all the wars in history.”

~ Carl T. Rowan ~

YALSA Blog

10 Questions To Ask About Your Teen Services

Are you struggling trying to find ways to engage teens at your library? Look no further! As part of our ongoing research relating to teen library services, we talked with teens across the country and have answers for you in “10 Questions to Ask about Your Teen Services.”

(For details about the research, see our recent *YALS* article: Denise Agosto, Rachel Magee, Andrea Forte, and Michael Dickard, 2015, "The Teens Speak Out: What Teens in a Tech High School Really Think about Libraries...and What You can do to Improve their Perceptions." *Young Adult Library Services* 13 (3): 7-12.)

10 Questions to Ask about Your Teen Services

1. Can teens find quiet spaces for reading and studying in your library and vibrant spaces for hanging out, socializing, and creative activities?



It's important to remember that teens use libraries for all sorts of activities - social interaction, quiet reading, collaborative school work, and hanging out with friends. Your library space needs to support all of these diverse activities. When asked why they use libraries, some of the teens we've worked with talked about schoolwork. For example, Kacie* (age 18), told us that she hadn't visited her public library in years. Then she stopped in one day and realized that it was a great place to do her homework. She realized that: "Hey! The library is quiet. There's everything I need [for studying]."... It was like: 'Hey! The library's kind of awesome!'" On the other hand, other teens told us about using libraries as spaces to connect with their friends or to engage in creative pursuits. As Jamie (age 18) explained: "People usually just go to the library to play music or just chill out, eat lunch, or read a game magazine. I have used it for that. They have cool magazines there." Your library should provide clearly marked spaces to support each of these different activities.

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10 Questions To Ask About Teen Services

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2. Do you avoid charging fines and other penalties that can keep teens away from the library?

Our work with teens has taught us that worries about possible fines and fees even as small as thirty cents can keep teens from using their public and school libraries. As Jenny (age 16) told us: "I used to [use the public library]. What ended up happening was a thirty dollar fine for a video that I didn't even check out, so I never ended up going back and finding out how to solve the problem." Patrick (age 18) explained that: "Personally, I know that I'm really bad at remembering due dates, or I'll just be really lazy one day and be like, 'I don't want to return this book right now.' So to save myself money and know I don't have to worry about that, I don't bother using real libraries."

What's more important: attracting teens to libraries, or collecting fines? We think you'll agree that encouraging teens to use libraries is far more important. It's time we work toward finding creative non-monetary alternatives to fines and fees. Possible solutions include providing volunteering options for working off fines and scheduling periodic amnesty days instead of insisting that teens pay up.

3. Do teens help you decide what you stock in the library?

Some teens told us that the materials their libraries stock are irrelevant or uninteresting to them. For instance, Amani (age 16) said that libraries "don't necessarily have the books you might be looking for," so she prefers going to bookstores or looking for reading materials online. Public and school libraries should set up a communication channels to encourage teens to ask for the materials they would most like to use—not just books, but magazines, music, gaming equipment, and any other types of materials you consider purchasing.

4. Are you fighting against the stereotype of libraries as just book providers?

Many teens we talked to expressed the idea that "library" equals "books"—and nothing else. This limited perception meant they would mainly think to use a library when looking for a paper book, not for socializing, for entertainment opportunities, for homework help, or to take advantage of the many other services that libraries offer. As Hannah (age 15) stated, she goes "to a school that doesn't use books as much [for class assignments], so that's another reason why I've never used [the library]." As librarians and other library staff know, libraries offer much, much more than just books, but this message doesn't seem to



be getting through to teens. As a field we must work to fight against the outdated image of libraries just as book providers and help teens learn the full range of services that today's libraries offer.

5. Are you going to where the teens are (outside of the library) to market your services?

Most library research takes place in libraries and uses library users as study participants. Our research took place in high schools with random groups of students who did not self-identify as library users. Sadly, the teens in our studies were largely unfamiliar with their libraries and were mostly infrequent public and school library users. Jamie (age 18) even suggested that "today's youth have quit libraries," in part because "usually everything is done online." This finding highlights the importance of moving library marketing outside the physical library boundaries. After all, why focus your marketing efforts on teens who are already using libraries? Moving outside the library to other places where teens go, such as shopping malls, churches, community centers, sports fields, and online to social media and any other popular online teen hangouts makes for much more effective marketing by spreading the message of how great your library is to teens who don't already know it.

6. Are you working to ensure that all library staff exhibit positive, welcoming attitudes toward teens?

We learned that some teens perceive libraries as having unpleasant, unwelcoming staff members—people who don't seem to like teens all that much. For example, Meghan (age 17) noted that the previously pleasant atmosphere of her school library was ruined by a new "librarian that was like, 'No food! No drinks! No talking!' [After she was hired] people were no longer interested in going there." Once the library gets the reputation of being unwelcoming to teens, it can spread quickly throughout the teen community and keep teens away.

7. Are your policies framed in positive language?

We also learned that negative language in library policies can send the message that the library views teens as potential troublemakers. A sign that says, "No cell phone use in the library!" sends an angry, distrustful message. A sign that says, "Please take all phone calls to the lobby to avoid disrupting others who are working" means the same thing but sends a message of trust and mutual respect. Library staff members' actions when enforcing policies can also have a major effect on teens' perceptions of the library. Kacie (age 18) described returning to the library after

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10 Questions To Ask About Teen Services

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having a positive experience with library staff waiving a fine: "Yeah, the one time I had sixty cents [in fines]. One book was late, but they forgave that. That was very nice. That's why I keep going. I've been at least five times in the last two months." Framing library policies in positive language can go a long way toward promoting the image of the library as welcoming to teens.

8. Are you matching your services to your teen community's unique needs?

We all know that community needs and interests should drive collection development and programming, but it's a rule that bears repeating. For example, there has been strong push in the library literature to think of public and school libraries as technology providers, but in economically-advantaged or technology-saturated communities, teens are likely to have reduced needs for technology access. As Maisha (age 15), a student in a technology magnet school, told us: "I really don't need to go to the library because I have everything at home," including several digital devices and full access to a range of online tools and resources at home and at school. In these types of communities, the more effective approach to teen library services might be to focus on providing community engagement opportunities, civic participation outlets, social activities, recreation, information literacy education, etc., instead of focusing on information resource provision and on technology access. For more disadvantaged communities, however, public and school libraries might better serve teens by focusing resources and energy on providing technology access, infrastructure, and education, and by providing information resources teens can't get elsewhere.

9. Do you provide opportunities for teens to demonstrate their knowledge and accomplishments, such as avenues for displaying teen fiction, teen photography, teen computer game designs, teen music compositions and performances, etc.?

Libraries are perfect places for celebrating and encouraging teens' creativity and their creations. Teens in our studies described deep levels of engagement with creative endeavors like writing, photography, and music. Taahira (age 14) explained that, "I just take pictures, because I want to be a photographer when I grow up." She went on to detail her photography and to describe her efforts to find good outlets for sharing her work others. Isaac (age 16) explained that he plays "drums, guitar, and bass.... We started a [music] club, too." Libraries have the opportunity to provide community spaces where teens can share their

creativity and knowledge with other teens and with their community at large, both in the physical library and online via the library's website or social media accounts.

10. Do you work hard to bring the teens in your community together at your library, either face-to-face or online?

The teens in our studies told us that the social support aspects of libraries are key to engaging their interest, especially for those with limited transportation options or limited access to places where they can safely or easily hang out and socialize. Public and school libraries interested in increasing teen participation should look toward providing services that facilitate social interaction and focus on promoting libraries as social organizations. Victoria (age 16) described a successful program at her local public library: "They have these things every Tuesday, these teen programs that they have. And all these teens from different places come and meet, and they play all these games, and eat, and just hang out. We actually started going on Tuesdays, because it was really fun." That's what teen librarianship should be about at its core: bringing teens together and providing them with a wide variety of opportunities for positive social, intellectual, and personal development.

Were you able to answer yes to all 10 questions? We hope so!

Please tell us if you found this information useful by completing a short, three-question survey at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GRN5PMQ>.

For more information about our research with teens, visit our homepage:

Drexel University's Youth Online Research Group.
<http://youthonline.ischool.drexel.edu/>

Thank you!

By Michelle Purcell, Rachel Magee, Denise Agosto, and Andrea Forte

*Note: All teens' names are pseudonyms. Quotes come from our interviews and focus groups with high school students, conducted between 2013 and 2015 in U.S. public high schools.

"10 Questions to Ask about Your Teen Services" is based on research conducted by Drexel University's Youth Online Research Group, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services [IMLS], Award #LG-06-11-0261-11, and the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship under Grant No. 2011121873.

Source: <http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/2015/07/30/10-questions-to-ask-about-your-teen-services/> 