Summer Library Outreach to Underserved Children and Caregivers

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Introductions

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Our Advocacy Structure

Define and identify “underserved communities”

Step 1: Research and identify need.
- Brainstorm potential programs/ outreach/ initiatives

Step 2: What barriers do you need to overcome?
- Identify barriers to executing your ideas

Step 3: How do you advocate for your community?
- Brainstorm ways to advocate for your ideas and communities
Who are underserved communities?

Questions to ask: Who is missing? What is missing?

- Look at diversity through an equity lens
- Don’t forget about intersectionality
- “Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors” can be applied to programs and services.
  - Concept by Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop

What does leaving out a community look like?
Have You Talked to Your Community?

START HERE: Have you talked to people in your community?

Yes
List the resources currently available for your target population.

No
Talk to your community! Research and identify existing resources, barriers, and greatest needs.

How can we work with underserved populations effectively and with informed intent in mind?

- **Authenticity:** Create programs and outreach with the community and ask community leaders rather than assuming what a community wants.

- **Avoiding Auto-Pilot:** Program creation can be affected by financial, time, or staffing constraints. To do it well and with reflection built in, we need to do the work.
Research

Best practices for authentically researching a particular community/exploring partnerships

Some questions to ask at this stage:

**Big Picture**

- What goals do I have with this work?

**Details**

- What is being provided and by who?
- How often is it being provided?

**Partners**

- Is there anyone I’ve partnered with already who can help?
- Who else is doing similar work in my community that I can connect with?
Toolkit Components

The New American Toolkit provides a number of resources for librarians and library workers to tap into as well as an overview of the New American population. This information is made available to help meet the needs and help with challenges that New Americans might face.

1. About This Population
2. Recommended read alouds
3. Recommended apps
4. Professional and community resources
5. Materials for the children’s room
6. Materials for programming
7. Successful library programs

About this population

New Americans comprise an important part of United States society, with approximately 13.7% of the population - or 44 million people - being born in another country. The vast U.S. immigrant population includes:

- Latin American immigrants, the largest subgroup by percentage
- Asian diaspora immigrants, whose history in the U.S. spans more than 300 years
- Black diaspora immigrants, the fastest growing category of immigrants
- Middle Eastern/North African immigrants, including recent Afghan refugees
- European immigrants, a segment that has sharply decreased since the early 20th century

Chronic undercounting leads to some uncertainty in census tabulations, but estimates suggest that almost half of new Americans do not hold citizenship, and more than a quarter have entered the country within the past ten years. New Americans contribute to U.S. society's cultural and economic vitality in numerous ways, such as starting businesses, developing technologies and companies, boosting demand for goods and services, and contributing unique perspectives.

New Americans include a variety of categories, each with their own unique needs:

- Refugees, or those who leave their own country due to risks of serious human rights violations or persecutions
- Asylum seekers, or those who leave their own country seeking protection from persecutions and serious human rights violations, but are not yet legally recognized as refugees
- Migrants, or those who choose to leave their own country for such purposes as employment, education, or reuniting with family
- Immigrants, or those who make a conscious decision to leave their own country with the intention of settling in a new one

Libraries are uniquely positioned to support new Americans, whether through basic needs like learning English or more complex topics like community and civic engagement. Doing so requires intentional processes and reflection as we consider the unique needs of each community.

The resources in this toolkit offer program service and design, communications and marketing, library materials and collections, stakeholders and partnerships, and equipping staff to serve these communities.
Current Capacity/Organizational Landscape

Making the Ask

● Managerial/Board Buy-In:
  ○ How does this idea fit with the goals, values, or mission of your library?
  ○ Is, or could this idea be part of your strategic plan?
  ○ Does this idea fit within your professional goals?
  ○ Something that works well for you may not work elsewhere.
  ○ Sometimes, you just need to do it!

● Use the information from your Research/SWOT analysis to Support your Position!
Current Capacity/Organizational Landscape

Making the Ask

- Identify and be Prepared for Potential Barriers
  - A Neutrality Position is based on Equality
  - Fear of Community Push-Back
  - Others?

- Be Slow to Move Fences
  - How are things working currently within existing systems?
  - Is there room for improvement, expansion, or partnerships with community organizations?

- **Use the information from your Research/SWOT analysis to Support your Position!**

Initiatives/Programs/Outreach Options

Choose your first (or next) step from the options below.

NOTE: You may not have an answer for all these options. Some may require more time and energy to allow for change. Keep trying to advocate for services with the community in mind.

- Programs and Service Design
- Communications and Marketing
- Library Collections
- Stakeholders and Partnerships
- Equipping Staff
Summer Outreach

Lower-Income Families (who may not be able to access the library)

- Work with Title 1 teachers struggling readers
- Permission to participate
- Self-directed programming ideas
- Mailers:
  - Examples:
    - Lap-sized chalkboard and chalk with writing prompts
    - Get pens with word search puzzles
    - Magnetic alphabet letters and inexpensive (Dollar Tree) cookie sheet
- Post-Test Measures
- Transient Families
- Using Title 1 funding for potential sustainability
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Migrant Community

Step 1: Research and identify need

- Missing school, food, healthcare, social services, childcare

Step 2: What barriers do you need to overcome?

- Trust, time, transportation, language, cultural norms

Step 3: How do you advocate for your community?

- Start where you can.
- Obtain buy-in little by little
- Problem solve, think how to change a “No” to a “Yes”

Be an ally to your community!
Summer Outreach

Miami Dolphins Training Camp Visit

In partnership with Prosperity Social Community Development Group Inc. the North Miami Public library took approximately 30 patrons under 18 years of age to the Miami Dolphins Summer training camp. The Miami Dolphins provided breakfast, a practice facility tour, and some of the players came over to provide autographs to the kids.
More Examples

**Partnership Storytimes with a Local Autism Center**

- Provide “ear phones,” tactile “fidgets” (such as carpet squares, rocking floor seats, double-sided contact paper, pipe cleaners, silly putty, tangles, etc). as an open invitation for children who are neurodivergent or need accommodations to successfully participate in story time programming.
  - Result: parents of children who had been identified as being on the autism spectrum were more comfortable bringing their children to the library/out in public.
  - Other recommendations:
    - Dim overhead lights and eliminate fluorescent buzzing whenever possible.
    - Eliminate or make scents selective whenever possible.
    - Create and provide social story videos and/or books on website
    - Picture schedule of storytime
    - [https://www.kulturecity.org/](https://www.kulturecity.org/) is a great place for more information on becoming more attuned to sensory issues. A certification is offered for a fee.

**Summer Meals for Teens and Kids**

- During the school months, kids and teens are provided with a healthy breakfast and lunch. But what happens in the summer months when students are not obligated to attend summer school, camps are asking parents to provide lunch and snack or, summer camp is not affordable?
- There are many community based programs, including libraries, who are well aware of food insecurities in the summer months. To combat this issue, there are a number of Summer Food programs that offer breakfast and lunch for teens and kids. Summer Break Spot is one of the main resource community programs used in the state of Florida. They offer balanced breakfasts, lunches, snacks or (if a facility is open late enough) they provide dinner as well. Patrons simply need to visit the SummerBreakSpot.org and search the map for the nearest location. No application necessary. Locations include libraries, parks, churches, etc.

The CSLP website also offers many “Libraries and Summer Food” resources for those interested in this type of programming

- [https://www.cslpreads.org/libraries-and-summer-food/](https://www.cslpreads.org/libraries-and-summer-food/)

**Don't Exclude Summer Camps**

- Invite surrounding Summer camps to the library: Library Day, Storytimes, etc

**Bring Programming Outside of Your Doors**

- Examples include laundromats, parades, parks, fairs, summer school outreach, shelters, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc. Ask: Where are kids and teens gathering at during the summer?
Reflection

- Look for your partners/collaborators
- Learn more (helping yourself grow)
- Find support
- Share more
- Don’t be afraid of failure!
Look at the Big Picture

- Each aspect may have an end, but our work is a circle
- Focus on centering the community
- Celebrate the little victories along the way
Link to Handouts Folder

[QR Code]


Share with us!

Please share additional suggestions, updates, or thoughts:

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References


