

**Four County Library System
Youth Services Meeting
22 November 2019 – Mary Wilcox Memorial Library
Focus on teens!**

Libraries represented:

In person: SID, WA, FE(3), STA, EN(2), JC(2), LI, BCPL, SNB, HART, WP, DI, FR, ONA
Via GoToMeeting: SM, AF, NO, BA

A couple of upcoming training opportunities related to teens:

- Kathleen Odean will be coming to DCMO BOCES in Norwich on April 21. She will present a full-day workshop on great new YA books (with some middle grade thrown in, too). It's also a great opportunity to connect with school librarians. It looks like she'll be at the Broome-Tioga BOCES on April 20. Sarah will send registration info when it is available.
- Transforming Teen Services – A workshop that will be offered by people trained as part of a national initiative. It looks like they won't be able to come to every system, but we may be able to partner with nearby systems (Finger Lakes and/or Southern Tier) to have one in central New York sometime in the next year or so. Sarah will send updates.

Collection

- Sarah shared a handout that included a number of ways to find out about books that might be popular and/or interesting to your teen patrons. (The handout with links can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vldOa_jFAPkFtD4MjzJ4ry9euGQIzohc/view?usp=sharing)
- Other ideas for deciding which books to add to your collection included the following:
 - o Preview collection – If your library hosts the preview, allow your patrons to take a peek at it and let you know which books they want you to purchase. (If you don't host the preview, you could let teens look at catalogs and make recommendations.)
 - o Publisher websites, especially comic publishers
 - o YouTube – Channels like Epic Reads and Collider Heroes will provide book reviews.
 - o Find out from your local high school librarian about what's popular at school.
- Book display ideas
 - o Include books based on current events and/or seasons
 - o Display new books
 - o Imitate book store displays (like those at Barnes and Noble)
 - o Have a "staff picks" display
 - o Use emoji icons to indicate if a book is funny, sad, etc.
 - o Don't make your display too pretty, or patrons might think they're not allowed to touch it. Maybe even leave an empty space so that people know that the idea is to take books and check them out. (Here's a blog post that talks about this: <http://www.teenlibrariantoolbox.com/2018/08/rethinking-displays-again/>)
 - o Use post-it notes and shelf markers to draw attention to books on the shelves

Programming Ideas

- Harry Potter Alliance – This provides a way for your teens to develop leadership skills work on things that they're passionate about. More information can be found here:
<https://www.thehpalliance.org/>
- Self-directed programming (participation from home or on their own time) – Endicott used ReadSquared (an online platform for tracking reading – provided by the NY State Library) to engage teens this past summer.
- Thoughts on programming from meeting participants:
 - o Provide a safe space for teens – a relaxed, hang-out atmosphere
 - o Have programming that includes some structured activities, as well as some unstructured time.
 - o Ask teens what they want to do
 - o Kids often want to unplug and interact with each other, so give them an opportunity to do that.
 - o It can sometimes work for teens and tweens to do programming together.
 - o It's often good to include food, and sometimes local restaurants might be willing to donate.
 - o If you have a college in your area, students might be interested in coming to provide programming at your library.
- Some ideas that have worked in member libraries:
 - o Cooking classes with a Cooperative Extension partnership (SID)
 - o Book discussion group (EN)
 - o Bath bombs and lip balm (WA)
 - o Cupcake wars (BCPL)
 - o Anti-Valentine's Day Party (WA)
 - o Minute to Win It (SID)
 - o Escape room (EN)
 - o T-shirt decorating (JC)
 - o Gaming – video games, tabletop games, bingo
 - o Minecraft crafts (JC)
 - o Duct tape and perler bead crafts
 - o Jumbo games (JC)
 - o Movie programs, including interactive movies (EN)
 - o Tech Night (EN)
- A handout with some other places to look for ideas (including links) can be found here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BUMOmr89nZfczjyXEN746wyfaoULttuX/view?usp=sharing>

Getting the word out

- Social media – Snapchat and Instagram seem to be the most popular among teens.
- Connect with the school
- Ask where teens see signage
- If you have a sign outside your library, use it to promote teen programs.
- Fenton uses the Remind app that can be used to send texts to patrons to remind them of upcoming events.

Volunteers

- Recruiting volunteers is a great way to get teens into the library, since many have requirements for community service.
- Be willing to give credit for hours served and write letters of recommendation for jobs and college.
- Meeting participants have had teen volunteers helping with these sorts of things:
 - o The “usual” – shelving, dusting, shelf reading, program prep/cleanup
 - o Creating bulletin boards
 - o Scanning history documents
 - o Answering tech questions and providing instruction on digital devices
 - o In Delhi, the high school Ukulele Club provided programming for the younger children.
 - o In Lisle, the high school Drama Club helped with a Halloween party.

Partnerships

- It might help in some situations to partner with other community agencies that are serving teens, and if you can make a connection with someone at the school, that’s also fantastic.
- Meeting participants have partnered with the following in their communities:
 - o Colleges
 - o Schools
 - o Teen center
 - o Parks Department
 - o Municipality
 - o Churches
 - o Community center
 - o Group home
 - o Scout groups
 - o Comic book store