

Tween Time Tips

An **environmental scan** of tween programs at Sch'dy County Public is that we currently offer them at Central and the 2 city branch libraries. We offer them on a weekly or every other week basis. Programs are designed for grades 5 – 9 but I am flexible & understand the tweens at the branches are often watching younger siblings so they are welcome, too, as I can accommodate them.

To speak on the **value** of tween programs - it is **dynamic**. At Central, I have contact with parents and they find value in keeping their **children engaged in the library and in a social, safe, community activity**. I endeavor to offer educational, social, and cultural activities that align w. the library's mission statement and parents have that awareness. At the city branches, tweens walk in on their own initiative because of the **3 F's: free - fun – food. Inclusivity** is important – I aim to appeal to boys, girls, quiet thinkers, social butterflies, moody, impulsive, all races and economies, anxiety ridden, and comfortable-in-their-own-skin youth. I encourage **self-discovery, cooperation, and competition** in a safe environment. **Active learning, reasoning, and exercising a variety of aptitudes** are also goals.

I think of tween program **worthiness** in a larger context than the library. Tween programs, as entrees on the youth services menu, nourish our society. During important developmental years – often where kids face the fork in the road of **trouble or truth** – providing engaging, open & free activities where professionals model compassion, practice reflective listening, set reasonable expectations and provide the space to meet them - while having fun - is a benefit to our society's future and our organization's future.

Marketing is through individual class and school assembly visits, word of mouth, facebook, signage in the library and local businesses.

Evaluation I perform is mostly informal. Butcher block paper on tables that says “golf ball billiards is . . . “ and give the tweens time to respond. Similar info can be gleaned by talking at the end of the program. I listen for enthusiasm or indifference from parents. I watch for repeat customers and through relationship building hear what they liked, was memorable, and what flopped.

Repeat programs:

- **Music Match:** playlist of songs from a variety of genres and pictures of performers on the wall & they match them to the song
- **Golf ball billiards:** colored tape, pencils, and golf balls
- **Minute to Win It:** great website and tons of interactive games that stretch tweens physically
- **Make-up session** with a local make-up artist – Thom Cammer from Arts Center in Troy
- **Scavenger Hunts:** visual scavenger hunt where they have a photo and have to find that spot in the library and the little trinket (or whatever) that's hidden there
- **CRAPS PAST** - Dice games: portability
- **iPads – IDEAS PLEASE**