Programs for Older Teens

1. Re-envision the nature of a library program. For teens, it may be much less structured than for younger children or for adults. Opportunities to hang out with friends, at the library, at a planned time, may be enough of a program. Pick one night a week (Fridays?), and call it Teen Friday Night or something generic. Have snacks, have movies and gaming equipment (electronic and board) on hand, ideas to offer (like Charades), and let the teens who come decide how they spend their evenings. You are building relationships, giving teens a place to be, and helping with their developmental assets (see handout).

2. Getting Your First Job Workshop for Teens: enlist local youth job agencies, small business owners, parents, and others to present.

3. Crafts that are more difficult and provide a cool result: look in adult craft books.

4. Duct tape: sandals, visors, bookmarks, wallets, dresses, holiday ornaments

5. Help out with library programs: put on a haunted house at the library (big or small), puppet shows, Chinese New Year. Capture kids' dramatic instincts, enjoyment of younger kids, and desire to make a difference in the world.

6. Prior to summer, host a community service/volunteer opportunities fair. Include the library's volunteer opportunities.

7. After hours or lock-in program with gaming and food

8. Be the space and provide office supplies and snacks for a Finals Study Night

9. Celebrate the end of tests with a Finals Are Over party

10. Invite someone from a local university to do a program on demystifying financial aid for college-bound students

11. Hold an anime film fest. Invite kids to wear costumes, and serve food.

12. For the teens not into mainstream school events, hold an Un-Valentine's Party or an Un-Prom. The teens plan it.

13. Hold a poetry slam or talent night. If you have a space, it can become a coffee house atmosphere.

14. For a big event, plan and hold a garage band concert.

15. Hold a poster design program/contest for a week like Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week.