

Attendance:

Natalie Hurteau (UHLS), Anne Pitlyk (UHLS), Peggy Mello (COLN), Sue Hoadley (WSTR), Elizabeth Putnam (EGRN), Carol Melewski (RCSC), Melissa Tacke (CAST), Jane Chirgwin (RENS)

Providing Better Services to our Adult Patrons with ASD

Carrie Painter, Director of Center Brunswick Services, gave a talk about ways member libraries can better serve people with disabilities. Carrie has previously worked with BRUN to help plan programs to serve people with disabilities, including chair yoga and an art program. Her tips included:

- Treat people with disabilities the same way you would treat any other patron.
- Always speak to the person with disabilities, not to staff. Even though the staff with them may be the one responding to your questions, it's important to speak directly to the person.
- Consider providing age appropriate replacements for various activities. For example, if patrons with disabilities are going to your children's section and coloring, try putting out adult coloring books.
- If you're providing the same programs for multiple audiences, consider integrating the programs. For example, if patrons with disabilities are working on their reading skills, they can work alongside youth patrons who are also learning to read better.
- In emergency situations, always try to speak with staff first before contacting the police. Staff will most likely have plans in place to help a person with disabilities manage disruptive behavior. Of course, if safety issues concern you, call the police.
- If you are getting multiple agencies coming in with groups of people at the same time, consider speaking to the staff accompanying them to try and work out better scheduling.

N. Hurteau will provide Carrie Painter's contact information to the Adult Services list, and anyone with further questions is welcome to contact her.

Providing Better Services to Our Deaf Patrons

Carol Roberts from the Troy Public Library gave a presentation about providing better services to deaf patrons. In addition to being a librarian, Carol is a sign language interpreter.

- Deaf people are not disabled, they are their own cultural group with a native language and history.
- Audism is prejudice against deaf people. It stems from the inaccurate assumption that being deaf is bad.
- When communicating with a deaf patron, consider lighting and speak at a normal pace. Back lighting makes it hard to read lips, and speaking more slowly distorts the shape of your mouth as you speak.
- It is also perfectly fine to write in order to communicate with a deaf patron, but keep in mind that for many deaf people, English is a second language, and their written grammar may not be perfect.
- Schenectady County Community College, Hudson Valley Community College, and St. Rose all offer ASL classes for those interested.

- Collection development - try to have materials on hand like graphic novels. For nonfiction, Gallaudet University Press is the preeminent authority.
- When advertising popular programs, note on the flier that ASL interpreters are available upon request. Interpreters can be hired from:
 - Association in Interpreting and Mentoring Services
 - Northeast Career Planning Interpreter Services
 - Living Resources Inc. Professional Interpreter Services
 - Sign Language Consultants of the Capital District

Library by Mail

N. Hurteau proposed establishing a service to homebound patrons patterned on the program run by Crandall Public Library. It would effectively work like Netflix by mail. Patrons could request titles from the library, the materials would be mailed in envelopes that patrons could then use to mail the books back. The program would be available to all UHLS members, but libraries with their own services to homebound patrons already in place would not be required to participate.

- E. Putnam pointed out that even though EGRN could have a program like this in place, they have had trouble reaching the population that would use it. S. Hoadley said that WSTR faces the same issue.
- M. Tacke agreed to test the program at CAST first before expanding it to other libraries.
- E. Putnam suggested that having a system-wide program would help cut down on service-area related complications.

Humane Society

N. Hurteau met with the director of the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society, Todd Cramer, to discuss partnership opportunities for libraries. Some options are:

- Mobile service for pet surrendering.
- Pet care 101 and other community education classes
- Book clubs and movie nights at the Humane Society
- Establishing pet food pantries at libraries
- Adoption days
- Spay/neuter/vaccination clinics

J. Chirgwin asked who should be contacted to arrange the programs, and N. Hurteau will get the contact information of their outreach coordinator.

Adult Literacy Grant Update

The grant has been submitted. Notary classes will be scheduled in August or September. Dr. Tom Denham and Marsha Lazarus are returning as trainers for the new grant cycle. Bek Jarvis-Girtler from COLN will serve as the technology trainer. Books and materials will continue to be offered.

Winter Reading Challenge

The committee for the Winter Reading Challenge will resume planning in the fall.

Adult Programpalooza

N. Hurteau attended the Adult Programpalooza at the Crandall Public Library. She reports back that the presentation by Janie Hermann from the Princeton Public Library in NJ was particularly helpful. E. Putnam also attended the workshop and agreed that Janie Hermann productivity tools were awesome. The presentation was sent to the Adult Services mailing list.

This led to a discussion of survey and marketing tools used by libraries. P. Mello said that Libcal will send out surveys to any patrons who registered after the event. N. Hurteau asked if having a system-wide account for Meet Up would be useful. E. Putnam agreed that it would be.

Open Forum

- All attendees agreed that more networking opportunities would be helpful. E. Putnam expressed interest in hosting a system networking event at EGRN.
- N. Hurteau would be happy to attend any adult summer reading program events that members are having and offered to help if needed.
- J. Chirgwin reminded attendees to fill out the shared program calendar. N. Hurteau said that she, Joe Thornton, Mary Fellows, and Jona Favreau are working to make improvements on the shared calendar to make it easier for staff to use.
- UHLS is also working to create a list on the website for all of the items contained in libraries of things at various member libraries. It will be important for all library of things materials to use the 500 tag to make it to this master list.
- P. Mello asked if any other libraries do outreach to senior centers. She has been seeing long overdue large print materials and asked if anyone had a good way to tack them.
 - M. Tacke brings a tote of books to a nursing home once a month. The nursing home has its own agency card on which all books are checked out before she brings them. Then, at the senior center, residents or staff there fill out a log of who takes which book.
 - P. Mello suggested service to seniors as a future ASAC topic.

Next Meetings

- How to facilitate groups and conversations with Mary Fellows
Thursday, June 27th | 9:30am
- ASAC Meeting, Topic TBD
Thursday, July 25th | 9:30am
- ASAC Meeting, Topic TBD
Thursday, August 22nd | 9:30am
- Program Swap @ GUIL
Thursday, September 26th | 9:30