

Libraries & Day-Hab Providers: Creating Meaningful & Manageable Library Visits Together

Thursday, May 15th

10 a.m.-11 a.m.

Upper Hudson Library System

In Attendance: Judith Wines (UHLS), Amy Powarzynski (WSTR), Catherine Snow (EGRN), Heather Nelson (EGRN), Laurie Buckley (APLD), Ian Hauck (EGRN), Michelle Beutel (GUIL), Amy McLaughlin (APL), Sarah Kerr-Mace (MEND), Melanie Sheldon (CAST), Marion Pierson (EGRN), Kristina Ronald (GUIL), Meg Kelly (APL), Elissa Valente (COLN), Geoff Kirkpatrick (BETH), Debbie Sternklar (VOOR), Maureen Mooney (VOOR), Bryana Wachowicz (GUIL), Natalie Hurteau (GUIL), Pete Petruski (GUIL), Jane Chirgwin (RENS), Kim Roppolo (STEP), Kelly Frazier (Liberty (Schenectady) ARC), Sarah Slagle (Wildwood), Colleen Edwards (Center for Disability Services), Chelsea Haley (Wildwood), Rob Scaccia (Living Resources), Alison (Living Resources), Lindsay Friedman (Living Resources), Crystal Ladd (Arc of RENS County), Meg Affonso (Center for Disability Services)

Introductions

Sharing Perspectives

What's working for the libraries and programs: great pre-scheduled library programs, availability of community rooms and study rooms, groups coming into the library mostly feel welcomed and comfortable

Current challenges: Sometimes agency staff and clients don't feel welcomed by library staff, high volume of visitors, lack of library resources when there are a lot of visitors, sometimes it's difficult identifying who is with which agency, lack of communication between libraries and agencies, would like more programs that are appropriate for clients

Group Discussion

What types of library activities or services are most meaningful for day-hab clients?

Volunteer opportunities for clients that can help build soft job skills, Inclusive games sessions, art programs targeted for clients (e.g. GUIL had a guided art program for Wildwood clients), exercise/movement activities (e.g. tai chi, yoga), anything that fosters socialization. Library staff could ask individuals what they want to work on today, or how they can help them work on their goals.

-What's the best way to communicate library offerings with agencies?

-Agencies don't generally look at library calendars before coming to the library. A one stop calendar would be helpful.

What are expectations for agency staff; for library staff?

- Agency staff: should be engaged and respect the individual's needs, don't use time at the library as break time, since issues have arisen from unattended clients (agencies are aware of these issues, and the agency should be informed if there are staff problems)
- Library staff: know that different clients need different levels of supervision, make sure library staff is trained to interact with clients rather than agency staff

How can we identify your staff?

- Have day-hab staff introduce themselves to library staff
- Sign-in sheets with staff names, agency name, location, and supervisor would be helpful
- Know who to contact at the agencies if there's an issue

Do agencies coordinate on other things? What is your relationship like?

Agencies are independent and do not coordinate with each other regarding library visits.

How can visits be structured to work within the library's capacity?

- Windows for agency visits are generally 10-11:30, and then 12-1:30.
 - Community-hab programs have more varied hours, including evening hours.
- It would be helpful for agencies to have a designated contact point at the libraries.

Next Steps

- UHLS will share the new calendar with the agencies so it's easier to plan visits
- Implement sign-in sheets when agencies visit libraries (including name of agency, name of present staff, and supervisor contact information)
- Share contacts between libraries and agencies