

LACONI Unconference

February 22, 2019

Session 1 – Tween Programming

Facilitated by Anne Luzeniecki

Attendance: 14

Let's start with program ideas – please share.

- Some libraries create a lot of service learning programs to help and utilize the tweens that need to be at the library anyway
- Nerf wars – afterhours, 10 years +, themes: zombie apocalypse, capture the flag
- Locked in the Library – grades 4-8 – they play various games after hours
- Tab groups who create events have more investment
- Sewing classes – basic skills or project based, grades 3-6
- Sewing with circuits
- College of DuPage – cookie decorating programs, contact: Donna Warner
- Adapt teen programs for tweens, they want a lot of the same things
- Microsoft Store Fortnite programs at you library, you need to have a good relationship with your IT dept
- Use experts in their field, people outside of your library
- Apple Store iMovie programs at your library
- Subscription boxes with book and candy, based on Owl Crate
- B&T will send arcs if you ask
- Interactive movie events

Session 2 – Summer Reading Ideas

Facilitated by Anne Luzeniecki

Attendance: 11

What are you looking forward to?

- Switching to Beanstack (technology gap & less tangible)
- Do we track titles or time for reading?
- Meeting them where they are, just track “units,” instead of titles or time
- Beads as incentive – best example Oak Park Public Library
- Books as prizes
- Scholastic book fair will come to your library
- Anderson's has a warehouse sale for stocking up on prizes, subscribe to their email
- Coupons from local businesses
- Bingo sheets
- Pool party as final prize
- Astronomy programs for 50th anniversary of Apollo II
- Histories For Kids has a Neil Armstrong impersonator
- Themes – a lot of libraries are doing Universal Stories, some are creating original themes

- Build a planetarium class (presentation at IYSI for more info)
- Teens as volunteers for registration, programs, training gauntlet, volunteering in other depts.
- Program attendance – some said attendance is going down, leveling off or going up, attendance is higher in June and drops off in July
- When is the best time to send out donation request letters – April
- Too many prize choices is overwhelming,
- Keep it simple

Session 3 – Playspaces in your library

Facilitated by Anne Luzeniecki

Attendance: 19

- Playspaces for birth through 8th grade
- Marble run
- Brainflakes
- Toys and games for older kids
- Chalkboard table (is a challenge because it is messy and allergies to dust)
- Lakeshore puzzles
- Magnatiles
- Flannel boards
- Spirographs
- Switch out activities to avoid play fatigue
- Expect some pieces to go missing
- Legos – table and walls
- Lincoln Logs
- Keep some boxes high enough that adults have to help and take responsibility
- We can't eliminate all choking hazards, there will always be something
- Make items feel special because they have to ask for them or reach for them, or unlock them
- Daddy day with hot wheels track, involve whole family
- Cleaning procedures – bins for licked toys, closing practices, Pages often help
- Puppet theatre
- Helpful if library has a washer and dryer
- Painted wood doesn't hold up
- Grimm's blocks are expensive but long lasting, they are dyed not painted
- Melissa and Doug products don't generally last, made of individual use, not public use
- Melissa and Doug pizza with Velcro toppings is popular
- Where is your service desk in relation to the playspace?
- Be present in the room, parents will be more likely to model good behavior
- See cleaning as an opportunity to engage and model behavior
- Make a staff contest/game – have staff take pictures of the messiest room
- Give kids stamps for cleaning
- Have positive engagement with play, ask them questions and compliment their play, so that you can redirect behavior when needed
- Realize that parents and caregivers are often looking down so that they do not trip over their kids and toys

- Things that haven't worked – Montessori style activities, leaving out art supplies
- Double side your coloring sheets
- How do we handle noise? Accept that kids make noise and play is important for their development
- Take shorter shifts to help staff
- Origami station

Session 4 – Passive Programming

Facilitated by Anne Luzeniecki

Attendance: 21

- Gimlet for tracking statistics
- Menu sign with games available at the desk
- Monthly giant games – scrabble, matching, hangman, would you rather
- Kids Picks – display idea
- Science to go crafts
- Story walk through department
- Fish tank turned eye spy tank
- Ellison dye shapes to decorate windows
- Flannel board for play
- Interactive bulletin boards
- Quiz of the week
- Guess the shredded book in jar
- Naming contest for plants
- Demco “Lets Stick Together” puzzles, take photos for social media
- Cardboard play houses that kids can color, they're cheap and don't last, but a lot of fun for a week or so
- Do we keep stats on passive programs? (isn't covered in attendance)
- Do we count people in playspaces as passive programming? Are playspaces passive programming?

Session 5 – STEM Kits

Facilitated by Anne Luzeniecki

Attendance: 11

- IEEE Grant for STEM kits
- Store bought kits – Mackin
- What is your check-in procedure, many circ desks won't inventory pieces
- Some staff want each piece of a kit to be a separate circ
- Work with what you've got – Anne's filing cabinet storage example
- Ready to Learn kits – for Kindergarten readiness
- What kind of boxes? – cases, backpacks, quite a variety
- Do we lock them – most say yes, with zip ties

Session 1 - Making and Building Community Connections

- Chicago Public Library does storytimes in Laundromats and at McDonalds
- Laundromats- people are stuck there for a long time lots of potential for programming there
- Also could look at barber shops
- Challenges with getting that started?
- Depends on individual people running the laundromats
- CPL worked with an umbrella organization
- How do you get the right person to talk to in order to get you in?
- Email may not be the best method to reach out to community partners
- Just showing up seems to have the best effect
- Showing up can help you plan what you need for your program
- How do we figure out usage patterns?
- When are the kids there?
- If you can't get there for storytime, maybe you can leave materials there?
- Distribute materials at doctors' offices and laundromats
- Summer Reading Sponsors-
- Could do readings at their places of business
- A scheduled thing that is advertised by both parties
- Could be a good way to start/get your foot in the door
- Could also be a way to open new doors
- Don't get tied up in big overarching concept- small steps will get you there too
- Look at your community- where are the bus routes? Where will the people/kids be?
- Water park storytime- go where the kids are!
- Hop-in storytime-
- Group storytime wasn't working at community event, so she changed gears and had the kids who walked by pick a book and she read it to them one-on-one
- It's about figuring out how we can adapt what our idea of a traditional storytime is to the environment we are in
- Could have members of community coming into the library
- You can bring a pizza to the fire department and have pizza with the firefighters-bring a group of kids
- We never really know how far-reaching our efforts are
- Hard to know how much room to give something before you end your efforts
- Face-to-face contact is really important although it can be hard to coordinate schedules
- Are we competing with the Park District?
- Good to think about what our strengths are- what do we do that's different, unique or special?
- A lot of it is the whole family, park district can't do that
- Our strength is technology and maybe not so much for the park district
- We could be syncing up our programming with the schools and park district isn't necessarily doing that
- Relationships take time to build- doesn't happen in the first year

- Formalized training for soft skills?
 - Forest Park has formalized training for customer service
 - part of a bigger project at the library
 - Recorded video for staff to watch and mini-sessions
 - Will revisit and refresh quarterly
 - When they onboard new people their community engagement librarian does one-on-ones
 - Anonymous Survey afterwards and results are shared with the management team

- What were the strongest points?
 - Scenarios were really popular and role-playing was very popular
 - everyone has to have a difficult conversation at some point and it's nice to have it play out in a smaller environment
 - smaller group so people were more open and not as shy as if it were a big group
 - they got very good feedback because of the small groups

- Hard to assess somebody's skill at customer service and any soft skills in general
- As a manager you're not spending every desk shift with that person
- Coaching can be a potentially sensitive subject- no one wants to hear that they are not a good team player
- Successful- pairing a strong team player with someone who needs more support-give them the opportunity to observe what it looks like when two people are working on something- someone who doesn't have strong programming skills works with someone who is a great programmer
- Praise someone in staff meeting and really point out the good job they did and tell everyone "hey watch what Mr. Paul did with that or how he handled that situation."
- Speaker-Listener
- Staff who aren't seeing eye to eye
- As the manager say- "You know, I'm not sure if I handled this situation the right way, what would you have done?" Can open up the conversation
- Provide as many opportunities as possible to improve these skills
- Culture Statement- put into groups and split up the culture statement- everyone does a presentation on the culture statement
- Pick something from the culture statement that the staff member wants to work on, or expand on, or develop themselves professionally
- Has anyone gone outside of the library world to address this?
- Extend offer of webinars or presentations to Park District and maybe they will have something to offer us as well
- St. Charles Public Library- Read a book on change- picture book, chapter book, adult book and then everyone go around and talk about the book they read- really positive, successful experience
- Experiences with other departments within the library?
- Customer service policy applies to patrons and staff
- Extend same courtesy and respect to staff that you do to patrons
- Managers have to make an effort to collaborate and solve problems together because it trickles down to the other staff
- Empowerment of all levels of staff to know the impression they make on the public
- Make it clear that the customer service statement applies to everyone-critical to patron's enjoyment of the library

- Team building-
- Be intentional in getting the staff to work together
- Get outside of the library and do something different
- Ukulele classes for storytellers and has turned into a team builder, people relating on a level in a positive way (Glen Ellyn)

Session 3- Readers Advisory

- Most useful site: Mid Continent Public Library juvenile sequels and series
- Do a google search for juvenile series and sequels
- Can search by series title, author, book title
- Pinterest and Good Reads lists
- Instagram
- RA for All
- Common Sense Media- appropriateness and what's in the book
- Can use for books, games, movies
- Will tell you how many times a swear word is in a book
- RA Meetings
 - someone facilitates a book discussion among the YS staff
 - sometimes they read the same book
 - potential Newbury contenders
 - buzz books
 - everyone reads one and they talk about it
 - hi/lo books -find a book for a 4th grader reading at a 1st grade level and a 1st grader reading at a high level -found that this is a hard task!
 - sometimes it's about the books and sometimes it's about the process
 - created a good reads account for the youth services department
 - people can add books to the shelves and make private notes
- Staff members Who Read What List
 - Someone on staff says they love thrillers and then they call on that person to give suggestions
- Challenges
 - Homeschool family who wanted Christian Vikings
 - Parent says I need a book at Level M
 - Trying to make parents understand that the kids don't HAVE to stay in that level-they aren't boxed in
 - At a certain level it's more about interest and appropriateness
- Discoverability
 - Making collections visible and merchandised in a way that promotes RA
 - Put series collections by name like You Choose under YOU
- Bookshelf with each shelf being a different genre
- Rotate them out monthly
- Shelved like a book store with some face out and some spine out
- Go to neighborhood bookstores and observe
- Think about how stores market their items- how can that be applied to books?
- Tweens do peer reader advisory

- Give 10 book titles they really like and librarian posts it on the slat wall so other 4th graders can see what another 4th grader is reading
- Get rid of Dewey and do picture book neighborhoods -put nonfiction picture books in with the other picture books
- Make grade level reading bibs and change them every spring
- Stock up on those books in the spring so that they are ready for the summer
- A lot of work but worthwhile
- Present new selections at a YS staff meeting
- 12-15 books each year for each grade
- Bibliographies are immensely helpful
- Bookmarks with read alike titles, not descriptions
- Library Aware has pre-made bookmarks
 - you can switch out the books to make them all books you own
 - or you can keep them and promote ILL
- Personal Reading List- GENEVA
 - do it for all ages
 - form on website with age, reading level, genres you like and don't like, books you've read and enjoyed
 - form is emailed to everyone on the team and someone replies that they are working on it
 - they use Library Aware
 - patron will get personalized list with 5 books
 - presented this at PTO meetings and parents really like it
- Attach phrase "curated" or "personalized"
- Noticed that people still like the paper forms and like coming in and having books handed to them
- Subscription boxes
 - Hinsdale Public Library
 - curate new books each month
 - Like Owl Crate
 - Converted to library book version
 - Also give them ARC's -contacted Baker and Taylor and they gave them a bunch of ARCs
 - 4th-5th graders love it
 - Add other little things like stickers and candy
 - Recycle things from summer reading
 - Patrons come and pick up from library
 - Personalized to child's interest
 - Capped at 30 a month
 - 3 months per kid and then they rotate them out so other kids can have a chance
 - Experimenting with using different boxes and bags
 - About the way you market it
 - Partnering with Adult Department and doing a parent child book
 - Can market through the school librarians and have them show it off
 - Now exploring crafting boxes
- Schaumburg PL Subscription Boxes
 - items put inside box
 - they keep the items and bring back the box and books
 - do it for 3 months and then they can renew

- they have 300 boxes, so right now they have no cap per month
- Fill out form of what they like
- do a survey when they turn it in so they can tailor the service even more
- make buttons
- No candy
- Only do it with teens right now because it's a pilot
- Helen Plum- baseball card type handouts with read-alike suggestions for popular books
- Tag collection with great read-aloud for school mystery readers
- Picture Book bin categories

Session 4: Volunteers

- What can volunteers do when they come?
- Help with craft prep
- Wiping toys
- Middle school vs adult volunteers?
- Court ordered? Boring jobs nobody wants
- Teens? Fun things from them to do so they want to come back
- 5 hours to read a book in the YA collection, write a review and film it
- Trying to figure out how to vet volunteers to lead family programs
- Parents Day Out-
 - Hinsdale is looking into offering this in the future
 - Parents would be able to drop off kids and the NHS volunteers will babysit the kids, go through a workshop first that covers child protection and have a little staff oversight
 - Ongoing series
 - Can have them do Storytimes
 - Train teen volunteers so that they can take on a bigger role in the future
 - Wouldn't be for a long period of time- For example 10 am-12 pm on Saturdays in December you can drop your kid off and you can leave for a little bit
- Middle to Littles- Glen Ellyn
- Craft Sale and Book Sale help
- Where is the line between what you have the paid people do vs the volunteers?
 - Union libraries can't have any volunteers do tasks that a librarian could do- maybe package it as an internship
- Try wrapping it as a program- have teens come in as a group and do inventory or labeling projects under a staff member
- Adult volunteer-
 - Try getting involved in outreach
 - Assistant at an outreach event
 - Talk about how much they love the library-advocacy thing
 - They can scout out locations for laundromat storytime or the like
 - Research what other libraries are doing- go to other libraries and report back about what they are doing
- Check pieces for STEM kits
- Kids wanted a chess club- no one in YS wanted to start it, so they had a teen and her friend run it
- Applications?

- Google forms
- Volgistics-a bit clunky
- Good ol' paper
- Require references- teacher, clergy, not a family member
- Interviews for teens
- If there isn't enough for the person to do to reach their hours, give a list of other places they can volunteer in the community
- Adult Volunteers- background checks
 - Have to commit to certain amount of time because the library has to pay for it
- Issues with volunteers signing up but not showing up
 - if you don't show up for one of your scheduled shifts, the rest are taken away -there are other people waiting
- Volunteer Appreciation?
 - College recommendation letters
 - Job recommendation letters
 - Pizza Party
 - Free printing coupons
 - Fine coupons
- Every volunteer is different and you have to customize their experience at the library to their strengths

Session 5- Arts and Crafts

- Paper Mache Alternative-
 - Shred it, soak it in water, dry it/ring it out, mix it with flour, like play-doh, can knead it, roll it, and shape it
 - Made stalactite and stalagmites for a cave program
- Muselin bags and created tic tac toe, tags so they can make it for a friend- tic tac toe bag to go
- Craftsters- Morton Grove Public Library
 - Make bean Bag toss games
- Bean bags out of baby socks from the dollar store and tie with a hair tie
- Pipe Cleaner Ninjas-
 - Straw, color it, cut it up, combine with beads and thread onto pipe cleaner
 - Google it
 - Can make dioramas with them
- Chopped with crafts
 - craft supplies and you make a creation
 - families worked together
- Crafternoon-
 - Take leftover random bits and put them out for 2 hours
- Money Smart Week-
 - Beads
 - \$15 of fake money and they decide how they will spend their money
 - Everything is priced and it's just leftovers from the cabinet
- Marshmallow shooters are popular
- Cardboard construction

- saved book boxes for weeks
- put them out in meeting room with masking tape
- bought cardboard knives
- let them go at it
- let them take the creations home
- cheap but took some forethought for stashing the boxes
- also use toilet paper tubes
- Mr McGroovys website- sells connectors for attaching cardboard
- Make Do- also has connectors
- Different connectors are required for single and double cardboard
- Cloud Dough-
 - Soft play-doh
 - Flour, cornstarch, water, baby oil
 - Caused a mess so protect tables and floor
 - Use a tarp on the floor
- Cornstarch and conditioner- google it
- What if You Had Animal Feet? What if You Had Animal Hair? Books
- put copies of pictures on the wall
 - kids got to choose what teeth they wanted, ears they wanted
 - then would draw self-portrait with the animal parts
- Jar Programs
 - glitter jars
 - buy mason jars from amazon
- Kindness Rocks
 - paint rock with positive message
 - hide around town
 - book covers on the rocks
 - clean rocks
 - use primer and spray paint
 - then use acrylic markers to paint on top of the prime paint
 - spray with protective coating
 - pair with presentation on kindness and how the kindness rocks movement started
- Tempura paint sticks, kind of goes on like oil pastels
- Election signs
 - prime them and then cover with chalkboard paints
 - then kids used chalk and made their own message like Vote for Robots
 - kids take the signs home
- Dollar store fans
 - take them apart and make them into spinner art devices
 - made mess containment units
 - had to prove that mess containment units worked before they combined it all
 - Morton Grove Public Library
- Old art stashed away in the library-
 - Repurpose for older kids to repaint using the canvas/frame
 - Use what you got!
 - Put up sign to solicit craft materials

- Storage?
- Clear plastic boxes that are labeled
- Craft materials can go into subscription boxes
- Drop-in craft to get rid of extra crafts and materials
- Crafts on the go for school visits?
 - Use silhouette machine
 - Put materials in baggies
 - Everyone gets a kit
- Open ended art- Just bring printer paper and colored pencils
- Ceramic figure painting
- Paint book ends and use them in the library
- Cover contest
 - Peter Pan book without a cover and do a cover contest
- Collaborative art-
 - Everyone works on something over time
 - Mosaic picture
 - During summer reading each time the kids came in they got to put a dot on the picture
 - Don't put it on glass-do it on paper
- Poster and cut it apart and then they get to pull out a piece and put it on the master- at the end the picture will be completed
- Collaborative coloring sheets
- Printing shop will print it huge for you -table size
- Bradley Public Library will share files they have used
- Glitter glue is a great alternative to glitter
- Glue dots are easy and convenient
- Elmer's glue in finger nail polish bottles- buy in bulk on amazon- easier for the kids