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ABSTRACT

This document provides guidance and practical suggestions for Wisconsin public libraries in ensuring that all youth will have convenient and equitable access to materials and technology at public libraries to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. The body of the document is the plan itself, which includes goals, objectives, and possible activities for public libraries, public library systems, and the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Public libraries are the primary focus of the plan, and specific activities are described that public libraries can consider in efforts to improve library services to youth with special needs. In addition to the plan itself, statewide demographic data are given for comparison with local service areas. The plan is based on results of a March 1998 statewide conference; in conjunction with the task force members' thoughts about societal trends and their implications for public library service, the summary of the conference results is given. All sections offer topics for discussion and exploration at librarian and board of trustees meetings, or in talks with possible agency partners in the community. Appendices include survey form and results; selected collaboration resources; Library Services and Technology Act projects for youth with special needs; and a bibliography. (AEF)

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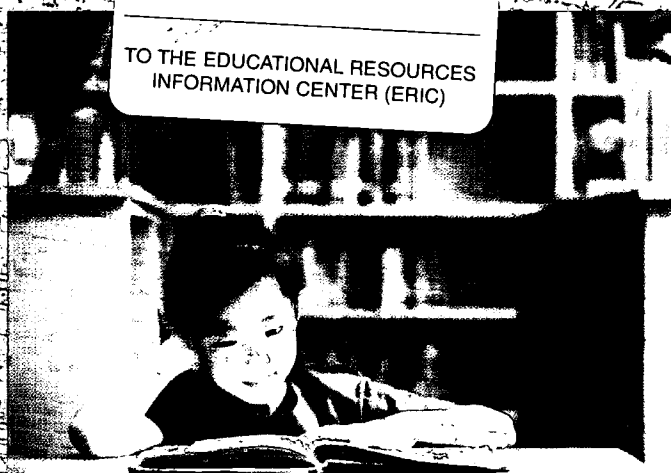
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A Plan for Wisconsin

Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Public Library Services for Youth with Special Needs: A Plan for Wisconsin

Developed by the Task Force on Youth with Special Needs

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Foreword

Public libraries can make a major contribution to the quality of life for all children and young adults, regardless of their personal circumstances or their economic background. *Public Library Services for Youth with Special Needs: A Plan for Wisconsin* is designed to provide guidance and practical suggestions for public libraries in ensuring that all youth will have convenient and equitable access to materials and technology at public libraries to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

The plan was developed partly as a response to welfare reform legislation, and recognizes the changing face of Wisconsin. As we move into the twenty-first century, our state's population is increasingly diverse, youth with disabilities are living at home and attending neighborhood schools, a significant percentage of children live in poverty in both rural and urban communities, and the juvenile arrest rate is climbing. In the plan, the members of the Special Needs Youth Task Force identify strategies through which public libraries can provide these children and teens with the means to develop the skills and the positive self-image they need to be happy and successful in school and in their adult years.

Collaboration is one of the six goals in the plan. This emphasis on working together will be effective in bringing together public libraries, schools and agencies that work with youth with special needs. The Department will actively promote awareness of the plan in schools, encouraging school librarians and teachers to form partnerships with the public libraries in their communities.

John T. Benson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Acknowledgments

This plan would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of the Special Needs Youth Task Force, who met eight times between February 1998 and January 1999 to create the plan. Task force members gave generously of their time, knowledge and experience.

Deepest appreciation to Coral Swanson, a private library consultant from Janesville, who designed the planning process, co-facilitated the task force meetings, and, wresting order from the creative thinking represented on countless flip chart sheets, wrote the first draft of the plan.

Thanks also to those individuals who substituted for task force members occasionally unable to attend a meeting: Nancy Fletcher of the Waukesha County Library System, Barbara Huntington of the South Central Library System, Sandy Lonergan of Representative Underheim's office, Joan McArthur of the Department of Workforce Development, and Marsha Valance of the Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

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Presenters at the Library Conference on Special Needs Youth

Many thanks to the presenters at the Library Conference on Special Needs Youth, which was held on March 17, 1998, in Madison. Nan Brien, Associate Director of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families and a member of the task force, provided an overview of the demographics of Wisconsin's youth with special needs. Jim Moeser, Administrator for the Dane County Juvenile Court Program; Becky Steinhoff, director of the Atwood Community Center; and Amy Whitehead, project coordinator at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Waisman Center, gave thoughtful presentations which informed the Conference attendees and influenced the members of the task force throughout their subsequent meetings.

Department of Public Instruction

Gratitude is first expressed to Nancy Holloway, executive assistant to the State Superintendent, for her guidance in the procedures for establishing a State Superintendent's task force. Division administrator Cal Potter's support for the plan and his active assistance in getting out the word out about its existence are deeply appreciated. Many thanks to Division colleagues who served as members of the task force, namely, Larry Nix, director of the Public Library Development Team, and Jane Roeber, youth services consultant. Larry and Jane not only participated actively at task force meetings, but were generous in sharing their knowledge and experience about the steps in moving a publication from idea to reality. Thanks also to Jane for writing "How to Use This Document" and for her inestimable help in editing the document. Al Zimmerman, public library system administration and finance consultant, gave generously of his time and expertise in formatting the special needs youth survey and collating the results. Bob Bocher, technology consultant, placed the various drafts of the plan on the Department Web site and used his skills to ensure that the survey forms for response to the draft plan were available electronically. Thanks to Kay Ihlenfeldt, librarian at the Department's Professional Library, for her assistance in identifying and obtaining resources. Much appreciation to George W. Hall, the Public Library Development Team's program specialist and computer guru, for his technical assistance, editing skills, and unfailing good humor. The attractive cover for the plan was designed by Donna Collingwood, graphic artist for the Department.

Wisconsin Library Association

Sincere appreciation to the staff at the Wisconsin Library Association office, at which seven of the Task Force meetings were held. Thanks to Tom Klement, Lisa Strand and Brigitte Vacha of the Wisconsin Library Association for their graciousness in setting up the meeting room time after time, and for creating a hospitable environment.

Frances de Usabel
Special Services Consultant
April 1999

Introduction

Definition of Youth with Special Needs

For the purposes of this document, youth with special needs are defined as youth under age 18 who are poor and/or have disabilities. Youth with special needs include, but are not limited to, children and teens who are economically and educationally disadvantaged, those for whom English is a second language, and youth who are institutionalized or incarcerated or homeless or who have cognitive, emotional or physical disabilities.

Libraries in Wisconsin

Wisconsin has 381 independent, statutorily recognized public libraries organized under seventeen public library systems. Public library systems are county and multicounty administrative units that receive state aid to coordinate library development and resource sharing among the public libraries within their service areas. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, through the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning, is responsible for statewide library development, resource sharing, and administering state aid to public library systems. Within Wisconsin, the Division also administers the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), a federal grant program for libraries.

Background of the Special Needs Youth Initiative

Every public library system has a staff person with the responsibility for promoting and facilitating library services to individuals of all ages with special needs. The Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning annually organizes a meeting for the system special needs consultants, and at their meeting in 1994 the group engaged in an all-day planning session. They were asked to prioritize among the various special needs populations, given the inadequacy of available resources to serve all persons with special needs. Children in poverty were the group given the highest priority, and this decision has been reaffirmed in subsequent annual meetings.

In 1995, the Youth Services Section of the Wisconsin Library Association, a nonprofit educational organization committed to improving and promoting library and information service, published the *Wisconsin Public Library Youth Services Guidelines*. It contains a section on collaboration and outreach, which includes library service to youth from economically disadvantaged families and youth with disabilities.

In June 1996, the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning sponsored a statewide workshop to inform librarians about the pending Wisconsin Works (W-2) legislation in Wisconsin and to generate recommendations about the role of public

libraries in providing information and resources to those who would be affected by this legislation. (The W-2 program eliminated the cash entitlement provided under AFDC and replaced it with a work-based program.) Many of the workshop recommendations concerned children in W-2 families. A few months later, in September 1996, new legislation for federal funding for library service—the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)—was enacted. One of the purposes of LSTA is “targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and underserved urban and rural communities, including children (birth through 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.”

Given the W-2 legislation, the specific language concerning children in poverty in LSTA, and the priority given to children in poverty by the Wisconsin library community, the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning developed the following priority for the *Library Services and Technology Act Plan for Wisconsin 1997-2002*: “to ensure equitable library and information services to youth in poverty, institutionalized youth, and those with disabilities.” An objective for that priority for 1998-99 was “to establish a task force to develop a statewide plan for library services for at-risk youth.”

Charge to the Task Force

The Special Needs Youth Initiative was undertaken in 1998 by the Wisconsin Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL) and funded with LSTA monies. A twenty-three member task force was appointed by John Benson, Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction, and charged with creating a statewide plan to improve public library services in Wisconsin to low-income children and teens and those with disabilities. Comprised of librarians, legislators, and staff from the Department of Public Instruction, other state agencies, schools, and the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, members were chosen because of their experience and their demonstrated commitment to improving library service to young people with special needs.

In his charge to the Special Needs Youth Task Force at its first meeting on February 10, 1998, Larry Nix, director of the DLTCL Public Library Development Team, said, “There is a basic assumption in undertaking this effort that public libraries can make a major contribution to the quality of life for all children and young adults regardless of their personal circumstances or background.” In developing the plan for youth with special needs, the task force was asked to examine the current level of library service, incorporate information from Wisconsin projects funded with federal monies, think about societal trends, and review the recommendations generated at the statewide conference on youth with special needs. Because meeting the needs of special needs youth requires the cooperation and involvement of families, schools, and community and state organizations, the task force also was asked to consider how public libraries can best cooperate with other groups and agencies. Finally, the plan developed by the task force was to provide guidance on priorities, strategies, and the allocation of existing and potential new resources.

How To Use This Document

The heart of this document is the plan itself, which includes goals, objectives, and possible activities for public libraries, public library systems, and the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. Public libraries are the primary focus of the plan because that is where direct service to youth with special needs usually is provided. Specific activities are described that public libraries can consider in efforts to improve library services to youth with special needs. The recommended objectives for public library systems and the Division are designed to strengthen and support community level activities.

For ease of reference, the six goals are listed on page 16, preceding the chart of goals, objectives, and activities. Starred (*) activities are basic steps a library of any size could undertake to better incorporate youth with special needs into its program. (These basic activities also appear in a separate listing, "Getting Started in a Few Minutes a Week," on page 28.)

Given specific local, regional, and statewide situations, many individuals will find the plan essential to short term and long range planning.

- For youth services librarians, the plan will be a model against which to test present activities and to use in analyzing what they already do in cooperation with other community resources. They will find it a stimulus in considering new or revised services, and will be able to use it as a base for discussion with other community agencies and organizations concerned with serving youth with special needs, their families, and caregivers.
- For public library directors working in conjunction with youth services staff members, the plan will be a catalyst for defining or redefining outreach services and the library's active role in the community.
- For public library trustees working in conjunction with the library director and staff, a thorough acquaintance with the plan will help in the formulation and adoption of proactive appropriate budgets and formal policies. The community connections represented by members of the board of trustees will enhance efforts to promote and publicize the library's services to special populations.
- For public library system consultants in the fields of special needs and youth services, the plan will stimulate exploration of potential new regional partnerships and resources, offer ideas for working with member libraries, suggest avenues for planning continuing education workshops, and lead to helpful, relevant resources. The plan itself provides a model of strategic planning, and the statewide survey form (Appendix A) can easily be adapted for use in system-level planning.
- For public library system directors, familiarity with the plan will strengthen understanding of and support for service to youth with special needs. It will be a foundation for discussion with system staff.
- For trustees of public library systems, the plan will broaden knowledge of demographics and the potential for library initiatives. As with local boards of trustees, the occupations, insights, and commitments of individual board members will facilitate meaningful cooperative efforts.

- For staff members at the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning, the plan will reinforce the effort to provide support and technical assistance and to disseminate information about best practices and resources in a timely way. The plan will serve to focus continuing attention on services to youth with special needs and continuing interaction with state level organizations that serve those young people, and their families and caregivers. Response from public libraries and systems will help direct the use of future state and federal dollars.
- For schools and for community programs serving youth with special needs, the plan will broaden their understanding of potential strategies for partnerships with public libraries.

In addition to the plan itself, other parts of this document can assist libraries in designing services best suited to their communities.

- In the “Looking at Wisconsin” section (pp. 5-9), the statewide demographic data can provide a comparison with local service areas. (Statistics for every Wisconsin county can be obtained from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families’ *WisKids Count Data Books*, cited in the bibliography (Appendix D).
- Information about what Wisconsin libraries are doing is found in the summary results of a statewide survey and the tabulation of that survey’s results (Appendix A), and in the descriptions of LSTA projects for youth with special needs (Appendix C).
- “Selected Collaboration Resources” (Appendix B) identifies possible partners for library projects, while the bibliography (Appendix D) offers a list of recommended titles on library services to youth with special needs. A couple of pages are provided following the collaboration resources section for use in listing local contacts.

The plan is based on the results of a March 1998 statewide conference where librarians and personnel from relevant agencies gathered to identify the needs of youth with special needs, barriers to public library service, and strategies for overcoming those barriers. In conjunction with the task force members’ thoughts about societal trends and their implications for public library service (pp. 7-9), the summary of the conference results in “How the Plan Was Developed” (pp. 11-13) can provide the basis for local library and system-level planning. All sections offer topics for discussion and exploration at librarian and board of trustee meetings, or in talks with possible agency partners in the community.

Looking at Wisconsin

Demographics of Youth with Special Needs

Children in Poverty

Wisconsin's estimated population for 1995 was 5,119,240, a 4.7% increase since 1990. The fastest growing areas have been the Fox Valley, the Wisconsin River Valley, Dane County and southeastern Wisconsin. There are 1,351,840 children below the age of 18, representing 26.4% of Wisconsin's population (*1998 WisKids Count Data Book*). In 1995, 14% of Wisconsin's children were living in poverty. This was a decrease from 16% in 1985 and compares to the national average of 21% for 1985 and 1995 (*Kids Count Data Book, 1998*).

At the Special Needs Youth Conference on March 17, 1998, Nan Brien, the associate director of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families and a member of the task force, provided statistics about child poverty in Wisconsin. Because the Census Bureau does not make state population estimates by race or ethnicity between the decennial census years, Brien used figures primarily from the 1990 Census.

Although the overall state population grew at less than half the national rate between 1980 and 1990, Wisconsin's growth rate among all races except whites exceeded the national rate. Wisconsin's overall population thus grew at a rate that was much slower than the national rate during the 1980s, but its rate of growth among minority children and adults far exceeded the national average. This trend is expected to continue into the next decade, and the number of children of color in Wisconsin will increase.

Among Wisconsin children, the high growth rate of groups other than whites occurred primarily within cities. Thirty-four percent of the children in thirteen Wisconsin cities were African American, American Indian, Asian, or Hispanic, compared to 13% of the children in the state as a whole. The thirteen cities are Appleton, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Janesville, Kenosha, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Racine, Sheboygan, Waukesha and Wausau (*1995 WisKids Count Data Book*).

The ethnic group registering the largest increase in Wisconsin during the 1980s was Southeast Asians. In 1990, Southeast Asians experienced the highest total poverty rate and second highest child poverty rate of the major race/ethnicity groups in Wisconsin. Only California had a larger number of Southeast Asian immigrants. Even more startling are the statistics indicating that Southeast Asian children living in Wisconsin had the highest poverty rate among these children in any state, while the poverty rate for African American children in Wisconsin was second only to Louisiana's.

According to 1990 Census figures, while 9.8% of Wisconsin's Caucasian children lived in poverty, 54.1% of African American youth, 48.1% of Asian children, 44.6% of American Indian, and 32.6% of Hispanic youth were in poverty. (The 1990 Census defined poverty for a family of four with two minor children by a 1989 income below \$12,575. By 1998 the figure had risen to \$16,450.)

Among the most vulnerable populations in Wisconsin are single mothers and their children. Since 1985, more children live in single parent households. In 1995, 22% of families with children were headed by a single parent compared to 20% in 1985 (*Kids Count Data Book, 1998*). According to 1990 Census figures, 43.3% of single mothers with children were living below the poverty level, compared with 5% of married couples with children and 15% for single fathers with children. In 1994, 21% of births in Wisconsin were to teen mothers. Brien said research shows that poverty is the single greatest single predictor of a child's IQ at age 5—more important than maternal education or ethnicity.

According to 1993 estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, the greatest **numbers** of poor children live primarily in southern Wisconsin's most populated counties:

	Youth in poverty	Percent of county's children
Milwaukee	54,094	31.1%
Dane	5,857	9.3%
Racine	5,233	14.1%
Brown	4,187	10.2%
Rock	4,087	14.3%

With the exception of Milwaukee, the counties with the highest **percentages** of children living in poverty were located primarily in more sparsely populated northern Wisconsin:

	Youth in poverty	Percent of county's children
Menominee	478	36.5%
Milwaukee	54,094	31.1%
Sawyer	745	24.7%
Forest	408	22.9%
Rusk	641	20.3%

Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile arrest rates and correctional institution placements have increased in Wisconsin over the last several years. Juvenile arrests increased from 87.2 per 1,000 children in 1992 to 106.7 per 1,000 children in 1996. During the same period, juvenile correctional institution placements increased from 1,661 to 2,155. Juvenile arrests in Wisconsin over the last three years have been concentrated primarily in the southeast and northern counties (*1998 WisKids Count Data Book*).

Changes in Wisconsin's juvenile code allowed the incarceration of most seventeen-year-olds in county jails rather than juvenile detention centers, effective January 1, 1996. An estimated total of 5,750 seventeen-year-olds were held in Wisconsin county jails in 1996, but an estimated 8,125 were held during 1997 (Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance, Statistical Analysis Center, *Wisconsin Adult Jail Populations 1997*).

Children with Disabilities

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction provides child counts by primary disability. The counts for children and youth ages three to twenty-one, as of December 1, 1997, are given below. Children with more than one disability were counted only once, according to their primary disability. Over 25% of these 113,498 children have two or more disabling conditions.

Primary Disability	Count
Learning Disability	46,816
Speech and Language	27,689
Emotional Disturbance	16,344
Cognitive Disability	13,455
Orthopedic Impairment	1,888
Hearing Impairment	1,545
Autism	1,052
Vision Impairment	434
Other Impairments	4,275

The Department of Health and Family Services provides a child count for infants and toddlers with developmental delays and diagnosed disabilities served by the Birth to Three Program. The December 1, 1997 count was 3,896.

Societal Trends and their Implications for Public Library Service to Youth with Special Needs

During the planning process the task force identified trends and forces in our society affecting the lives of youth with special needs. The process combined examining known facts with imagining what the future may hold. Members considered demographic data, comments from speakers and participants at the statewide conference on youth with special needs, and their own knowledge and experience as citizens and as professionals. Task force members then explored what implications these trends might have for the provision of public library services to youth with special needs.

Significant numbers of children are living in poverty. Children are being affected by welfare program changes in W-2 (Wisconsin Works) and SSI (Supplemental Security Income). Health care services are not available or the services offered through health care plans are being limited. There is an increasing gap between the haves and have-nots in our society.

A variety of communication barriers, such as limited literacy skills and minimal family tradition of library use, will continue to challenge public libraries to find innovative ways to reach youth with special needs. Cooperating with programs that serve them (for example, Women, Infants and Children [WIC] and free health clinics) will offer public libraries opportunities to reach youth with special needs where they are. The importance of the role of “free” libraries will increase. Making it easier to obtain and maintain a library card will be important. By offering volunteer opportunities to youth with special needs, the public library can encourage a feeling of ownership and belonging.

Our communities, our schools, our workplaces are more diverse. Increasing numbers of Hispanics and Asians are changing the ethnic composition of our state. Youth with disabilities are leaving institutions and being included in regular school classes in their local communities. Workplaces and communities are becoming more accessible to persons with disabilities. Medical advances have enabled more people with life-threatening disabilities to survive.

Being more responsive to a diverse population means making library staff more aware of how best to meet different people’s needs and more aware of the services provided by community agencies. A diverse service population increases the importance of evaluating accessibility and adaptability when designing programs. Agencies experienced in working with special needs populations can assist in staff awareness and program design. Public libraries can partner with schools to share resources and expertise. Community information and referral becomes an important public library service.

There is an antitax climate and a shift in power and responsibility from the federal to the local government level. Accompanying this trend is an increased interest in private instead of public support. With financial support declining, there is more attention being focused on reducing services and duplication and increasing agency collaboration.

Decreasing tax support means that public libraries will have to be creative in the search for funding by looking outside the community and by investigating how other organizations are garnering support. More attention will be paid to private fund raising. Collaborative efforts will become more important as a way of reaching people in need more effectively and efficiently. (Borrowing equipment from schools over the summer is one example.) The public library will remain one of the shrinking numbers of “entitlements” as “free” library services. Increased advocacy will be needed along with more effective political networks.

Technology is changing the way Americans communicate and access information and the amount of information available. Technology is making libraries and their collections more accessible to those with the money to own, and the skills to use, computers. The increasing use of technology poses the danger of placing information resources and computer skills out of the reach of poor youth and those with disabilities both because of the lack of money and because

Web-based information sources, as they evolve, may not be adapted for persons with disabilities. Youth with special needs are often missing from technology plans. At the same time, a high level of technical and traditional literacy skills is needed for jobs beyond the entry level.

By providing the necessary technology—such as Internet access, screen magnification and other adaptive software—the public library can ensure that youth with disabilities and low-income youth are not cut off from access to information resources. The public library can ensure that computer access for special needs populations is maintained as computer services evolve. The public library can market Internet access to minority populations among whom surveys show low access to the Internet. It can provide additional staff, better trained in technology.

There are more parents in the workforce and they are commuting longer distances. At least 50% of children will spend time in a single parent family. About 50 to 80% of preschool children have working parents, resulting in children being placed in child care programs. More youth with disabilities are at home rather than in institutions. These developments increase the need for more community support for parents in terms of child care services and information resources. Research is emphasizing the importance of children's early years in their future growth and development and consequently highlighting the importance of a child care environment that is safe and stimulating.

This trend will increase the importance of cooperating with agencies that provide services to children and their parents in reaching special needs youth. The public library can go where the children are and be seen as a resource that is accessible through many different locations and sources. The public library can respond to working parent needs by offering appropriate hours of service, providing dial-in access to the catalog and collections when closed, repeating programs at varied times, offering parent resource collections, workplace services, and after-school programs.

There is a climate of increased violence and conflict with younger and younger children being involved in the criminal justice system. Gang influence is increasing. There is greater public indignation at misdirected youth. The focus is on incarceration as opposed to prevention.

The public library can provide a safe and responsible environment for children and teenagers. It can cooperate with schools and community agencies to create educational and cultural opportunities for at-risk children, such as after-school reading clubs, homework centers, and evening programming for families. The public library can enhance the self-esteem of teens by creating opportunities for them to learn by doing, involving them in planning programs and volunteer opportunities with younger children. The public library can cooperate with staff at alternative high schools and juvenile detention centers and offer community work placements for teens in the juvenile justice system.

How the Plan was Developed

Between February and September 1998, the Special Needs Youth Task Force met monthly to develop the plan. In addition to the task force meetings, an invitational conference was held in March to gather input from librarians and community agency staff throughout Wisconsin. Sixty-five attendees participated in small groups where they identified the needs of special needs youth, the barriers that exist to library use by special needs youth, and strategies public libraries can use to best address the needs and overcome the barriers. The task force used the conference results as the foundation on which the plan was built. Included in the final draft of the plan that was sent to all public libraries and public library systems in December 1998 was a response survey. The task force convened for a final time in January 1999 to make changes in the plan based on the survey responses from the library community.

Needs of Youth with Special Needs

Conference participants identified a variety of needs, which the task force organized into five general categories.

Basic: To have adequate food, clothing, shelter, and health care, and a comfortable, safe environment, which includes space and opportunity for self-definition.

Emotional: To be respected, valued, accepted, trusted, understood, encouraged, and loved. To have self-confidence and hope for themselves and their futures. To find fun and enjoyment in life. To be seen as distinct, whole individuals, not only or merely as "individuals with special needs."

Social: To have a support network that includes family, friends, dependable adults, and positive role models who provide love, guidance, and discipline. To have the ability to communicate. To have a place where they feel they belong and where they can have positive interactions with others.

Educational and Recreational: To have access to a variety of community resources that offer, at very little or no cost, opportunities for stimulation, training, education, learning, recreation, physical activity, and participation.

Access: To have affordable access to education, information, recreation, and service resources that have no physical or transportation barriers and are welcoming and easy to use.

Barriers to Public Library Use

As a second step, conference participants identified barriers to public library use. These were organized by the task force into three general categories:

Inadequate access. This includes physical barriers related to a public library building. It also includes geographic, neighborhood, and transportation barriers in getting to a public library.

Knowledge, culture, and climate both outside and inside the library. Outside the library, barriers include lack of familiarity with library services, limited language and literacy skills, the attitudes of peers and parents about library use, competing demands and responsibilities, and inadequate emphasis on agency cooperation. Inside the library, barriers may include unwelcoming and uninformed staff and patron attitudes; unfriendly, inflexible, and costly library policies; the lack of involvement by youth with special needs in library planning that affects them; and the perception that services to youth with special needs is an “extra” (i.e., expendable) service.

Lack of resources for youth with special needs. This includes the lack of appropriate materials, programs, services, equipment, technology, and the staff time to provide them.

Strategies to Overcome Barriers

As a final step, conference participants suggested how public libraries can best overcome the barriers and address the needs of youth with special needs. The task force organized the responses under topics which formed the basis for the plan’s goals and objectives. (The following responses are listed in priority order, as voted upon by the task force members. In their transformation to goals, they have been arranged in the order in which a library would implement them.)

Market library services. Create a marketing plan to reach all publics, including staff and governing bodies. Develop and promote a welcoming attitude. Be a visible presence in the community. Be proactive in sharing information about library services and resources with schools, day cares, and community agencies. (Goal #6)

Train staff. Develop and train staff. Promote knowledge and understanding while respecting differences and celebrating commonalities. Offer workshops focused on sensitivity training and cultural awareness. Utilize the Wisconsin Library Association’s *Wisconsin Public Library Youth Services Guidelines*. Recruit minorities for library school and library staffs (Goal #2)

Collaborate. Partner with agencies that work with youth with special needs to obtain needed expertise and services. Diversify library board membership. Get community input via teen and adult advisory boards. Network and collaborate with other libraries

and with community and state organizations. Campaign for more library funds at local, state, and federal levels. (Goal #4)

Ensure physically accessible library buildings. Make libraries more inviting and accessible. Rearrange library facilities for greater access. (Part of Goal #5)

Plan to include youth with special needs. Work with youth with special needs to design programs and services. Invite ownership. Address special needs as part of overall library planning. Conduct needs assessments. Survey nonusers. Use focus groups. (Goal #1)

Diversify materials, services, and equipment. Develop appropriate collections. Obtain assistive equipment. Increase resource allocations and seek funding for technology, information resources, and materials in special formats. Increase funds to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Goal #3)

Reach out. Implement outreach programs to nontraditional sites. Go where youth and their families are and offer programs for them at appropriate times. Present programs that address issues of interest and concern to youth with special needs. Welcome and involve youth as much as possible at the library as volunteers, mentors, employees, and planning group members. Adapt activities to be more inclusive. Be visible. Adopt user-friendly policies with input from youth with special needs. (Part of Goal #5)

Public Library Service for Youth with Special Needs Plan

A Vision for Youth in Wisconsin

A planning vision expresses the ideal desired future. The task force adopted the vision expressed in the Wisconsin Library Association's *Wisconsin Public Library Youth Services Guidelines*.

- Youth in Wisconsin will have equal access to materials to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.
- Wisconsin's youth will have an awareness of the multicultural society in which they live and respect the rights and dignity of all people.
- Youth in Wisconsin will have the opportunity to develop the skills to locate and use information in a changing technological world.
- Youth in Wisconsin will be prepared for and have the opportunity to be successful in school, leading to lifelong learning.
- Wisconsin's youth will have a safe and healthy environment which fosters a positive self-image.
- Youth and their families will have access to a coordinated network of quality services.
- Wisconsin's youth will have the opportunity to creatively dream and design a better world.

—from *Wisconsin Public Library Youth Services Guidelines*
Youth Services Section, Wisconsin Library Association, Inc., 1995

The task force then crafted the following sentence to connect the vision to public library service in Wisconsin:

All youth in Wisconsin will have convenient and equitable access to materials and technology at public libraries to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs and to improve their quality of life.

The Mission for Public Libraries

The task force developed the following statement to describe the mission of public libraries and their purposes and priorities. The plan's goals and objectives are based on this understanding of the public library mission and how public libraries can contribute toward making the vision a reality for all youth in Wisconsin, including those with special needs.

The public library is a community resource, where, without charge, all people can enrich their lives. It provides access to diverse points of view and to the vast educational, informational, recreational and cultural resources of our society. The public library connects individuals to both print and nonprint resources by gathering and organizing the collection, providing trained staff, and linking the library to resources and community services beyond its walls.

Goals for Library Service to Youth with Special Needs

Youth with special needs are children and teens who are poor or who have cognitive, emotional or physical disabilities. The term is occasionally broadened in these goals to include any individuals, agencies, or organizations that work with and care for youth with special needs. For example, in Objective 1.3, "Public libraries develop plans that include youth with special needs as a customer group," the idea is implicit that the "customer group" also includes the families of youth with special needs and the agencies and organizations that work with them.

The following six goals for public library service to youth with special needs are the heart of this document. In the chart that follows the goals list, they are given specificity by the addition of objectives and activities for public libraries, as well as objectives for public library systems and for the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL). The document is designed primarily for public libraries, since it is at the local level that youth with special needs experience library service. Public library systems and the Division are viewed as supporting public libraries in their efforts.

In the chart, the strategies that appear in parentheses after the goal statements are the results of the small group sessions at the statewide conference for youth with special needs held in March 1998. The task force used the conference results as the foundation on which the plan was built. (See "How the Plan was Developed" for more information.)

Core activities are indicated with an asterisk in the chart. These are basic steps a library of any size can take to reach out to youth with special needs. The basic steps also are listed separately immediately following the chart as "Getting Started in a Few Minutes a Week."

GOAL #1: Public libraries include youth with special needs and their families in planning, implementing, and evaluating public library services.

GOAL #2: The public library welcomes youth with special needs and their families in a responsive, sensitive, and appropriate manner.

GOAL #3: Public library resources, services, and programs are relevant to the lives of youth with special needs and their families.

GOAL #4: Public libraries are integral members of a network that provides the best possible services to youth with special needs and their families.

GOAL #5: Public library collections, services, and buildings are fully accessible and inviting to youth with special needs and their families.

GOAL #6: Public library services, collections, and programs are known and well-used by youth with special needs, their families, and the community.

GOAL #1: Public libraries include youth with special needs and their families in planning, implementing, and evaluating public library services. (Strategy: Plan to include youth with special needs.)

OBJECTIVES

Public Libraries	Systems	DLTCL
<p>1.1 Public libraries identify where youth with special needs live in their communities.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Know your community. * Contact the schools. <p>Contact social service agencies, school district offices, and local planning departments.</p> <p>1.2 Public libraries identify community services and programs for youth with special needs.</p> <p>1.3 Public libraries develop plans that include youth with special needs as a customer group.</p> <p>1.4 Public libraries include youth with special needs in library planning.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <p>Invite youth with special needs to be part of teen boards.</p> <p>Include youth advocates as part of library planning.</p> <p>Consult with advocacy groups to recruit parents of youth with special needs as participants in library planning.</p>	<p>S1.1 Systems consider the needs of youth with special needs in their planning.</p> <p>S1.2 Systems gather and share demographic and other information about youth with special needs and community services for them in the system area.</p> <p>S1.3 Systems conduct workshops on planning services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>S1.4 Systems designate a staff person to work with member libraries on youth with special needs.</p>	<p>D1.1 DLTCL offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in planning for library services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.2 DLTCL disseminates demographic data regarding youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.3 DLTCL distributes information on planning services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.4 DLTCL cooperates with other sections of DPI and other state level organizations that work with youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.5 DLTCL includes librarians who work with youth with special needs on Division committees.</p> <p>D1.6 DLTCL annually reviews the long range plan for library services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.7 DLTCL advocates for adequate funding for library programs for youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.8 DLTCL provides guidance in the use of the public library standards regarding youth with special needs.</p> <p>D1.9 DLTCL has annual meetings for special needs consultants and youth services liaisons.</p> <p>D1.10 DLTCL has a consultant position that works with systems on services for youth with special needs.</p>

GOAL #2: The public library welcomes youth with special needs and their families in a responsive, sensitive, and appropriate manner. (Strategy: Train staff.)

OBJECTIVES

Public Libraries	Systems	DLTCL
<p>2.1 Public libraries offer diversity and ability awareness training to all staff on a regular basis.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Schedule youth with special needs as a topic for at least one staff meeting per year. * Include trustees in diversity and ability awareness training. * Provide training for staff and the public on using library assistive devices. <p>Offer opportunities to attend nonlibrary workshops (e.g., Head Start conferences).</p> <p>Provide opportunities for signing and other language training.</p> <p>Identify local providers of diversity and ability awareness training.</p> <p>Bring in youth with special needs and their parents and caregivers to talk to library staff.</p> <p>Include practical tips on serving youth with special needs in staff workshops.</p> <p>2.2 Public library policies are written and regularly reviewed to ensure that they welcome library use by youth with special needs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Train staff regularly about library policies. <p>Encourage youth with special needs to obtain library cards.</p> <p>Build flexibility into application of library policies affecting youth with special needs.</p> <p>Have policies reviewed by youth with special needs.</p> <p>2.3 Public libraries include youth with special needs in</p>	<p>S2.1 Systems offer diversity and ability awareness training workshops and inform their members about other training opportunities.</p> <p>S2.2 Systems identify and distribute information about regional and statewide providers of diversity and ability awareness training.</p> <p>S2.3 Systems offer opportunities for staff to attend nonlibrary workshops.</p> <p>S2.4 Systems assist libraries in identifying employment and volunteer opportunities for youth with special needs.</p> <p>S2.5 Systems offer workshops and technical assistance to their members in developing policies that welcome youth with special needs.</p>	<p>D2.1 DLTCL cooperates with systems in offering regional diversity and ability awareness workshops.</p> <p>D2.2 DLTCL identifies and distributes information about regional and statewide providers of diversity and ability awareness training and informs systems about awareness training opportunities.</p> <p>D2.3 DLTCL offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in staff training.</p>

<p>employment and volunteer opportunities.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provide for open posting of employment and volunteer opportunities. <p>Contact local school districts to identify opportunities for community service or supported employment.</p> <p>Contact local law enforcement/juvenile justice workers to identify community service opportunities.</p> <p>2.4 Public libraries offer programs about the cultures and history of groups in their communities.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Invite community or regional groups to present programs to the community and staff at the library. <p>Identify other groups in community and link with their celebrations and observances. Have a library presence at events.</p>		
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GOAL #3: Public library resources, services, and programs are relevant to the lives of youth with special needs and their families. (Strategy: Diversify services, materials, equipment.)

OBJECTIVES

Public Libraries	Systems	DLTCL
<p>3.1 Public libraries develop and maintain, or provide access to, up-to-date collections for and about youth with special needs. <u>Possible activities:</u> * Include the needs of youth with special needs in youth and adult collection development policies. * Weed and update collections on a regular basis. Examine and respond to community need for materials in foreign languages and alternative formats. Own or have access to adaptive equipment for youth with special needs. Refer eligible users to the Wisconsin Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.</p> <p>3.2 Public libraries provide access for youth with special needs to library resources through technology. <u>Possible activities:</u> Develop accessible Web sites with links to resources for youth with special needs. Cooperate with schools and other agencies in providing technological access for youth with special needs. Provide assistive technology where needed to ensure access to online resources for youth with special needs.</p> <p>3.3 Public libraries design programs that are responsive and accessible to youth with special needs. <u>Possible activities:</u> Provide and publicize accommodations to enable</p>	<p>S3.1 Systems provide workshops and in-services on materials, programming, resources, and technology related to youth with special needs.</p> <p>S3.2 Systems ensure that member libraries are knowledgeable about adaptive technology for youth with special needs.</p> <p>S3.3 Systems ensure accessibility to resources for youth with special needs when addressing systemwide technology.</p> <p>S3.4 Systems help libraries develop accessible Web sites.</p> <p>S3.5 Systems facilitate purchasing materials and equipment for their member libraries.</p> <p>S3.6 Systems identify funding sources for services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>S3.7 Systems assist libraries in writing grants to benefit youth with special needs.</p> <p>S3.8 Systems write grants to serve youth with special needs.</p>	<p>D3.1 DLTCL offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in providing services and programs for youth with special needs.</p> <p>D3.2 DLTCL provides information and workshops about services, resources and technology for youth with special needs.</p> <p>D3.3 DLTCL ensures accessibility to resources for youth with special needs when addressing statewide technology.</p> <p>D3.4 DLTCL identifies and publicizes funding sources for services to youth with special needs.</p>

<p>youth with special needs to participate in programs.</p> <p>Involve youth with special needs and agency staff in program planning and production.</p> <p>Use appropriate methods and media to reach youth with special needs.</p> <p>Schedule programs at times and places convenient for youth with special needs.</p> <p>3.4 Public libraries seek supplemental revenue sources to serve youth with special needs.</p>		
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GOAL #4: Public libraries are integral members of a network that provides the best possible services to youth with special needs and their families. (Strategy: Collaborate.) (See Appendix B, "Selected Collaboration Resources.")

OBJECTIVES

Public Libraries	Systems	DLTCL
<p>4.1 Public libraries allocate staff time to identify and to work with community groups, agencies, organizations, and networks that serve youth with special needs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u> Work with parent groups. Work with community groups such as churches, Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, youth centers, and domestic abuse shelters in providing services (e.g., story hours, homework assistance and deposit collections). Work with Title I, special education, reading instructors, and other specialists in schools. Maintain contact with county coalitions and councils (e.g., literacy councils, family resource centers, Wisconsin Works community steering committees). Work with alternative high schools, juvenile detention facilities, and residential institutions for youth.</p> <p>4.2 Public libraries partner with community agencies in joint ventures, including sharing resources and cosponsoring programs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u> Provide library space for agency meetings and activities. Encourage groups to create library displays. Provide library brochures and bookmarks to agencies. Provide bibliographies of materials to agencies.</p>	<p>S4.1 Systems gather and share with their members information on regional and county agencies serving youth with special needs.</p> <p>S4.2 Systems gather and share with their members information on residential facilities for youth (e.g., juvenile correctional facilities, group homes for youth with developmental disabilities).</p> <p>S4.3 Systems inform area agencies that work with youth with special needs about library services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>S4.4 Systems provide continuing education opportunities that bring together libraries and community agencies that serve youth with special needs, including library staff in residential facilities/institutions.</p>	<p>D4.1 DLTCL offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in developing partnerships with community groups, agencies, organizations, and networks that work with youth with special needs.</p> <p>D4.2 DLTCL disseminates information about library services for youth with special needs to agencies and organizations that work with youth with special needs.</p> <p>D4.3 DLTCL cooperates with other state organizations in keeping libraries informed on legislative issues affecting youth with special needs.</p> <p>D4.4 DLTCL collaborates with other library organizations in advocating for library service to youth with special needs and in educating public officials about the library mission to serve youth with special needs.</p> <p>D4.5 DLTCL provides continuing education opportunities that bring together libraries and community agencies that serve youth with special needs.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek agency suggestions regarding library resources for their clients. Partner in grant applications. Invite agency staff to library workshops. Offer library tours and visits for agencies. Contribute articles to agency/organization newsletters. <p>4.3 Public libraries are a source for information about community agencies.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a public bulletin board for community notices. Maintain a Web site that provides links to community resources for youth with special needs. Develop a central source for information on community organizations serving youth with special needs. Publicize agency events. 		
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GOAL #5: Public library collections, services, and buildings are fully accessible and inviting to youth with special needs and their families. *(Strategies: Ensure physically accessible library buildings and develop outreach programs.)*

OBJECTIVES

Public Libraries	Systems	DLTCL
<p>5.1 Public libraries provide services when and where youth with special needs and their families can best use them.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u> Develop outreach policies that are responsive to youth with special needs. Offer on-site collections of materials at agencies where youth with special needs are served. Provide access to the library through bookmobiles, vans, and outlets at neighborhood sites. Visit alternative high schools, juvenile detention centers, domestic abuse shelters, and residential facilities for youth with special needs. Visit neighborhood sites such as immunization clinics, low rent housing units, day cares, WIC, Head Start. Offer homebound services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>5.2 Public libraries work with government agencies and local advocacy groups to ensure access for youth with special needs to library facilities and services.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u> Arrange for provision of bus passes. Collaborate with schools, Head Start and other agencies to provide bus transportation.</p> <p>5.3 Public libraries design, remodel, build, and maintain facilities that are accessible and inviting to youth with special needs.</p>	<p>S5.1 Systems provide information and workshops on outreach programs.</p> <p>S5.2 Systems provide support and technical assistance to help their members in developing fully accessible collections, services, and buildings, including meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p> <p>S5.3 Systems routinely model the use of assistive technology.</p>	<p>D5.1 DLTCL provides information and workshops on outreach programs.</p> <p>D5.2 DLTCL offers support and technical assistance to public libraries and systems in developing fully accessible collections, services, and buildings, including meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p> <p>D5.3 DLTCL conducts a statewide library accessibility survey.</p>

<p>• <u>Possible activities:</u> Do an annual tour of the library with representatives of youth with special needs to identify barriers. Develop a plan to eliminate barriers. Identify and work to reduce neighborhood barriers to library access (e.g., safety issues, automobile traffic, curb cuts in sidewalks).</p> <p>5.4 Public libraries write, regularly review, and implement plans to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u> Examine library policies. Work with local governing bodies in achieving compliance with the ADA. Educate library trustees about the requirements of the ADA. Identify alternative revenue sources for programs and resources.</p>		
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GOAL #6: Public library services, collections, and programs are known and well-used by the youth with special needs, their families, and the community. (Strategy: Market libraries.)

OBJECTIVES

Public Libraries	Systems	DLTCL
<p>6.1 Public libraries work with their communities and their local media to publicize library services to youth with special needs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Maintain contacts with local newspapers and other media. * Inform trustees regularly about library services to youth with special needs. <p>Use word-of-mouth in publicizing services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>Develop channels for informing local, county, state officials.</p> <p>Develop and implement a public information plan that includes youth with special needs.</p> <p>Place library on agency mailing lists.</p> <p>Identify and utilize alternative media sources (e.g., interest group newsletters and ethnic publications).</p> <p>Provide information about library resources/programs to agency newsletters.</p> <p>Place agencies on library newsletter mailing list.</p> <p>Promote reading programs to Title I programs via school flyers.</p> <p>Send flyers to local hospitals for new parents.</p> <p>6.2 Public libraries use a variety of methods to reach youth with special needs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provide library tours and printed information in accessible formats. <p>Offer bilingual promotional materials and easy-to-read formats.</p> <p>Use portable displays.</p> <p>Display books and materials at agencies and community groups that serve youth with special needs.</p> <p>Develop library public service announcements and press releases.</p> <p>Utilize nonprint promotional media such as cable TV, billboards, ethnically</p>	<p>S6.1 Systems offer staff training and technical advice in developing and implementing public information plans that include youth with special needs.</p> <p>S6.2 Systems produce public information materials for their members.</p> <p>S6.3 Systems promote system-owned and other special needs collections and assistive technology.</p>	<p>D6.1 DLTCL offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in marketing library services to youth with special needs.</p> <p>D6.2 DLTCL cooperates with library and other organizations in the promotion of library services to groups that work with youth with special needs.</p> <p>D6.3 DLTCL incorporates ideas on how to reach and serve youth with special needs in DLTCL publications (e.g., Summer Library Program Manual).</p> <p>D6.4 DLTCL gathers and distributes information on state agencies and other organizations working with youth with special needs.</p> <p>D6.5 DLTCL shares information on library services to youth with special needs with state agencies and other organizations.</p> <p>D6.6 DLTCL shares information about library services to</p>

<p>oriented radio.</p> <p>Use accessible formats for library promotion (e.g., large print, audiotapes, and Braille.)</p> <p>Cite availability of assistive technology in library promotional materials.</p> <p>Attend meetings of agencies that work with youth with special needs.</p> <p>6.3 Public libraries develop a welcoming atmosphere toward youth with special needs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inform staff that creating a welcoming atmosphere is a top priority for the library. * Adopt and promote policies and procedures that are responsive to the needs of youth with special needs. * Invite agencies and support groups to meet at the library <p>Display pictures that include all kinds of people.</p> <p>Provide signage which is easily read and understood.</p> <p>Promote different celebratory days and weeks (e.g., Deaf Awareness Week, Black History Month).</p> <p>Ensure availability of assistive technology.</p> <p>Incorporate information on adaptive services and equipment into library tours and programs.</p> <p>Cultivate a multilingual staff.</p> <p>Seek employees who understand the needs of youth with special needs.</p> <p>6.4 Public libraries allocate staff time and funds to market library services to youth with special needs.</p> <p><u>Possible activities:</u></p> <p>Have a line item in the budget.</p> <p>Assign one staff person to work with youth with special needs or develop a team approach.</p>		<p>youth with special needs with the library community through print and electronic media and by providing workshops.</p>
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Getting Started in a Few Minutes a Week

- * Know your community.
- * Adopt and promote policies and procedures that are responsive to the needs of youth with special needs.
- * Train staff regularly about library policies.
- * Inform staff that creating a welcoming atmosphere is a top priority for the library.
- * Schedule youth with special needs as a topic for at least one staff meeting per year.
- * Provide training for staff and the public on using library assistive devices.
- * Inform trustees regularly about library services to youth with special needs.
- * Include trustees in diversity and ability awareness training.
- * Provide for open posting of employment and volunteer opportunities.
- * Weed and update collections on a regular basis.
- * Include the needs of youth with special needs in youth and adult collection development policies.
- * Contact the schools.
- * Invite agencies and support groups to meet at the library.
- * Invite community or regional groups to present programs to the community and staff at the library.
- * Provide library tours and printed information in accessible formats.
- * Maintain contacts with local newspapers and other media.

(The activities listed on this page are indicated with asterisks in the goals. These are basic steps a library of any size can take to reach out to youth with special needs.)

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Summary of 1997 Library Services to Special Needs Youth Survey

A survey about library services to youth with special needs was distributed to all 381 public libraries in Wisconsin as part of the state's *1997 Public Library Annual Report* form, and 364 responses were received. The purpose of the survey was to obtain data about ongoing library services to youth with special needs that are funded locally, rather than with federal Library Services and Technology Act monies. When asked if the library offered outreach services to low-income youth and/or those with disabilities in the past year, over one-third (134) responded yes. Survey results showed that Wisconsin public libraries were more likely to provide services for low-income youth than for those with disabilities. Services for low-income youth were provided by 29% of public libraries and services for youth with disabilities were provided by 16% of public libraries.

Age of Youth Served

Generally speaking, public libraries offer their broadest range of programs and services for young children. The survey showed that services for children with special needs also tend to be directed to younger age groups, and decrease as children progress through school. For example, 95 public libraries said they provided services to low-income children from birth through preschool age. From a high of 95, the numbers of public libraries with services for low-income youth declined as the children age, from 73 libraries serving kindergarten through grade 3 to a low of 22 libraries serving grades 10-12. The same pattern is evident in services to youth with disabilities. Forty-three libraries said they offered services to youth from birth through preschool and youth in kindergarten through grade 3, while only 26 libraries provided services to youth in grades 10-12.

Services by Size of Community Served

When comparing the size of the public library with its services to youth with special needs, it was more likely that the largest public libraries—those serving populations over 25,000—offered targeted services. While 36% of all public libraries said they provided outreach services to youth with special needs, 58% of public libraries serving populations over 25,000 said they did so. This compares to 36% of libraries serving populations 5,000 to 25,000 and 33% of libraries serving populations less than 5,000. Because a majority of public libraries in Wisconsin (263) serve populations under 5,000, the responses from the smallest libraries have the greatest impact on overall percentages for statewide library services to youth with special needs.

Ongoing Services

The percentage of public libraries providing services to youth with special needs on an ongoing basis declined slightly when compared to the percentage offering services during the past year. While 36% of all public libraries said they provided outreach services to youth with special needs in 1997, 32% said they did so on an ongoing basis. These small percentage decreases are evident for libraries in communities of all sizes.

Cooperation

When public libraries were asked about cooperating with other agencies in serving youth with special needs, the agency most often identified was Head Start, followed by schools, day care centers, special education programs, and literacy councils. Public libraries in smaller communities were more likely to cooperate with special education programs at the schools, while for public libraries in communities over 25,000, domestic abuse shelters were among the most frequently mentioned cooperating agencies.

Promotion

When asked about methods used to publicize services to youth with special needs, word-of-mouth ranked first, followed by the newspaper, flyers, posters, and the library's newsletter. There was little difference in the methods used to publicize services by size of library community. However, libraries in communities under 5,000 were less likely to use a library newsletter and libraries in communities over 25,000 were more likely to publicize library services to youth with special needs through agency newsletters. All of them relied on word-of-mouth as their top ranking method of promotion.

Services

The combined responses from public libraries of all sizes concerning their services to low-income youth indicated that story hour was the most frequently mentioned service, followed by collection development, bilingual materials, kit development, and materials in alternative formats for youth with physical disabilities. The same services were identified in serving youth with disabilities, except that collection development was the service most likely to be offered, followed by materials in alternative formats for youth with physical disabilities, story hours, and materials in alternative formats for youth with cognitive disabilities.

There were some differences based on size of library community. For low-income youth, story hours, collection development and bilingual materials were among the top five services, regardless of the size of library. While the development of kits appeared among the top five services for both libraries in communities of fewer than 5,000 people and those between 5,000 and 25,000, this service did not rank among the top five for libraries in communities of more than 25,000. The largest libraries ranked deposit collections among their top five services. Libraries in communities of 5,000 and larger listed workshops for day care providers among their top five services, while libraries in communities of fewer than 5,000 included materials in alternative formats for youth with physical disabilities among the top five. While the development of kits ranked among the top five services for libraries in communities of fewer than 5,000 and communities up to 25,000, bilingual materials took its place for libraries in communities of more than 25,000.

A final question in the survey asked respondents to briefly describe their services to low-income and/or disabled children and teens. A variety of outreach and library programs, materials, partnerships, and promotional activities were described. The plan incorporates many of these activities as suggestions for public libraries looking for ways to improve their services to youth with special needs.

1997 LIBRARY SERVICE TO SPECIAL NEEDS YOUTH SURVEY
Supplement to the 1997 Public Library Annual Report

INSTRUCTIONS: The following information is requested to assist the planning efforts of the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. Please respond to the following questions by checking the appropriate box or by providing the requested information. Contact Frances de Usabel at 608/266-0419; deusafe@mail.state.wi.us if you would like more information about the Special Needs Youth Initiative or have questions about completing this survey.

Definitions: For the purpose of this survey, special needs youth are defined primarily as those who come from low-income families and/or have disabilities. Examples include but aren't limited to children and teens who are educationally disadvantaged, non-English speaking, school dropouts, teen parents, institutionalized or incarcerated, homeless, and cognitively, emotionally or physically disabled. If your library program is designed primarily to serve these children and teens, answer yes as appropriate, although your program may also serve youth who are not considered to have special needs.

Note: Please include all programs except for those currently funded with Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA/LSTA) funds. Do not include either your library's own LSCA/LSTA project or any system-level LSCA/LSTA project from which your library is benefiting. However, programs that were started with federal funds and are now being continued with local funds should be included.

Return this survey with your Public Library Annual Report.

Name of Public Library _____

City, Village, Town, or Tribe _____

Name of person completing form _____

Phone number _____

1. In 1997, did your library offer outreach services to low-income youth and/or those with disabilities? Please check the boxes for which the answer is yes.

	<i>Low-income</i>	<i>Disabilities</i>
Ages birth to preschool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grades K - 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grades 4 - 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grades 7 - 9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grades 10 -12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please identify "Other": _____

Is this an ongoing service offered by your library? Yes No

Continued on next page

2. Does the library cooperate with any of the following agencies to provide service to low-income youth and/or those with disabilities? Please check the boxes for which the answer is yes.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Teen parent programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Low-income housing authorities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other school programs - please
specify at end of this question | <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless shelters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic abuse shelters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CESA | <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies for pregnant teens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities for incarcerated youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities for physically, emotionally, or
cognitively disabled youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start | <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement agencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day care centers (low income) | <input type="checkbox"/> County social service agencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program
for Women, Infants and Children) | <input type="checkbox"/> County extension agencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth to Three Program (for young
children with developmental delays) | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy councils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Churches | <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies for African-Americans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family resource centers | <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies for American Indians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health clinics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies for Hispanics |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies for Southeast Asians |

All other (Please name): _____

Continued on next page

3. Please check any services listed below provided by your library that are targeted to low-income youth and/or youth with disabilities and/or to their parents or caregivers or the agencies working with them. (Although children and teens not considered “special need youth” will probably also receive these services, this survey seeks to identify programs that are designed primarily to serve special needs youth.)

<i>Service</i>	<i>Low-income</i>	<i>Disabilities</i>
Lap sits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Story hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book talks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collection development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Materials in alternative formats for physically disabled youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Materials in alternative formats for cognitively disabled youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bilingual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deposit collections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of kits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
After-school programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshops for day care providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshops for agencies other than day care providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshops for parents/ family caregivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intergenerational programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation to library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home visits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bilingual aid at library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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4. What methods do you use to publicize your services to low-income youth and those with disabilities? Please check the appropriate boxes.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyers | <input type="checkbox"/> Billboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth to: | <input type="checkbox"/> Public service announcements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day cares | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies other than schools and day
cares | <input type="checkbox"/> Cable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents & family caregivers | <input type="checkbox"/> Agency newsletters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Library newsletter |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Material in alternative formats |

Other: _____

5. How is your program for special needs youth funded? (Do not include LSCA/LSTA funds.) Please check the appropriate boxes.

- Local or county appropriation (including regular budget appropriation)
- Donations or gifts (Friends of the Library, private donations)
- State or federal grants other than LSCA/LSTA funds
- Other (Describe) _____

Estimated number of special needs youth served annually: _____ Annual cost of program: _____

6. Please describe briefly your services to low-income and/or disabled children and teens.

1997 LIBRARY SERVICES TO SPECIAL NEEDS YOUTH SURVEY

Results by population of responding library. Number responding yes.

**1. In 1997, did your library offer outreach services to low-income youth and/or those with disabilities?
(Number responding yes.)**

Library Population	Low Income				Disabilities			
	Less than 5,000	5,000 to 25,000	Over 25,000	Total	Less than 5,000	5,000 to 25,000	Over 25,000	Total
Ages birth to preschool	59	20	16	95	29	7	7	43
Grades K - 3	49	14	10	73	28	7	8	43
Grades 4 - 6	34	5	7	46	21	6	6	33
Grades 7 - 9	16	3	5	24	16	7	5	28
Grades 10 -12	13	3	6	22	16	6	4	26
Other	6	2	1	9	10	4	2	16
At least one "yes"	69	23	16	108	38	11	9	58
Total libraries with at least one "yes"	87	29	18	134				
Total Libraries	263	80	31	374				
Percent "yes"	33%	36%	58%	36%				

Is this an ongoing service offered by your library?

Library Population	Less than 5,000	5,000 to 25,000	Over 25,000	Total
Number responding yes	75	26	17	118
Total Libraries	263	80	31	374
Percent "yes"	29%	33%	55%	32%

2. Does the library cooperate with any of the following agencies to provide service to low-income youth and/or those with disabilities? (Number responding yes.)

Library Population	Less than 5,000	5,000 to 25,000	Over 25,000	Total
Schools	58	22	15	95
Title I Program	26	7	7	40
Special Education Program	43	19	9	71
Other school programs	23	6	4	33
Alternative schools	12	9	7	28
CESA	11	6	5	22
Colleges	6	1	3	10
Library schools	8	1	1	10
Head Start	63	33	19	115
Day care centers (low income)	53	20	15	88
WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children)	14	3	8	25
Birth to Three Program (for young children with developmental delays)	10	3	8	21
Churches	16	2	6	24
Family resource centers	19	14	9	42
Health clinics	13	1	4	18

2. Continued

	<i>Less than 5,000</i>	<i>5,000 to 25,000</i>	<i>Over 25,000</i>	<i>Total</i>
Hospitals	5	4	4	13
Teen parent programs	4	2	7	13
Low-income housing authorities	12	1	8	21
Homeless shelters	0	0	6	6
Domestic abuse shelters	3	1	10	14
Agencies for pregnant teens	0	1	7	8
Facilities for incarcerated youth	7	2	1	10
Facilities for physically, emotionally, or cognitively disabled youth	6	11	4	21
Law enforcement agencies	18	6	3	27
County social service agencies	21	9	8	38
County extension agencies	20	7	8	35
Literacy councils	36	18	15	69
Agencies for African-Americans	0	0	5	5
Agencies for American Indians	7	1	3	11
Agencies for Hispanics	2	2	4	8
Agencies for Southeast Asians	0	0	7	7
<i>Responding with at least one "yes"</i>	133	49	23	205
<i>Total Libraries</i>	263	80	31	374
<i>Percent "yes"</i>	51%	61%	74%	55%

3. Please check any services listed below provided by your library that are targeted to low-income youth and/or youth with disabilities and/or to their parents or caregivers or the agencies working with them. (Although children and teens not considered "special needs youth" will probably also receive these services, this survey seeks to identify programs that are designed primarily to serve special needs youth.) (Number responding yes.)

<i>Library Population</i>	<i>Low Income</i>				<i>Disabilities</i>			
	<i>Less than 5,000</i>	<i>5,000 to 25,000</i>	<i>Over 25,000</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Less than 5,000</i>	<i>5,000 to 25,000</i>	<i>Over 25,000</i>	<i>Total</i>
Lap sits	4	0	5	9	3	0	2	5
Story hours	59	16	11	86	28	5	6	39
Book talks	9	2	5	16	3	2	3	8
Collection development	46	11	7	64	50	19	6	75
Materials in alternative formats:								
for physically disabled youth	16	4	5	25	29	12	13	54
for cognitively disabled youth	12	2	3	17	17	7	5	29
Bilingual materials	14	10	12	36	4	4	5	13
Deposit collections	5	4	7	16	2	2	3	7
Development of kits	18	9	4	31	10	6	2	18
After-school programs	13	1	5	19	2	0	1	3
Workshops for day care providers	7	7	6	20	2	1	1	4
Workshops for agencies other than day care providers	3	4	3	10	0	1	1	2
Workshops for parents/ family caregivers	6	4	9	19	1	2	1	4
Intergenerational programs	8	1	2	11	5	1	1	7
Transportation to library	3	0	2	5	2	0	1	3
Home visits	6	0	1	7	7	1	2	10
Bilingual aid at library	2	2	3	7	1	1	1	3
<i>At least one "yes"</i>	78	28	17	123	67	26	18	111
<i>Total libraries with at least one "yes"</i>	94	37	22	153				
<i>Total Libraries</i>	263	80	31	374				
<i>Percent "yes"</i>	36%	46%	71%	41%				

4. What methods do you use to publicize your services to low-income youth and those with disabilities?
(Number responding yes.)

Library Population

	<i>Less than 5,000</i>	<i>5,000 to 25,000</i>	<i>Over 25,000</i>	<i>Total</i>
Flyers	42	17	14	73
Posters	46	12	7	65
Word of mouth to:	76	24	17	117
Schools	68	24	15	107
Day cares	61	17	15	93
Agencies other than schools and day cares	30	14	9	53
Parents & family caregivers	53	10	11	74
Newspaper	68	18	13	99
Billboards	4	3	1	8
Bus signs	0	1	3	4
Public service announcements	8	4	7	19
Television	0	2	3	5
Radio	12	7	8	27
Cable	6	3	5	14
Agency newsletters	2	6	9	17
Library newsletter	12	11	9	32
Material in alternative formats	1	1	1	3
<i>Responding with at least one "yes"</i>	113	36	22	171
<i>Total Libraries</i>	263	80	31	374
<i>Percent "yes"</i>	43%	45%	71%	46%

5. How is your program for at-risk youth funded? (Do not include LSCA/LSTA funds.)
(Number responding yes.)

Library Population

	<i>Less than 5,000</i>	<i>5,000 to 25,000</i>	<i>Over 25,000</i>	<i>Total</i>
Local or county appropriation (including regular budget appropriation)	77	28	21	126
Donations or gifts (Friends of the Library, private donations)	29	10	9	48
State or federal grants other than LSCA/LSTA funds	6	2	1	9
Other	9	4	0	13
Estimated number of at-risk youth served statewide:	4,554	3,100	21,045	28,699
<i>Number of libraries responding</i>	58	22	17	97
State total annual cost of programs:	\$14,078	\$11,944	\$12,600	\$38,622
<i>Number of libraries responding</i>	34	12	6	52
<i>Total Libraries</i>	263	80	31	374

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Appendix B

Selected Collaboration Resources

Collaboration encompasses working with schools, community organizations, agencies, child care providers, and others to develop cooperative relationships to meet the needs of youth with special needs and their families. Collaboration is the key to offering effective services for youth with special needs. By forming alliances, public libraries can accomplish a number of goals. These goals include becoming better informed about the needs of youth with special needs, finding new ways to inform them about library resources, and providing library services where youth with special needs can best use them. Here is a selected list of agencies and organizations with which public libraries can partner.

Child Care Programs. Many child care programs work with children with special needs. These may be center- or home-based programs serving young children or before/after school programs for school-aged children. Most communities are served by a child care resource and referral agency that can refer callers to various types of regulated care in the area. To identify child care resources in your area, call 1-888-713-5437. This number will connect you with your local child care resource and referral agency. The *Wisconsin Child Care Information Center (CCIC)* is a mail-order lending library and information center serving anyone in Wisconsin who works in the field of child care and early childhood education. CCIC provides free information services, library services, and adult learning services. Sponsored by the Office of Child Care, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, CCIC is administered by the Department of Public Instruction's Reference and Loan Library. The number for CCIC is 1-800-362-7353.

Children's Organizations, Groups, and Clubs. Communities may have opportunities for partnerships with groups that work with children with special needs such as Special Olympics, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers/Sisters, RSVP, YM/YWCA, Salvation Army, and 4-H.

County Governments. County government departments provide numerous opportunities for collaboration.

Developmental disabilities boards provide a wide variety of services for persons of all ages who have developmental disabilities. Services may include counseling, prevention programs, family support services, diagnosis, and evaluation.

The *juvenile justice system* can include juvenile probation, juvenile detention centers, sheriff's department, and jail.

Health departments and/or human services departments provide public health nursing services such as family health and immunization clinics, lead screening, and home visits.

Healthy Start pays for medical care for low-income pregnant women and children under the age of six without health insurance and helps them to enroll in the Medical Assistance Program.

Prenatal Care Coordination provides comprehensive prenatal care services to eligible women and their infants to assure normal, healthy infants. Services include providing linkages and access to medical services, nutrition education/counseling, social support, and prenatal and parenting education.

University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Family Living programs respond to community needs with education and partnerships that support Wisconsin families. Among their programs is the Food & Nutrition Program for low-income parents.

Community Based Organizations. A wide variety of organizations exist that support linkages to youth with special needs. These include churches, homeless shelters, domestic abuse shelters, Easter Seal, United Cerebral Palsy, and parent support programs. Many community based programs also can link to special needs children within specific populations, such as the Great Lakes Intertribal Council, Community Action Commissions, Urban League, Hmong mutual assistance associations, and UMOS (United Migrant Opportunity Services).

Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL). Located within the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, DLTCL has directories of organizations and agencies that work with youth with special needs, and distributes them to the public library systems. Contact the Special Services consultant at DLTCL or the special needs consultant at your public library system for more information about collaboration resources in your area.

Governor's Office on Literacy and Lifelong Learning. This office serves as a state-level clearinghouse for information about adult and family literacy services in the state, and can be reached at 608/266-9709. The adult basic education program for the state, which administers the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds, is part of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). The number for the adult basic education program is 608/267-2086. WTCS maintains a Web site (www.board.tec.wi.us/wlrn), which provides information and technical assistance to literacy service deliverers throughout Wisconsin. More than 70 volunteer literacy councils in Wisconsin are part of Wisconsin Volunteers in Literacy, Inc., a nonprofit organization. Contact information for the literacy councils can be obtained from the Governor's Office on Literacy and Lifelong Learning.

Head Start. A Federal program for preschool children from low-income families, Head Starts are operated by local nonprofit organizations in almost every county in the country. They provide a variety of education, health, nutrition, disability/special needs, mental health, transportation, and social services to preschool children and their families. The overall goal of Head Start service is to improve children's social and educational skills. Children's families must meet federal income guidelines for poverty. The statewide number for the Wisconsin Head Start Association (WHSA) is 608/265-9422.

Independent Living Centers. The eight centers located across Wisconsin are nonprofit organizations providing an array of services to persons with disabilities. Services include peer support, information and referral, independent living skills training, advocacy, community education, personal care, and service coordination. Contact the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, 608-251-9151, for information about the center in your area.

Municipal Governments. Cooperative ventures are possible through departments such as parks and recreation, police, museums, and transit.

Schools Districts and Community Educational Service Agencies (CESA). School districts in each community have a number of programs where partnerships with the public library could be established to serve children with special needs. There also are twelve Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs) that provide regional services and support to school districts within the state. School districts may contract with the CESA to provide programs and/or personnel. The Department of Public Instruction's Web site (<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us>) can assist in finding information about school-based programs, local school districts, and CESAs. Most communities, either through the school district or the CESA, have programs including special education for children with disabilities, migrant education, Title I, and Even Start.

Special Education programs provide education and related services to children with disabilities from ages 3 to 21. Children must have a disability and need for special education in the areas of cognitive disabilities, orthopedic impairment, visual or hearing disabilities, learning disabilities, speech and language disabilities, emotional disturbance, autism, traumatic brain injury, or other health impairments. These programs may be a source of information about assistive technology equipment and services.

Title I programs for young children are often offered by school districts with low-income populations. These Title I programs provide classroom based programs and/or home visits to enhance academic and developmental skills. As part of Title I, migrant programs are often available in areas serving the migrant population.

Even Start programs work in collaboration with other community programs to provide literacy services in low-income school districts for families and their young children. The program provides preschool opportunities for children under 7, as well as parenting education, literacy skills, and GED preparation.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC). A short-term intervention nutrition program for pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and children under age five, WIC assists program participants in meeting their nutritional needs and in obtaining needed community services. To qualify for WIC benefits, individuals must meet moderate income guidelines. To locate the WIC program in your area, call 1-800-722-2295.

Workforce Development (DWD). This state agency manages a variety of state programs focused on jobs and employment, including *Wisconsin Works (W-2)*. W-2 replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in the fall of 1997. Families consisting of custodial

parents and their children age 18 or younger, with incomes below 115 percent of poverty, are eligible for W-2 services. At the local level, a single agency, usually the county, operates the W-2 program. Each local W-2 agency has a *Community Steering Committee* consisting of between 12 and 15 members, including representatives of local business interests. The *Community Steering Committee* is responsible for establishing ties to local employers, creating and identifying job opportunities for W-2 recipients, improving access to child care and expanding availability of child care. For more information about W-2, check DWD's home page at www.dwd.state.wi.us. To identify your local W-2 agency and the Community Steering Committee in your area, contact your local job center. The 800 number for Wisconsin's job centers is 1-888-258-9966. The job center Web site is www.dwd.state.wi.us/dwepfe.

The Wisconsin Career Centers System, partially funded by the Department of Workforce Development, has eleven youth career counseling centers around the state. Information about the centers can be obtained by calling the Office of Connecting Education and Work at 608/264-8744 or by checking their Web site at www.dwd.state.wi.us/careers. The Web site includes the local community career center addresses. Several sites are located in public libraries.

Contact Directory

Agency

Contact Person

Phone Number / E-mail



Appendix C

Library Services and Technology Act Projects for Youth with Special Needs

Introduction

The following project descriptions are a representative selection of the federally funded grants implemented by Wisconsin public libraries between 1996 and 1998 to improve library services to children and teens from low-income families and/or those with disabilities. They give the most detailed information in the plan about current public library services for youth with special needs. These grant descriptions can be used in conjunction with the public library activities listed in the goals and the results of the 1997 *Library Services to Special Needs Youth* survey for ideas about initiating and expanding library services to youth with special needs.

All the grants included were carried out by individual libraries. Projects for special needs youth administered by public library systems and county library services during this period are not included, since the focus of the plan is on public library service at the local level. The projects are arranged alphabetically by specific target population, and within that, alphabetically by administering library. A contact person and phone number is given for each project. If the project administrator is no longer with the library, either the name of the library director or the youth services coordinator is listed. The size of the community served by the library (rather than its municipal population) is indicated in the grant description, and those libraries serving populations of fewer than 5000 people are designated with an * before their names. Copies of these projects are available from the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning.

Developmental Disabilities

Antigo Public Library - Resources for Youth with Developmental Disabilities. (Funded at \$8,000; grant number 97-30).

This grant enabled the Antigo Public Library (pop. 20,459) to purchase books, adaptive toys, and videos for children from birth to age 17 with developmental disabilities. Since adaptive toys are expensive and not readily available locally, providing them at the library enabled developmentally disabled children to participate in library activities, as well as giving their parents and teachers an opportunity to evaluate the toys. Additionally, a Macintosh Power PC computer with a touch window and a speech synthesizer were purchased for use with educational software. The library coordinates its children's programs with the local Langlade County Interagency Coordinating Committee, a group of providers of public and private services to young children in the community. The local Birth to Three Program and the Early Childhood staff and parents assisted in the selection and purchase of grant materials, and served as an

advisory group to monitor and evaluate the project. Efforts were made to publicize the new resources to the Exceptional Educational staff at the schools in the county, as well as to the members of the Interagency Coordinating Committee. (Helen Perala, Project Coordinator; 715/623-7887.)

Disabilities

***Ellsworth Public Library - *Tot 'n Tell Storytime*.** (Funded at \$7,844; grant number 98-349.)

With cooperation from the Birth to Three (B-3) program, Early Head Start and the Pierce County Public Health Department, the Ellsworth Public Library (pop. 4,984) provided a toddler storytime for children with special needs and their parents. A special education teacher working with Head Start and the B-3 programs led thirty weekly programs during the year, and publicity was designed with the help of the Indianhead Federated Library System. Among the materials purchased were disability puppets, board books, dolls for teaching cognitive and social interaction, and flannelboard story kits. (Margaret Levenhagen, Project Coordinator; 715/273-3209.)

Monona Public Library - *Services for Teens with Disabilities*. (Funded at \$8,795; grant number 97-52.)

This project was the result of close cooperation between the Monona Grove School District and the Youth Services Department at the Monona Public Library (pop. 11,432). It enabled the public library to purchase materials needed by middle and high school students with exceptional education needs (EEN), many of whom read two or three years below grade level. Space was created on the library's lower level for teachers to work with students who were not responding to the traditional classroom setting. A Teen Summer Reading Program was started, and the library developed a core collection of specialized materials, such as high interest/low vocabulary books and unabridged book/cassette novels, for teens with low reading levels. Bibliographies were prepared of these materials. The Youth Services Coordinator made presentations at special education classes, and tours of the public library and library skills instruction were arranged for EEN students and their teachers. An author/performer workshop was given for middle school students with a tie-in to the public library. (Karen Wendt, Project Administrator; 608/222-6127.)

Domestic Abuse

Vaughn Public Library, Ashland - *New Day Shelter Outreach Project*. (Funded at \$14,150; grant number 97-32.)

This project provided improved library services to clients of the New Day Shelter, a domestic abuse shelter which serves Ashland and Bayfield counties, as well as publicizing the effects of domestic violence on children. The project set up a rotating collection of library materials at the New Day Shelter, arranged for transportation of juvenile residents to the Vaughn Library (pop. 13,644) for assistance with school assignments, offered preschool story hour programs at the

shelter for residents, and offered a presentation on parenting skills to adult shelter residents. In addition, there were public presentations on the effects of domestic violence on children, and a public relations campaign in Ashland and Bayfield counties to alert the community to the issue of domestic violence. (James Trojanowski, Project Administrator; 715/682-7060.)

Family Literacy

Platteville Public Library - *Families and Libraries Workshop Series*. (Funded at \$10,663; grant number 97-58.)

This project was founded on collaboration among the Platteville Public Library (pop. 18,385), the Even Start Family Education Center, The Family Center, Head Start, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College (SWTC), and the Southwest Wisconsin Library System (SWLS). Six thematic workshops, presented on a monthly basis, enabled the library to create a learning environment for both child and parent, encouraged library use by families, and provided appropriate materials to families with special needs. The workshops included both adult and children's programming, and family activities for library and home. Materials were purchased to create family literacy kits, and the existing adult new readers collection at the SWLS was utilized. In addition to announcements to the collaborating agencies and other agencies that serve at-risk families, press releases to local and county newspapers and public service announcements to areawide radio stations publicized the project. (Kathy Scheetz, Library Director, 608/348-7441.)

Hispanic Youth

***Jane Morgan Memorial Library, Cambria - *Reading Motivation: Migrant Youth*.** (Funded at \$6,250; grant number 97-40.)

This grant took place primarily between July and the end of November 1996, when 400 migrant families from Texas and Del Rio lived in Cambria. At the beginning of the summer school session, a workshop was held for migrant parents on motivating their elementary school age children to read. In cooperation with school personnel, the library director provided weekly book talks in classrooms for the migrant children, and these classes also visited the Cambria library (pop. 1,548) on a weekly basis. The library hired a bilingual staff member who helped migrant students with homework assignments in the library after school, and introduced them to the books purchased through the grant. Subject bibliographies of these titles were shared with the migrant children, their parents, and school personnel. (Jeanne Radke, Project Administrator; 414/348-4030.)

Aram Public Library, Delavan - *Special Needs Youth—Hispanic Usage*. (Funded at \$7500; grant number 97-44.)

The percentage of Spanish-speaking families in Delavan has doubled in the past fifteen years, and in 1995, 20% of the first grade class in the Delavan-Darien School District was Hispanic.

This project enabled the public library in Delavan (pop. 15,585) to improve library service to this growing population by hiring a bilingual staff member to present story hours in Spanish throughout the project year, developing adult registration forms and a brochure describing the library's services in Spanish, and expanding the library's collection of Spanish language material, including videotapes and audiocassettes. The library publicized these new services and materials in the local weekly newspaper, through the *Walworth County Hispanic Newsletter*, and by posting notices in local stores and businesses frequented by the Hispanic community. (Peggy Fleck, Project Administrator; 414/728-3111.)

Institutions

Delafield Public Library - *Research Units for Disadvantaged Youth*. (Funded at \$4,247; grant number 98-347.)

The Delafield Public Library (pop. 8,186) provided library materials for youth at three residential institutions to use in preparing research papers. The institutions were the Lad Lake residential treatment center; Ethan Allen School, a juvenile correctional institution; and the Oconomowoc Developmental Treatment Center, a residential treatment facility for special education students. Youth functioning below grade levels in the local public schools also benefited from the project. Broad topics for the research units were chosen in conjunction with staff at the institutions, utilized a variety of formats, and contained materials at different reading levels. The research units were publicized with an informational brochure distributed to teachers and school librarians in the Delafield area as well as within the institutions. (Polly Gropen, Project Coordinator; 414/646-6231.)

***Southern Oaks Girls School - *Library Enhancement Project*.** (Funded at \$6,000; grant number 98-365.)

This project established a core library collection at the Southern Oaks Girls School, a state juvenile correctional facility for female adolescents. The facility opened in 1994 with an educational program but no library services. At the time of the project, the institution housed 85 adolescents, and more than half the residents were African-American, Hispanic, or Native American. Most had experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse, and approximately one third were on medication for mental health conditions. The new library collection purchased through the grant included reference titles, fiction and nonfiction recreational titles and young adult literature, high interest/low reading level materials, and career exploration/education materials in a variety of formats, as well as newspapers and magazines. (Holly Audley, Project Coordinator; 608/266-5601.)

Learning Disabilities

Sun Prairie Public Library - *The Learning Disabled or Limited English-speaking Reader.* (Funded at \$4,272; grant number 97-60.)

This project encouraged children and young adults in the Sun Prairie School District who have learning disabilities or limited English-speaking ability to read on their own. Popular and school-assigned juvenile and young adult reading materials were purchased as books on cassette and book/cassette kits. Bibliographies of these new materials were disseminated to all Sun Prairie teaching staff. Librarians attended fall school staff meetings to inform teaching staff about the new collection. Special education teachers scheduled class visits and brought learning/reading disabled and limited English-speaking students to the Sun Prairie Public Library (pop. 24,217) where librarians provided a tour, library card registration, audio book talks, and browsing and checkout time for the students. Librarians added two audio book talks to regular book talk programs presented during spring school visits. (Sharon Zinders, Library Director, 608/837-5644.)

Low-Income

Altoona Public Library - *Books in the Park.* (Funded at \$6,889; grant number 98-337.)

The Altoona Public Library's (pop. 8,618) project began with the distribution of books through the Head Start Early Childhood Center and Pedersen Elementary School during the last few weeks of the school year. It was followed during the summer months by staff and volunteer visits to sites in three low-income neighborhoods to provide library materials, encouraging reading for children and their parents. Weekly visits included story reading, puppet shows, craft and related activities. Books were chosen in the areas of English as a Second Language, the Hmong culture, high interest/low vocabulary items, and wordless books. A flyer for parents emphasizing the importance of reading was included with the books. Among the volunteer groups involved in this project were 4-H members, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, UW-Eau Claire students, students at Altoona Middle and High Schools, and senior citizens. (Carol Hillman, Project Coordinator; 715/839-5029.)

Beloit Public Library - *Full Court Press.* (Funded at \$12,054; grant number 97-36.)

Almost one third of Beloit's children live in poverty. This project was designed to reach low-income middle elementary school students through the Bookleggers and Reading Road Show programs. Bookleggers, book talks by adult volunteers, were presented to all third grade classes in the Beloit school district's elementary schools monthly over a seven month period. Multiple copies of the titles discussed were provided for checkout in the classrooms during the month. A bus trip to the Beloit Public Library (pop. 48,423) was scheduled for each class. The Reading Road Show, a before- and after-school program that brings paperback book collections and readers advisory services to elementary aged children, was given at six community outreach sites. A Daycare Reading Fair at the library brought books and programming ideas to day care providers and nursery school teachers. There was a special emphasis on in-home family day care

providers as those most likely to serve low-income families. In the following year, the Beloit Public Library's *Completing the Cycle in Children's Literacy Outreach* project (funded at \$9,810; grant number 98-339), continued most of these activities and added the Ride 'n' Read Program. This program enabled children up to the age of 18 to use their public library cards as a free bus pass to and from the library during school vacations. (Kate FitzGerald-Fleck, Project Administrator; 608/364-2909.)

Brown County Library - *Born to Read: A Community Campaign to Raise Readers.* (Funded at \$16,391; grant number 97-38.)

This project encouraged teen mothers, and low-income and non-English speaking families to read to their infants and to use the resources of the Brown County Public Library (pop. 214,613). The "Born to Read" message in three languages (English, Spanish, and Hmong) appeared on buses, billboards, in agencies throughout Brown County, and in a television commercial produced by WBAY-TV. Brown County children's librarians made outreach visits to "New Baby" classes at the community's two WIC (Women Infant and Children) locations and the Teen Pregnancy Coalition class at the YWCA. Area hospitals distributed library information and "Sharing Books with Babies" bookmarks to all parents of infants. Collections of board books and other library information were placed at the Golden House (a shelter for battered women), Crossroads (a homeless shelter) and four other agencies that serve low-income individuals. Children's Services staff attended a training workshop on providing storytimes for babies, and regular storytimes for infants were established at the Brown County Central Library and six branch libraries.

Among the activities in a grant the Brown County Library received the following year, *Born to Read, Part Two* (funded at \$16,132; grant number 98-34) were storytimes offered at Marion House, a home for teenage mothers and their babies, and at a neighborhood family resource center. Brown County librarians visited teen parent programs at area high schools to discuss preliteracy skills and the role parents play as their child's first teachers. In addition, the Literacy Council of Brown County, in cooperation with Brown County children's services librarians, trained tutors to work with parents who are literacy students in developing skills to use with their children. Materials appropriate for children two and younger including books, cassettes, toys, videos, and puzzles were purchased for the Central Library, eight branches and the bookmobile. (Clare Kindt, Children's Coordinator, 920/448-4400.)

Madison Public Library - *Building Bridges: the Library Head Start Connection.* (Funded at \$5,185; grant number 97-48.)

The youth services staff at Madison Public Library (pop. 266,815) promoted reading readiness for preschoolers and modeled storytime techniques for Head Start staff by visiting each of Madison's twenty-three Head Starts twice during the year. They presented "library parties" consisting of stories, songs and activities on a popular storytime theme. Head Start teachers were given "teacher party packets" which included bibliographies and suggestions on story selection. In addition, the library held two sessions for the teachers at their monthly in-services, identifying appropriate materials to use in their programs. Presentations were given by library staff at Head Start's parent meetings encouraging parents to read to their children. Each Head

Start classroom was given a collection of children's books. (Linda Olson, Project Coordinator; 608/266-6345.)

Native American Youth

Menominee Tribal/County Library - *South Branch Community Reading/Study Center. (Funded at \$41,000; grant number 97-50.)

This project enabled the Menominee Tribal/County Library (pop. 4,272) to create a reading/study center at the South Branch community, located at some distance from the main library in Keshena. Library furniture and equipment was purchased, and a collection developed consisting primarily of reference material for student use. The reading/study center was linked to the on-line catalog in Keshena, which provided a rotating collection of popular materials. A tutor aide was hired who set up after-school tutoring schedules and a summer reading program, and initiated an intergenerational program by recruiting tribal elders as storytellers with Head Start children. Transportation was provided for the South Branch children for regular visits to the main library. (Sally Kitson, Project Coordinator; Tel.: 715/799-5212.)

Nekoosa Public Library - *Native American Outreach and Awareness. (Funded at \$9,275; grant number 97-56.)

This project provided outreach services to the Chak-Hah-Chee Child Care Center, which serves children from six weeks to twelve years old. Many are Native Americans whose parents are employed at the Rainbow Casino, which is operated by the Ho-Chunk Nation. Multimedia kits were created, primarily for use by the Center's day care providers, but also for use by teachers, early childhood education centers and home schoolers. On-site story programs were held at the Center, and the children were encouraged to participate in the Summer Library Program. The collection of Native American materials at the library was weeded and updated. The Nekoosa Public Library (pop. 4,568) informed appropriate agencies and local schools about this project and publicity also appeared in the local paper and in the Hochungra Nation and Casino newsletter. (Carol Bliske, Project Coordinator; 715/886-7879.)

Southeast Asian Youth

La Crosse Public Library - *Library Connection at Child Care Sites.* (Funded at \$11,077; grant number 98-351.)

With this project, the La Crosse Public Library (pop. 52,091) focused on serving day care sites in low-income areas of La Crosse, particularly the North Side, where many Southeast Asian refugee families live. An outreach storytime presenter was hired to provide monthly, half-hour storytimes to 24 day care centers and community agencies. Deposit collections of books, audio cassettes, puppets and book/cassette kits were rotated monthly among 20 sites. Among the agencies consulted in developing this project were the Boys' and Girls' Club, the Friendship

Program, La Crosse County Human Services, Great Rivers Independent Living Services, and the La Crosse Housing Authority. (Pam Venneman, Project Coordinator; 608/789-7100.)

Oshkosh Public Library - *Library Service for the Hmong*. (Funded at \$7,000; grant number 98-359.)

A key component of this proposal was the employment of a bilingual aide to serve as a resource for the Hmong community, so that existing barriers to library service would be minimized. With the assistance of the aide, the Oshkosh Public Library (pop. 87,358) offered tours and orientation sessions for youth and families in the Hmong language, translated existing library brochures into Hmong, and provided homework assistance after school at different locations in the library. The library also contacted 50 Hmong families with children under the age of 5 to explain preschool storytimes and recruited children and their parents to attend, and made school visits to ESL classes and ESL parent support groups to explain the summer reading program. One library storytime session every month included Hmong folk tales and an interpreter. (Laurie Magee, Project Coordinator; 414/236-5210.)

Appendix D

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