

Family Literacy Library Services 2013-2016

Project Number: 0342 -14 -4617

Project Title: Summer Reading at MHLS Libraries

2015-6 Narrative

Synopsis: Mini grants of \$526 each were awarded to 17 libraries for a Phase 2 Continuing Collaboration project, to determine the effect of multi-year partnerships, as well as how libraries would build on previous partnership success. The libraries were required to collaboratively plan interactive inquiry-based programs for families (before submitting the project to MHLS) with groups/agencies that affect their communities, resulting in 10 libraries (59%) expanding their partnership with the same community partner group/agency, and 7 libraries (41%) adding a new community partner group/agency. 100% of the libraries reported that their collaborations were successful, that they benefitted from the collaboration, and that their community partner group/agency benefitted from the collaboration. Libraries participating in the mini grant program reported that the both elements (providing interactive inquiry-based programs for families, and their collaboration with groups/agencies that affect their community) increased the number of families involved in their summer reading program. The total number of programs system-wide for children during the summer increased 16% (2,738 Year 1; 3,174 Year 3), with a 12% increase in total attendance at these programs (55,608 Year 1; 62,299 Year 3). The number of programs that included parents/caregivers increased 24% (1,902 Year 1; 2,352 Year 3) showing that more families are involved in Summer Reading at New York Libraries.

Coordination with Agencies: The 17 libraries receiving Phase 2 mini grants were the direct cooperating agencies involved in this project [Brewster Public Library partnering with Design Camp; Chatham Public Library partnering with Wave Radio – WXGC 90.7 FM; Kent Public Library partnering with The Nature of Things; Kinderhook Memorial Library partnering with Little Wonders Early Childhood Enrichment Center; LaGrange Association Library partnering with Cara Wood-Ginder – Artist/Set Designer for Masque and Mime Theatre at Roy C. Ketcham High School; New Lebanon Library partnering with Walter B. Howard Elementary School, New Lebanon Junior/Senior High School and New Lebanon Summer Youth Program; NorthEast Millerton Library partnering with Astor Head Start Early Childhood Center; Olive Free Library Association partnering with Beginnings Pre-School; Patterson Library partnering with Patterson Recreation; Philmont Public Library partnering with Free Columbia, a branch of Hawthorne Valley Association; Pine Plains Free Library partnering with Pine Plains Summer Day Camp; Poughkeepsie Public Library District partnering with Poughkeepsie Farm Project; Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library partnering with Stepping Stones Early Learning Center; Staatsburg Library partnering with Norrie Point Environmental Center; Stanford Free

Library partnering with Riverbank Banjo Band; Starr Library partnering with Rhinebeck Recreation Department Camp; Town of Ulster Public Library partnering with Town of Ulster Recreation Department]. PLANNING: The libraries were all recipients of Year 2 funding for similar partnership programs which were successful, and were funded to determine the effect of multi-year partnerships, as well as how libraries would build on previous partnership success. They were invited ([Exhibit A](#) – Phase 2 Mini Grant Application for Member Libraries) to apply for the Phase 2 program to expand their 2016 summer program by adding additional activities with the same community partner/group agency and/or adding a new community partner group/agency ([Exhibit G](#) – Sampling of Partnership Letters). As in Year 2, they were required to plan their interactive inquiry-based programs for families collaboratively with their community partner, before submitting the project to MHLS for funding consideration. PROJECT ACTIVITIES: The libraries were responsible for project activities targeted to their specific community, designed to increase the number of families involved in local summer reading programs AND foster collaborations with community agencies in support of “Summer Reading at New York Libraries”. EVALUATION: The libraries conducted evaluations of their programs and were also responsible for evaluative reporting to MHLS.

Accomplishments: The 17 libraries receiving mini grants improved their programs by planning them collaboratively with their community partner group/agency, as together they shared their knowledge of the community and improved the key components of library programs to increase effectiveness. In addition these collaborations also resulted in advancing the shared goals of the libraries as well as the community partner agencies. 100% of the libraries reported that the library benefitted from the collaboration, and that their community partner agency benefitted from the collaboration. The total number of programs system-wide for children during the summer increased 16% (2,738 Year 1; 3,174 Year 3), with a 12% increase in total attendance at these programs (55,608 Year 1; 62,299 Year 3). The number of programs that included parents/caregivers increased 24% (1,902 Year 1; 2,352 Year 3) showing that more families are involved in Summer Reading at New York Libraries. Member libraries received System staff support to increase their skills in providing and evaluating summer programs for young people and families through a total of 15 targeted workshops and webinars [‘The Future of Programming: Empower, Engage & Excite’; ‘Successful Programming for Babies and Toddlers’ a webinar from Infopeople; ‘On Your Mark, Get Set...READ! Children's Summer Reading Program’ a webinar from CSLP; ‘Infusing Preschool Early Literacy with STEAM, Music and Movement’ a webinar from CLRC; ‘Get in the Game...READ! Teen Summer Reading Program’ a webinar from CSLP; ‘Exploring Early Literacy in Public Libraries’ a webinar from NYLA; ‘Summer Reading 2016 Playground: Resources for Children and Teens’ a webinar from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine; ‘Orientation for New Programmers’; ‘How to Create Summer Reading Promotions with Library Aware’ a

webinar from LibraryAware; ‘STEAMing Up Summer Learning’ a webinar from NYLA; ‘Serving Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder’ a webinar from ALA; ‘STEAM Programming in a Diverse Setting’ a webinar from InfoPeople; ‘Summer Reading Support with Gale/NOVELNY Resources’ a webinar from Gale] ([Exhibit B](#) – Sampling of Workshop Notices) with a total onsite attendance of 86 (attendance was not collected for the webinars). Two tip sheets were developed by participating libraries so others could ‘learn from their peers’: ‘Tips for Developing a Successful Partnership Project Between a Public Library and a Community Group/Agency’ ([Exhibit C](#)) and ‘Tips for Developing Successful Interactive Inquiry-based Programming for Families’ ([Exhibit F](#)). The tip sheets will be distributed to the MHLS Directors Association and to the NYS Public Library System Outreach Coordinators.

Publicity: This Phase 2 project was publicized to all 19 recipients of the Year 2 funding by direct e-mail, which was effective as all 19 responded and 17 (89%) of those applied and participated in Year 3.

Problems: We did not encounter problems working towards the objectives of the project. We found that expanding the partnership element from just school partnerships in Year 1, to partnerships with groups/agencies that affect their communities in Year 2 and Year 3, was a great asset for libraries to be able to customize the collaboration for their community. We were surprised that two of the Year 2 funding recipients responded that they wanted to opt out of Year 3 (one because the project was not well received by their patrons and one because they were not able to get confirmation from the community partner that they had hoped they would be working with), so it was good that we had specifically asked Year 2 libraries if they were interested in Year 3 funding.

Planning for Experience: We were pleased to note that the criteria of having to plan in advance with the partner has become much easier for our libraries, now that it has been mandated in the MHLS mini grants for several years, and has resulted in more successful library programs. Through this process libraries found better times of day and better locations to hold their programs for families. Town of Ulster Library reported “This is our second year partnering with the Town of Ulster Park and Recreation Summer Camp. Our first year had some bumps, which has allowed us to gain a better sense of what will work this year and what will not. For those that have partnered with an organization in the past and felt it might not have been successful, try again!”

Family Component: Libraries participating in the mini grant program reported that the both elements (providing interactive inquiry-based programs for families, and their collaboration with groups/agencies that affect their community) increased the number of families involved in their summer reading program. Patterson Library reported “I really enjoyed this partnership. I met kids I never met and have seen some come to the library for their library cards and other programs. It has been really successful for us.”

Olive Free Library reported “We are happy to have this opportunity to partner with another community group. These partnerships strengthen the community and make the library a present and tangible resource for families.” Regarding the family component, a tip sheet was developed by participating libraries so others could ‘learn from their peers’, “Tips for Developing Successful Interactive Inquiry-based Programming for Families’ ([Exhibit F](#)). A new element was added in Year 3 to assist libraries with publicizing programming for families, as our analysis of how people find out about events in their community indicated that signs by the side of the road are one of the most effective methods. Based on this knowledge, a Year 3 budget adjustment was made to fund customized roadside signs ([Exhibit H](#) – Sampling of Sign Photos and Locations) for each participating library saying “Find Family Fun at Chatham Public Library”. Responses indicated these were very effective, with comments from the public such as: “Nice idea.”; “Catchy message.”; “I think it is a good idea to spread around town.”

Evaluation Methods: 17 libraries partnered with a total of 19 community partner groups/agencies. 100% of the libraries reported that they benefitted from the collaboration and that their community partner agency benefitted from the collaboration. Children and families have access to library programs that develop family literacy and improve their knowledge, as demonstrated by the provision of 4,026 total programs (a 10% increase over Year 1) with an attendance of 72,214 (a 13% increase over Year 1). There is a boost in the Lexile levels and reading skills of youth, as demonstrated by the equivalent of 16 years of reading (8,435,418 minutes) that was accomplished Year 1-Year 3 by children and teens. The staff of member libraries increased outreach services skills and knowledge, providing improved services to library patrons, as demonstrated by the 100% of MHLS workshop attendees who reported training was worth their time ([Exhibit D](#) Sampling of Evaluation Summaries). 100% of the libraries participating in the in the mini grant program formed relevant community partnerships at the local level, as demonstrated by [Exhibit E](#)– Comments for Community Partner Groups/Agencies About the Project. Digital materials (J & YA) added to the MHLS Digital Download collection at <http://mhls.lib.overdrive.com> (Year 3 cost = \$2,558; Year 3 value of circulation = \$360,091) supported summer reading, as demonstrated by a 50% increase in circulation Year1-3.

Budget Changes: A budget change was made to Year 3, by reassigning the mini grant funds for the two libraries that opted out, to purchase customized roadside signs for each participating library. Going forward into the 2016-2019 Family Literacy Library Services grant cycle, this type of centralized purchase of signage will be continued. [Final Expenditure \(FS-10\) Form](#)

Additional Funds: List additional funds used for this project and where funds were obtained. Estimate the in-kind costs incurred by the library and cooperating agencies. In-kind costs incurred by the libraries and cooperating agencies is estimated at a total of

\$709,080 for the year. This is comprised of \$317,400 for room rental (3,174 programs at \$100 each); \$380,880 library staff time for programming (6 hours of library staff time for each program totals 19,044 hours at \$20); \$10,800 staff time from libraries and community partners for collaborative planning (15 hours for each of the 17 libraries and 19 community partners totals 540 at \$20).

3 Year Literacy Summary:

Please add here a brief summary of activities and outcomes of the entire 3 year cycle of the program: Mini grants were used Year 1-Year 3 to incentivize member libraries to initiate projects collaboratively-planned with community agencies that would increase the number of families involved in local summer reading programs AND foster collaborations with community agencies in support of “Summer Reading at New York Libraries”. Over three years the Family Literacy Library Services Grant Program directly funded the establishment of cooperative projects among 25 MHLS member libraries and 49 community partner groups/agencies ([Exhibit I](#) - MHLS Family Literacy Library Services Funded Projects 2013-6). Libraries were required to collaboratively plan programming for families (before submitting the project to MHLS) with groups/agencies that affect their communities. 100% of the libraries reported that their collaborations were successful, that they benefitted from the collaboration, that they formed relevant community partnerships at the local level, and that their community partner group/agency benefitted from the collaboration. Libraries participating in the mini grant program reported that the both elements (providing programming for families, and their collaboration with groups/agencies that affect their community) increased the number of families involved in their summer reading program. Lexile levels and reading skills of youth were boosted, as demonstrated by the equivalent of 16 years of reading that was accomplished in 3 years by children and teens. Access to increased library programming for children and families to develop family literacy and improve their knowledge was achieved, as demonstrated by the 16% increase in total number of programs system-wide for children during the summer 3 years, and a 12% increase in total attendance at these programs over 3 years. The number of programs that included parents/caregivers increased 24% over 3 years showing that more families are involved in Summer Reading at New York Libraries.

Continuation: MHLS does not plan to continue this project after the 2013-2016 NYS Family Literacy Library Services Grant Program is complete, as the 2016-2019 funding cycle does not have the same focus. Dedicated grant funds are needed to continue this project.

[Project Statistics](#)