

# Plan of Service Focus Group Session

## Adult Programmers | March 30, 2011

### Challenges & Issues:

- **Funding**

- Not enough funds are budgeted for programming; some libraries reported no funds budgeted for programming; however staff is tasked with producing programming.
- Staff reported feeling pressured to “do it all” when it comes to programming on top of other duties
- Always seeking free programs; volunteers
- Seeking grants to fund programs
- Concern that they are not offering “something for everyone”
- Not enough staff to help people one-on-one with computers
- Hours open are not always convenient for offering programs at times when adults can attend
- Feel programming is a priority for the community and that resources should be devoted to producing programming; “Success in programming means people want more.”

- **Promotion**

- Continually looking to increase program attendance
- Seeking partnership opportunities for programming, with other groups, agencies and libraries
- How to best connect program attendees with what the library has to offer beyond the program (materials, services, other programs); “Some people think all we have is books.”
- Seeking best practices for holding programs off-site while still connecting attendees with what the library has to offer
- Difficult for the same staff person to do promotion on top of program planning and execution

- **Planning**

- Seeking “programs that work”; that connect with the community and make them want to come back; How to know what patrons want to come to?
- Unsure of how to evaluate the success of a program
- 100% of libraries reported there was no program policy approved by the board to define program goals for the library
- How to tap into patron base of knowledge to find possible program presenters? How to tell if a person is both knowledgeable about a topic AND a good presenter?
- Public is asking for more
  - internet/computer-centric
  - “family fun” program offerings
  - More fun, social; “less educational”

- How to expand programming beyond individual strength of staff tasked with providing programming?
- Need help managing volunteers; "We need reliable help, not casual."
- Looking for best practices to manage and evaluate outside presenters
- **Space**
  - Frequent comment that many libraries do not have the space to conduct programs
  - Internal competition for space – adult, teen, children and Friends programs are in competition – most libraries reported a lack of centralized coordination
  - External competition for space: Increasing number of tutors and outside community groups seeking to use library space
- **Technology**
  - More and more patrons seeking assistance on the computer; how to design programming around this; See an opportunity in this to connect these patrons with online library services
  - Need for staff training on very basic things: email, MS Word, internet searching, how to download audio and ebooks

**What do you hope the community is saying about the library?**

- They have everything
- Go ask them, they know
- We get our money's worth
- Approachable
- Friendly and welcome
- A vital community center