



TOOLS FOR TRANSITION

SUGGESTIONS & STRATEGIES FOR LIBRARIES
A 2022 Project Report Based on Findings of the Report,
“Across the Valley: Changes & Trends”



Mid-Hudson Library System | September 2003

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

An Introduction to This Toolkit

Having a plan of service for the future of your library is essential to anticipating and preparing for change. The report "Across the Valley: Changes & Trends" (available at http://midhudson.org/admin/Across_Valley.pdf) lists elements that will have an impact on your library and the services it provides to your community. This toolkit, **Tools for Transition**, was developed from "Across the Valley" report findings and offers potential action steps for your library to take in order to implement the services you choose to offer in your plan.

Planning is a valuable process that helps create a shared vision among board and staff of where the library is going. In our rapidly changing region, this kind of forward thinking is essential to the future success of your library. Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) planning consultants provide support to member libraries for community-based planning initiatives. We generally recommend that each board develop a 3- to 5-year plan, which you evaluate yearly to see if you are moving forward and to determine where you need to make adjustments.

You then build your budget for new programs and services around the plan, rather than the reverse: using an existing budget that may not have room for new offerings. Having a long-range plan of service as a formal document is also mandated by the NYS Division of Library Development, which oversees public libraries (minimum standards available at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/helpful.htm>), making the planning process essential to the operation of your library.

Using the toolkit for ideas to reach and support your community is one of the steps in the planning process. A number of services and resources are readily available to directly assist library directors and boards with the full process, including:

- *MHLS planning consultants*: **Josh Cohen** (Executive Director), **Merribeth Advocate** (Outreach and Education Coordinator), and **Rebekkah Smith** (Coordinator of Member Information) are available to review your plan, speak to your board about planning, and for individual consultations by phone or email (contact information available at <http://midhudson.org/staff.html>). Josh Cohen and Rebekkah Smith are also available to help libraries maneuver the political process as they engage in projects and initiatives that bring them into the political arena and to advise libraries with budget votes and building projects. Merribeth Advocate can provide Outreach support for libraries serving changing populations.
- *MHLS website*: The right-hand navigation menu of the Mid-Hudson homepage (<http://midhudson.org/>) offers support information for management, planning, demographics, programming, marketing, advocacy, and funding as well as detailed resources for trustees.
- *Professional materials*: Books and materials supporting planning and other administrative endeavors are listed in our Public Library Catalog (<http://gigcat.midhudson.org/>), including those in the MHLS Professional Collection. When ordering from the Professional Collection use the form available at http://midhudson.org/department/interlibrary_member_form.htm.

As your library works to implement ideas outlined in this toolkit, staff of Mid-Hudson Library System will be working to support your efforts and to prepare member libraries and the System for the future, based on information from the report and our Plan of Service. We thank you for proactively meeting the future with library services for your community.

USING THIS TOOLKIT

- ◆ **This toolkit is a resource for public libraries that will make the planning process easier.** It offers options applicable to libraries of any size; yet you cannot and should not expect to implement everything in this toolkit at your library.
- ◆ **Review the entire toolkit for ideas you can currently implement and ideas that you want to build into your library's future services.** Many of the actions/activities may be easily incorporated into your current plans. As you plan for future services, part of your planning process should be to identify the service areas that are most desired by your community and focus on implementing those. By giving the community what they want and need most, your library is more likely to receive positive community support through budget increases, volunteerism, and fundraising.
To learn more about selecting the most appropriate areas of service for your specific community:
 - Visit the MHLS New Planning for Results resource page at <http://midhudson.org/trustee/NPFR.htm>.
 - Read *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach* by Sandra Nelson (available in the MHLS Professional Collection. Use the online ILL form to make a request: http://midhudson.org/department/interlibrary/member_form.htm.)
 - Talk with one of the MHLS planning consultants: Executive Director Josh Cohen, Outreach and Education Coordinator Merribeth Advocate, or Coordinator of Member Information Rebekkah Smith. They are available to speak to your board or for individual consultations by phone or email. Their contact information is available online at <http://midhudson.org/staff.html>.
- ◆ **The sections of this toolkit contain page numbers that correspond to the MHLS project report, "Across the Valley: Changes & Trends."** Ideas and action steps outlined in this toolkit respond to trends identified in that report. The full report is available online at http://midhudson.org/admin/Across_Valley.pdf.
- ◆ **This planning tool projects 10 to 20 years into the future.** You do not have to implement all your changes and service enhancements overnight. You can choose to implement certain areas over the next several years, reevaluating your plan annually, and then revisiting the toolkit periodically for new ideas.
- ◆ **Some of the suggested actions/activities support more than one area and are repeated where applicable.**
- ◆ **Look for additional trends and actions/activities for your communities that are not listed here.** The trends and activities listed will help you look at your services in a new way, and you will come up with additional approaches for implementing them locally. You are encouraged to share your ideas with MHLS staff so that they can be added to the toolkit for the benefit of other libraries. See contact information for MHLS planning consultants above.
- ◆ **You may already be implementing some of the ideas.** If this is the case, your library is to be congratulated. Perhaps you can be a resource to other libraries that are attempting to implement the same ideas for the first time. Contact one of the MHLS planning consultants to let them know what you are doing.

A 2022 Project Report
**GENERAL THEMES FOR LIBRARIES TO CONSIDER AS
THEY FACE THE FUTURE**

1. *The importance of effectively serving a changing population.*

The population in the Hudson Valley is changing rapidly. It is becoming much more diverse with an influx of weekenders, commuters, and immigrants making library communities notably different than they were in the past. As a result, libraries need to work diligently and differently to reach these people. Direct steps need to be taken to connect with these groups and to offer library services that respond to their needs.

2. *The need to continually make library services relevant to people's lifestyles.*

Instant gratification and efficiency are expected in today's high-tech society. People do not like to wait, or to feel any activity is wasting their time. To address this demand, libraries must continually question *how* they can make services more convenient and accessible to the public. They need to acknowledge changing families and lifestyles, experiment with new ways of marketing, and make information more accessible online. It is worthwhile to look at the activities of cutting-edge businesses and consider how their techniques for providing information and services might successfully be translated for the library arena.

3. *The importance of being cognizant of the library's image in the community.*

As libraries become more visible in the community through budget votes, building projects, and other high profile activities, they can become a target for negative attitudes and agendas. For this reason, libraries must become increasingly savvy with regard to marketing, public relations, and campaigning. They must work proactively to maintain a favorable reputation within the community.

4. *The need for local information in libraries.*

Technology has changed people's expectations about the kind of information libraries should offer, since the public is able to find a wealth of information without using the library. For this reason, libraries should provide information that cannot be found anywhere else and that is not published in traditional ways. Libraries may need to become publishers themselves, perhaps online, to bring this information to their communities. Searching out these nontraditional publications will require more aggressive acquisition methods. In addition, public libraries must effectively market their unique ability to provide valid and reliable information to the community.

OUR CHANGING COMMUNITIES (ATV Report pp. 10–12)

CITIZENS TAKE ACTION (p. 10)

Summary: Area residents are getting involved in local planning initiatives by joining boards, creating community awareness campaigns, and urging others to get involved. Town leadership has become a complex focal point of many local issues.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To support the planning information needs of local residents.
- ◆ To supply local, state, and federal government information to the public.
- ◆ To assist and encourage active citizenship.
- ◆ To demonstrate that libraries supply information on current issues in a non-partisan fashion.
- ◆ To facilitate exchange of information and ideas related to current issues.

Citizens Take Action **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Provide government information in the library and links on the library's website, including:
 - village/town board minutes.
 - local building codes and location/hours where they are available.
 - local licensing information (fishing, hunting, dog licenses)
 - U.S. Census, tax forms, link to municipal web site, area elected officials, voter registration information.
- ◆ Provide information in the library and library website links to land preservation information, local planning efforts, and smart-growth strategies.
 - Hudson Valley Smart-Growth Alliance (website) www.scenichudson.org/hvsga.htm.
 - Local planning initiatives. For example, www.rhinebeckplan.org, a community-wide planning program to create a vision for Rhinebeck.
- ◆ Provide a listing of volunteer opportunities at the library and in the local community.
 - www.volunteermatch.org is searchable by zip-code for Mid-Hudson area.
 - www.handsonhv.org covers Dutchess & Ulster counties.
- ◆ Keep planning documents in the library.
- ◆ Post public-notice announcements.
- ◆ Purchase material addressing different points of view on planning issues.
 - books, videos, DVDs CDs, etc.
 - zoning information, conservation, open space preservation etc.
 - items could be coordinated into a *planning collection*.
- ◆ Offer booklet "A Taxpayers Guide: How to File For a Review of Your Assessment" to reinforce that libraries serve the information needs of all people in a non-partisan fashion. This is a publication of the NYS Board of Real Property Services.
 - publication can be downloaded from www.orps.state.ny.us/pamphlet/complain/howtofile/index.htm. Printed booklets can be ordered by calling (518) 486-5446. (Booklets are usually shipped free of charge, but due to budget constraints, the library might be required to pay the shipping cost of the booklets.)
 - publication is revised every year, so it is important to obtain the updated version.
- ◆ Assemble a binder or create a display area with clippings about current local issues.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Host a discussion or debate of current issues. Some ideas:
 - Local issues roundtable.
 - Great Decisions program, a series of citizen discussions on foreign affairs organized by the Foreign Policy Association. For more information visit www.fpa.org.
 - Study Circles program to promote citizen education. Study Circles are part of the Study Circles Resource Center, a nonprofit, non-advocacy organization that promotes circles on domestic, social, and political issues. Visit www.studycircles.org for information on starting one.
 - National Issues Forums—a series of community based discussions on national issues. Visit www.nifi.org for information on conducting forums.
- ◆ Instruct citizens' groups about resources for planning.
 - Census website—www.census.gov
- ◆ Host public hearings and public-access television broadcasts of local meetings.

SERVICES

- ◆ Provide reference assistance in accessing planning resources at the library.
- ◆ Inform active citizens that the library meeting room is available to them.
- ◆ Offer the library as a meeting place for local and state govt. officials.
- ◆ Provide information literacy training to citizens.
- ◆ Highlight resources available from the independent press.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Join existing planning committees locally and regionally.
- ◆ Recruit active citizens to join library board.
 - Chambers
 - Civic Organizations, etc.
- ◆ Volunteer to serve on local government advisory committees.
- ◆ Present to local citizens' groups. Inform them that the library's major goal is to increase citizens' access to information.
- ◆ Work with school and community groups to keep library's information current.
- ◆ Collaborate with the town government to develop a newsletter or information sheet outlining their response to current issues. Make it available at the library.

OUR CHANGING COMMUNITIES INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEMS (p. 11)

Summary: Infrastructure limitations related to telecommunications, transportation, utilities, and water/sewer systems in many Hudson Valley communities must be addressed in order to manage growth and foster economic development.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To provide the community with information on infrastructure problems.
- ◆ To provide information and programs that address infrastructure issues.
- ◆ To increase public awareness about infrastructure problems and their implications.

Infrastructure Problems ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

INFORMATION

- ◆ Make handouts or reports about local infrastructure problems and their implications available to the public.
- ◆ Provide up-to-date information from metro-pool or other public transportation systems to address traffic problems.
- ◆ Link the NYS Drivers Ed. Manual to the library's website: www.nydmv.state.ny.us/dmanual/default.html

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Partner with DMV or AARP to host "Driving in the Valley" refresher workshops.
 - defensive driving classes could be included.
 - local businesses could provide incentives.

SERVICES

- ◆ Expand the number of public-access terminals.
- ◆ Collect public comment about traffic concerns, parking, or other infrastructure problems.
- ◆ Keep abreast of current issues in order to provide balanced resources and to direct patrons to the information they need.
- ◆ Provide wireless Internet access in and around the library (including in adjacent parks)
 - see Bryant Park, NYC as an example.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Offer the library as a site for community programs.
- ◆ Partner with area businesses to advocate for high-speed telecommunications.
- ◆ Work with the town to develop more public parking.
- ◆ Attend public hearings that address infrastructure issues.
- ◆ Advertise library services that address these issues.

OUR CHANGING COMMUNITIES TOURISM AS A BENEFIT TO COMMUNITIES (p. 12)

Summary: As tourism continues to expand in the Hudson Valley, new economic development opportunities are becoming available.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To provide quality tourist information to the community.
- ◆ To promote the library as an area attraction.
- ◆ To highlight the features/attractions of the community.
- ◆ To serve the information needs of tourists and visitors.

Tourism as a Benefit to Communities ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

INFORMATION

- ◆ Make cross-links between library and tourism websites.
 - on library website, include a link such as "What's happening in town this weekend" or "What's happening in _____ County this weekend?"

- ◆ Include a section in the library's newsletter and/or website that features tourism events locally and regionally.
- ◆ Have a Notable Local Citizens list available in print and/or on the library's website.
- ◆ Make the history of the library available in print and/or on the library's website.
- ◆ Offer books that feature the Hudson Valley and its history.
- ◆ Develop special collections to meet the recreational reading needs of tourists.
 - Hiking & Biking or Books at the Beach, for example.
- ◆ Create county-based brochures listing area libraries and hours. Make them available at tourism sites.
- ◆ Become a drop-off point for Hudson Valley Guide and Weekend section of the Taconic News.
- ◆ Link to sites featuring Hudson Valley history and events.
 - *History Keeper's Companion* (guide to sites & sources in Dutchess, Putnam, & Ulster Counties.) www.lowerhudsonconference.org/Resources/Publications/HKC_Guide.
 - *About Town* guide (for Dutchess and Ulster Counties) <http://abouttownguide.com> (also available in print).

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Partner with the county historical society or the Lower Hudson Conference of Historical Agencies to offer programs.
 - notable residents that once lived in the community
 - accessing local history
 - tours of local cemeteries
- ◆ Offer a presentation on the library's history, combined with celebrating an anniversary or community weekend.
- ◆ If housed in a historical building, promote the library as a tourist attraction.

SERVICES

- ◆ Act as a tourism information center with a display of tourism info.
 - invite someone from the local tourism bureau to provide library staff with training on the local tourism industry.
 - offer maps, bus/trolley schedules, local bed-and-breakfast information, local history and attractions.
 - feature one tourist attraction each month for an information display. Include books and incentives from the tourist spot to attract visitors. Two-for-one admission or a free item from the gift shop are some ideas.
 - vendors could maintain displays.
- ◆ Promote the library's ability to meet immediate reference, Internet, e-mail and other computing needs of tourists and visitors.
- ◆ Extend library material loan periods for patrons going on vacation.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Arrange for the library to be a stop on tourism routes, or request a stop close to the library.
- ◆ Market library services to tourism bureaus.
- ◆ Arrange a tour of local historical buildings in the area.

OUR CHANGING REGION (ATV Report pp. 14–16)

INFLUX FROM NEW YORK CITY AND WESTCHESTER (p. 14)

Summary: The Hudson Valley is experiencing unprecedented growth and development, with specific influx from Westchester County and NYC. Rising costs in southern locales, post 9/11 syndrome, commuter travel options, telecommuting alternatives, and the rural character of the Hudson Valley have attracted many new residents.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to new residents in the community.
- ◆ To create a sense of belonging or community cohesion among new and long-time residents.
- ◆ To demonstrate to new residents that the library is an important place in the community.
- ◆ To serve the special needs of new residents with appropriate resources and materials.

Influx from New York City & Westchester **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Have a *reader board* with changeable letters displayed in front of the library to announce upcoming events. This may encourage new people to use the library.
- ◆ Provide listings of local services.
 - babysitters, home/lawn care personnel, etc.
 - give only referrals—not evaluations.
- ◆ Make sure your library's contact information is featured in the phone book, welcome directories, and other sources of information for new residents.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Provide an orientation to the library.
 - give a tour of the library
 - have library card registration
 - demonstrate how to use the catalog and databases.
- ◆ Offer a presentation on the library's history.
- ◆ Host workshops about the community for new residents
 - present local history highlights.
 - give overview of local govt.
 - have guest speakers present on selected topics. Ideas include: town history and structure, zoning laws and regulations, legal issues, home maintenance information, etc.

SERVICES

- ◆ Act as a welcome center.
 - offer maps/directions to the local area.
 - have a directory that addresses common questions of new residents, such as *What do I do with my trash?*
 - include a list of local clubs and service organizations.
- ◆ Become aware of what services urban libraries provide. Review library websites in Westchester and NYC to see what services new residents might expect.
- ◆ Offer home-sale information (buying/selling) for patrons who prefer to work without a real estate agent.
 - contact realtors to get their website addresses and copies of their listings.

- ◆ Obtain list of new residents and welcome them with a personal invitation from the library director to visit the library. Use the letter to tell them about library services.
- ◆ Inform weekenders/commuters that they can order materials from a different location during the week and pick them up at the library on the weekend.
- ◆ Offer laptop stations (places to plug in laptops) and/or wireless access in the library.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Conduct a survey to identify the needs of weekenders.
- ◆ Consider new residents' higher expectations for making changes/improvements in library services and funding.
- ◆ Develop an advisory group of New York City library users (weekenders) and have them meet regularly with the Board.
- ◆ Create a newsletter detailing library services/events and send it to new residents. Include a tear-off section to solicit more Friends for the library.

OUR CHANGING REGION IMMIGRATION (pp. 14 + 15)

Summary: The Hudson Valley has experienced notable increases in persons from diverse backgrounds. While the primary increase is within the Hispanic population, immigrants from the Middle East, Asia, and Europe are also making the Hudson Valley their home at increased rates. Newcomers create versatility and dynamism, but also present challenges to area service providers and community leaders.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to immigrants in the community.
- ◆ To create a sense of belonging or community cohesion between immigrant and non-immigrant residents.
- ◆ To demonstrate that the library is a reliable resource for immigrants.
- ◆ To serve the special needs of immigrants with appropriate resources and materials.
- ◆ To assist immigrants wishing to learn English with information, resources, and appropriate community contacts.

Immigration **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Add information of interest to immigrants to the library's website.
 - citizenship and immigration info.
 - links to cultural heritage organizations.
- ◆ Make information on the library's website available in Spanish or other languages appropriate for the community.
- ◆ Facilitate access to ethnic oriented electronic resources, databases, and websites.
- ◆ Develop lists of volunteer and private tutors who teach English.
- ◆ Build library's collection of audio materials for learning English.
- ◆ Offer brochures on business, social services, healthcare, and/or transportation in languages other than English that are spoken in your community.
- ◆ Develop collections of books, DVDs, videos, etc. in the languages spoken in the community.
- ◆ Create library publications/signage that reflects the languages spoken in the community.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Plan and host diversity events.
 - develop one or two annual festival celebrations
 - ask foreign-language speakers for help.
- ◆ Offer first-aid classes geared for speakers of other languages.
- ◆ Arrange programs that celebrate the holidays of different cultures.
 - In December celebrate Kwanzaa, Hanukkah and Los Posados, in addition to Christmas.
- ◆ Have programs that include folktales from different countries.
- ◆ Offer bilingual storytimes and other programs.
- ◆ Organize Games from Many Lands program.
 - explain the origin of various games and then play them in the library.
 - *The Multicultural Game Book: More Than 70 Traditional Games from 30 Countries* by Louise Orlando is a helpful resource.
 - possible games include: Backgammon (Persia, India, Rome), Dominoes (China), Yo-Yo (Ancient China and Rome), Parchesi (India), Solitaire (France), Tangrams (Ancient China), Checkers (Europe).
 - consider having maps, flags, coats-of-arms, and traditional dress for the countries of featured games.
- ◆ Hold a Foods from Around the World program.
 - ask area restaurants to donate food or volunteers to make special dishes.
 - purchase food from local ethnic restaurants.
 - make recipes of featured foods available to patrons.
- ◆ Offer a Music of Many Cultures series.
 - can include vocal and instrumental music.
 - performers can dress in traditional dress of culture being highlighted.
 - Brief history of the music and the culture can be shared with the audience.
 - Look to local ethnic organizations for possible performers.
- ◆ Arrange Coping Skills Programs that consist of lectures and workshops to help immigrants adjust to life in the U.S. and the local community.
 - programs should offer practical, useful information. Possible topics include: immigration law, parenting, education, employment options, health, and family support.
 - * presenters might include lawyers, doctors, teachers, psychologists, social workers.
 - * seek presenters fluent in the language of their audience or hire a translator.
- ◆ Conduct technology instruction in Spanish or other appropriate languages.

SERVICES

- ◆ Provide space for ESL education and LVA tutors.
 - purchase materials to support these efforts.
- ◆ Become knowledgeable about ESL education in the community.
 - contact the local BOCES and LVA to learn about their offerings.
- ◆ Arrange for a translator to be available at selected library programs.
- ◆ Make efforts to employ diverse staff, board, and volunteers.
- ◆ Activate and advertise accessibility features on public access computers, including foreign-language characters.
- ◆ Create a *Multiethnic Resource Directory* that lists organizations involved in serving and promoting ethnic populations.
 - organizations may include civic and political groups, social clubs, community, cultural, and educational organizations, festivals, government agencies, professional groups, religious organizations, and social and health-service agencies.
 - directory can be online and in print.
- ◆ Provide all library staff with cultural awareness/sensitivity training.

- ◆ Consider Mail-a-Book service in languages other than English.
- ◆ Arrange basic Spanish-language instruction for library staff.
 - have an instructor teach staff greetings and other library related phrases.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Composition of library staff and board should reflect the community when possible.
- ◆ Conduct a survey to identify the needs of immigrant populations.
- ◆ Make presentations to ethnic group associations, service clubs, elected officials, and educators to inform them of library programs/resources.
- ◆ Employ or obtain a volunteer native speaker to assist patrons in the library.
- ◆ Establish strategic alliances with community groups to encourage them to speak positively on behalf of the library.
 - participate in community-based projects/events, street festivals, parades, charity events, and school activities to achieve this.
 - welcome collaborative grant projects as a means to form new partnerships.
- ◆ Patronize local ethnic restaurants.
- ◆ Export library card sign-up to locations outside the library in an effort to attract more immigrants to the library.
 - this could be done by volunteers at grocery stores, laundromats, schools, post offices, social service agencies, outside of churches, etc.
- ◆ Conduct open houses and tours for immigrants.
 - partner with ethnic associations to get participants and translators.
 - programs should offer practical, useful information. Possible topics include: immigration law, parenting, education, employment options, health and family support.
 - presenters might include lawyers, doctors, teachers, psychologists, social workers.
 - seek presenters fluent in the language of their presentation or hire a translator.

OUR CHANGING REGION AGING

Summary: The population is aging nationwide, statewide, and in the Hudson Valley. This will continue as the aging Baby Boom generation expands the size of the entire older population. The Hudson Valley is experiencing an aging lifestyle characterized by two groups: [1] the young-old and middle-old, and [2] the oldest-old. Each has very distinct needs.

YOUNG-OLD & MIDDLE-OLD (p. 15)

The young-old (ages 60-75) and middle-old (ages 75-85) form a newly emerging group who will change society's perspective on aging and present a real service opportunity for libraries. As the Baby Boom generation gets close to retirement, they will remain noticeably active and healthy. They will work part-time, engage in volunteer activities, travel, and pursue hobbies. It is likely that they'll still have cars, spouses, and pension plans. As *Newsweek* reported, the young-old/middle-old will "rewrite what it means to be a senior citizen. They'll take Tai Chi classes in their 90's, start second careers in their 60's, and begin romances to the foreheads of their grandchildren." Because of their renewed interest in life, desire to be actively engaged in the community, and perspective of retirement as simply a *transition*, the young-old/middle-old will become a very distinct demographic group in the future.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to senior citizens in the community.
- ◆ To serve the personal, recreational, and professional needs of young/middle aged senior citizens.
- ◆ To make use of senior citizens' time, talents, and experience to benefit the library and the community.
- ◆ To serve the special needs of senior citizens with appropriate programs and resources.

Young-Old & Middle-Old ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

INFORMATION

- ◆ Provide materials/resources on life planning, goal setting, and life transitions.
- ◆ Offer financial planning and retirement-planning resources.
- ◆ Have information and materials on home maintenance and repair.
- ◆ Have materials/resources that give techniques for encouraging literacy in children (for grandparents to use with their grandchildren.)
- ◆ Ensure library website has considered the needs of senior citizens. Many seniors citizens:
 - have older or slower computers.
 - have physical limitations affecting their ability to obtain information readily from websites.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Host programs on financial-planning topics, career options, computer literacy, health/fitness, caregiving, relationships, spirituality, and entertainment.
- ◆ Offer intergenerational programs that encourage different generations to intermingle, learn, and share skills. Ideas include:
 - art & crafts classes, book discussions, CPR, first-aid, self-defense, creative writing, foreign-language classes, poetry readings, dog-training, music events, game nights, etc.
- ◆ Arrange an oral history program hosted by senior citizens to discuss men and women who shaped their lives.
- ◆ Offer workshops on home maintenance/repair topics.
 - have a respected contractor answer specific questions or offer a how-to class
- ◆ Invite grandparents as guests to children's storytime.
 - address invitation to "grandparent, honorary grandparent, or special friend" to prevent any children from feeling left out.
- ◆ Arrange estate-planning workshops.
 - wills/trusts, etc.
- ◆ Offer workshops on travel
 - have a local travel agent give an overview of the 10 Most Memorable Vacations.
- ◆ Organize programs using MHLS' Bi-Folkal kits, themed multisensory kits, which you can request at <http://midhudson.org/Program/bifolkal.htm>.
- ◆ Set up Pen-Pal programs where older patrons correspond with younger ones.
 - older patrons can be recruited from homebound services the library offers and senior citizen groups/facilities.
- ◆ Celebrate Older Adults month each May.
 - display senior citizens' artwork or writings
 - give away something special to senior citizens.
 - have an information fair and invite agencies serving senior citizens to give presentations.

SERVICES

- ◆ Expand employment, volunteer, and recreational opportunities for senior citizens.
 - book groups, volunteer activities, part-time jobs
- ◆ Train Senior Tutors to assist students with homework assignments and locating information in the library.
- ◆ Have a Library Grandma/Grandpa, a senior citizen volunteer who works with children in the library. Have them discuss books and reading, help children locate materials, and play games.
 - a retired teacher might be perfect for this role.

- ◆ Consider making your library a Life Options Center, or a place that assists older adults making a transition to a new life by offering information and programs about choices for work, service, lifelong learning and community connections.
 - for more information about creating a Life Options Center visit Libraries for the Future online at: www.lff.org/programs/lifeoptions/LifeOptionsBlueprint.pdf.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Include young-old and middle-old individuals on library board.
- ◆ Develop a Senior Citizen Advisory Board. Involve older adults as leaders to plan and implement programs and services.
- ◆ Develop a core group of retired senior citizens to be active in the Friends group. Have this group use their contacts to assist with fundraising and special events.
- ◆ Offer library as a place for social interaction among senior citizens.
- ◆ Market senior services via print : this is the media form advertisers have found that senior citizens are most receptive to.
 - advertising experts highly recommend direct-mail campaigns to senior citizens claiming that senior citizens read all mail sent to them.
- ◆ Have a library booth at health fairs and community events to promote library services to senior citizens.

OUR CHANGING REGION OLDEST-OLD (p. 16)

The oldest-old (85 and older) is the fastest-growing group among the elderly due to miracle drugs and other technologies that have increased life-span. These individuals experience levels of chronic illness, disability, and social isolation far above that of other age groups. They tend to require more support services and assistance in daily living. Both challenges and opportunities abound with this growing population.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to senior citizens in the community.
- ◆ To serve the personal, recreational, and professional needs of senior citizens.
- ◆ To prevent the oldest in the community from feeling disconnected from the library and the community.
- ◆ To serve the special needs of senior citizens with appropriate programs and resources.

<i>Oldest-Old</i> ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

INFORMATION

- ◆ House information on transportation, healthcare, and other supportive services needed by the oldest members of the community.
- ◆ Make current health information available.
- ◆ Have materials/resources available for grandparents for encouraging literacy in children.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Offer programs and resources about giving care and finding appropriate care for aging relatives.
- ◆ Host workshop about memoirs writing.
- ◆ Arrange Pen Pal programs where older adults correspond with young library patrons.
 - older patrons can be recruited from senior citizen groups, assisted living facilities, and/or library homebound programs.

- ◆ Invite grandparent guests to story time.
 - make sure invitation is open to grandparents, honorary grandparent, or special friend in an effort to avoid slighting children who do not have a relationship with their biological grandparents.

SERVICES

- ◆ Make special formats readily accessible for senior patrons.
 - large print books, audio books, etc.
- ◆ Organize volunteer book mobile to homebound patrons or senior citizen facilities.
- ◆ Provide tools to assist disabled patrons
 - magnification readers
 - access to the library for the blind
 - devices for people with hearing impairments.
- ◆ Develop Grandparent Kits with books, audiocassettes, puppets, tip sheets, etc. Grandparents can use them to read and interact with young grandchildren.
- ◆ Ensure library building accommodates older patrons
 - parking, doors, ramps allow wheelchairs/walkers
- ◆ Consider flexible methods for requesting materials and flexible loan periods based on patron needs.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Build a relationship with the local Office for the Aging and other senior citizen groups. Discuss how to best serve the older-adult community.
- ◆ Bring library programs and materials to local senior citizen centers.
- ◆ Develop a Senior Citizen Advisory Board.
- ◆ Have a library booth at health fairs and community events to promote library services to senior citizens.

THE WAY PEOPLE WORK (ATV Report pp. 18–20)

BUSINESS RESTRUCTURING (p. 18)

Summary: Businesses and organizations in today's world face growing competition. For both public and private organizations, the high cost of operations has stimulated growth in mergers, partnerships, and umbrella organizations to facilitate cost sharing.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to for-profit and not-for-profit businesses in the community.
- ◆ To support the needs and issues of local businesses with appropriate programs and resources.
- ◆ To promote the library as a reliable business resource.

Business Restructuring **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Provide website links and library materials on for-profit and not-for-profit business law, business ethics, economics, organizational change, corporate culture, and other related topics.
- ◆ Offer materials on successful business mergers and partnerships.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Offer workshops on selected business topics. Possible ideas:
 - changing business environment, fiscal management, human resources in today's world.
 - contact professors at area colleges to speak about a topic in their area of expertise.

SERVICES

- ◆ Let for-profit and not-for-profit businesses check out reference materials overnight.
- ◆ Have a notary public on staff.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Create a monthly/quarterly newsletter for area businesses with pertinent articles, business facts and humor, profiles of how other businesses have benefited from using the library.
- ◆ Organize a group email to communicate with area businesses and inform them of upcoming programs and events.
- ◆ Make personal visits to business leaders when possible. Remind them that the library is available to them.

THE WAY PEOPLE WORK INCREASE IN SMALL BUSINESSES/INDEPENDENT WORKERS (p. 19)

Summary: More people are starting businesses or working from home than ever before due to layoffs, the effects of 9/11, and advances in technology. Increased numbers of self-employed workers may lead to greater flexibility in work schedules and environments, and may also lead to greater social isolation.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to small businesses in the community.
- ◆ To support the needs and issues of small businesses/independent workers with appropriate programs and resources.
- ◆ To promote the library as a reliable business resource.

Increase in Small Businesses/Independent Workers **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ List resources small business/independent workers view as essential to them.
 - website links to local chamber/business associations
- ◆ Support local businesses via library websites.
 - include a button such as Support Local Business and link to the chamber or business association that lists area businesses.
 - consider a button that lists Businesses That Support the Library.
- ◆ Distribute Small Business Resource Guide CD-ROM's from the National Business Association.
 - order for free from the National Business Association at 1-800-456-0440 or from the IRS at www.irs.gov
- ◆ Display current for-profit and not-for-profit business events and issues in the library to raise community awareness.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Offer programs at a variety of times.
- ◆ Offer adult programs for socialization.
 - clubs, book clubs, author visits, workshops, classes
- ◆ Hold non-fiction book discussions on business topics.
 - leadership, management, investing.
- ◆ Present book-discussion topics that will attract men.
 - history, wars, sports, automobiles, trains, etc.
- ◆ Host workshops for self-employed workers.
 - building support systems, securing health or other insurances, budgeting, tax information.
- ◆ Arrange a small business expo at the library.
 - invite a group of local business owners to discuss their products and services with the community.
- ◆ Hold Business After Hours programs or networking events.

SERVICES

- ◆ Act as a conduit for people working from home to connect.
 - for example, a group of area writers might meet at the library monthly and keep in touch via a listserv.
- ◆ Provide space and laptop access for telecommuters/independent workers.
- ◆ Expand evening and weekend hours to better accommodate small business owners/independent workers.
- ◆ Offer reference support to individuals wishing to access business materials in print, audio, video, or online.
- ◆ Provide brief orientation sessions to library's business resources.
 - can be arranged weekly at the library.
- ◆ Promote current for-profit and not-for-profit business events and programs.
- ◆ Offer telephone or email reference service so busy patrons can be helped without physically visiting the library.
- ◆ Allow for-profit and not-for-profit businesses to check out reference materials overnight.
- ◆ Have a notary public on staff.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Attend local Chamber of Commerce/business association meetings to network and become aware of current business issues.
- ◆ Educate business groups on remote-access business resources and Central Reference Library resources.
- ◆ Make personal visits to business leaders when possible. Remind them that the library has resources to support them.
- ◆ Visit local college business programs or classes to encourage use of public library resources.
- ◆ Ask business people to distribute library brochures.
 - banks, real estate agents, etc.
- ◆ Acknowledge small businesses in the community.
 - hold a breakfast or luncheon for them.
 - give away something useful to them.
- ◆ Create a monthly/quarterly newsletter for area businesses with pertinent articles, business facts and humor, profiles of how other businesses have benefited from using the library.
- ◆ Create more interchange between the library and local businesses.
 - exchange information, display business materials in the library and request that area businesses make library brochures available in their offices.
 - provide local business displays in the library. For example: a pottery display, antiques display, etc.
 - occasionally allow businesses to offer sample services in the library. For example: a five-minute back and neck massage given to patrons by a local massage therapist, sample foods from an area restaurant, etc.

THE WAY PEOPLE WORK RECRUITING AND RETAINING QUALIFIED WORKERS (p. 19)

Summary: Area employers are regularly challenged in hiring and retaining qualified workers. Many are employing creative strategies to address this critical concern.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to employers in the community.
- ◆ To support the employment needs of the community with appropriate programs and resources.
- ◆ To promote the library as a career/employment resource center.

Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Workers **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Support individuals looking to increase their knowledge/skills in a certain area with current materials.
- ◆ Provide links to job sites on library's web site.
- ◆ Regularly post job openings and provide current job and career materials.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Host education and career-related classes/workshops
 - ESL, GED, English and math classes, resume/job search workshops
- ◆ Organize a Vocational Night or business expo.
 - Employers could make presentations about the types of positions they are looking to fill, while potential employees listen in a non-threatening setting.
 - Post-secondary guidance counselors could discuss making life choices, selecting study programs, applying for financial aid, or seeking employment.
 - display library career and education resources and encourage attendees to make use of them.

SERVICES

- ◆ Set an example by recruiting/retaining qualified workers in the library.
 - personnel policies, salaries, working conditions, levels of trained staff may need attention.
- ◆ Collaborate with MHLS to receive additional staff-development workshops.
- ◆ Develop a Career Advisory Council to make available career resources and information most useful to the community.
 - council members might include local business people, school faculty, librarians, and other interested parties.
 - council could meet monthly to discuss possible programming ideas. Possible ideas include: career mentoring, test preparation workshops, mock interviewing, resume preparation.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Educate business groups on remote-access business resources and Central Reference Library resources.
- ◆ Make presentations at area schools and businesses about career and education resources available.

THE WAY PEOPLE LIVE (ATV Report pp. 22–24)

MORE COMMUTERS (p. 22)

Summary: Commuting has become a way of life in the Hudson Valley and has had a noticeable impact on Hudson Valley communities. Many residents report a lost sense of community, as large numbers of people spend their time in different locations for work.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to commuters in the community.
- ◆ To support the needs of commuters with targeted programs and resources, demonstrating that the library recognizes the unique needs of commuters.
- ◆ To bring a greater sense of community between commuters and non-commuters.
- ◆ To provide opportunities for commuters to become involved in their community.
- ◆ To harness the knowledge, skills, and training of commuters for the betterment of the library and the community.

More Commuters **ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Provide listings of local babysitters, homecare and lawn-care personnel.
 - just referrals, no evaluation
- ◆ Include community room picture and use policy on the library's website.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Offer programs that bring members of the community together.
 - celebrate the town's anniversary, have local history presentations etc.
 - organize a Community Read program and encourage the entire community to read the same title together and take part in related discussions and/or activities at the library.
- ◆ Organize intergenerational programs.
 - classes in arts and crafts, foreign languages, creative writing, interior design, dog training, sign-language, self defense, first-aid/CPR, music programs, poetry readings, political discussions, and Game Nights.
- ◆ Be flexible in scheduling programs and events to allow a mix of people to attend.
 - consider holding programs at locations outside the library such as community centers, church halls, parks, schools, or businesses.
- ◆ Offer a computer-support group at the library.

SERVICES

- ◆ Offer materials that target commuters.
 - audiobooks and brochures on public transportation and carpooling.
 - commuter kits with a combination of materials such as: books on CD/audiobooks, music CDs, brochures about library services, a CD/audiotape that outlines library services. Kits can be themed such as: personal growth, business strategies, managing money, biographies, etc. Some kits could be only music, perhaps relaxing music for the drive. A focus group of commuters might help to develop useful kits.
- ◆ Exhibit local artists' work and local authors' books in a special area of the library.

- ◆ Make efforts to involve commuters in the library.
 - welcome packages
 - personal invitations to join the Friends group
 - conversations about their needs
- ◆ Consider replacing volunteer staff with professionals to meet the higher demands of incoming residents.
- ◆ Organize bookstands at commuter train stations.
- ◆ Enable online registration for library programs.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Change library Board meetings or Friends meeting from monthly to every other month as a way to attract busy commuters.
- ◆ Offer library meeting room/s as a community commons.
 - include community room picture and use policy online.

THE WAY PEOPLE LIVE CHANGES IN FAMILY STRUCTURE & LIVING PATTERNS (pp. 22 + 23)

Summary: Changes in family structure such as smaller families, fewer traditional families, more dual-income households and increased sedentary lifestyles are influencing the daily living routines of area residents. Families are experiencing greater stress, with a multitude of activities regularly competing for their time and attention.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To reach out to families in the community.
- ◆ To support the needs of local families with appropriate programs and resources.
- ◆ To demonstrate that the library recognizes the diverse needs of families.
- ◆ To foster a greater sense of togetherness among families through appealing programs.
- ◆ To support busy families with convenient and readily accessible resources.
- ◆ To offer programs and materials that acknowledge the changing family structure.

***Changes in Family Structure & Living Patterns* ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES**

INFORMATION

- ◆ Link relevant education resources to the library's website.
 - Lifelines website <http://midhudson.org/lifelines/>, sites used by local teachers to post assignments, school district website, homeschooling resources.
- ◆ Develop collections that address the changing American family.
- ◆ Purchase fitness videocassettes or DVDs.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Offer family centered programs. Some ideas include:
 - series of Family Nights @ the Library. Possible activities: art projects, petting zoo, science mysteries which families investigate, magic show, music program, game nights, storytelling, comedy show, family-tree program, a sign-language class, or visits to museums, zoos, parks, historical sites, plays, or dance performances.
 - include programs that address the changing American family.

- ◆ Organize health, fitness, and/or nutrition programs.
 - ask local health clubs or nutritionists to present.
 - get local fitness centers to donate memberships or free workouts.
 - incorporate healthy-eating cooking classes.
 - host a program that correlates with a local sporting event, such as bike safety to supplement a local biking event.
- ◆ Offer programs on multiple days and times to better accommodate busy patrons.
- ◆ Increase after-school programs
 - homework centers (See MHLS' Homework Center Manual at [www.midhudson.org homework_center_manual.pdf](http://www.midhudson.org/homework_center_manual.pdf)), study groups, and tutoring.
- ◆ Reach out to teens in a special way
 - create a teen center
 - develop a teen board
 - offer teen-centered programs. Some ideas: movie viewing, video game discussions and competitions, lending of video game software, beauty sessions (have a local beauty school do a program on hairstyles/haircare, or a cosmetic person from a dept. store demonstrate make-up and skin care), food (Snack Time @ the Library), research-skills programs, contests with prizes (photography, poetry, art), in-house magazine for teen authors (feature poetry essays, short stories, artwork), Halloween Haunted Library.
- ◆ Be flexible in scheduling programs and events to allow a mix of people to attend.
 - consider holding programs at locations outside the library such as community centers, church halls, parks, schools, or businesses.
- ◆ Develop homeschooling programs.

SERVICES

- ◆ Make presentations at area schools about available career and education resources.
- ◆ Develop flexibility in registration and circulation policies to accommodate non-typical family structures and children who have parents living in two locations.
- ◆ Provide library services in convenient satellite locations such as supermarkets, recreation centers, community centers, or senior citizen centers.* *
- ◆ Create a birthday club. Make each child that registers for a library card part of the birthday club. Send them a card on their birthday with a small gift inside the card (bookmark, gift certificate, sticker).
- ◆ Forgive fines during Random Acts of Kindness Week.
 - World Kindness Week, Nov. 10–16, 2003.
 - Random Acts of Kindness Week, February 9–15, 2004.
- ◆ Enable online registration for library programs.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Organize creative fundraisers that tap into the increased income brought to the region by commuters and dual-income families.
 - For example, since people are eating out more frequently, ask a local restaurant to sponsor a Library Night with some of the proceeds benefiting the library.
- ◆ Create family volunteer opportunities at the library.

*Perhaps a supermarket would give the library space for 24/7 access (banks are allotted space). Doing this would likely require a staff person, volunteer, or page to oversee. It might also involve laptops and use of the offline circulation client. Adding library services to current ones would bring in additional customers and might entitle the business to a tax deduction. Libraries could promote their services to existing businesses by saying, "Want extra traffic for your business? Become a pick-up location." If coordinating with a supermarket seems too complicated, a small chain or independent store might be a possibility.

THE WAY PEOPLE LIVE TRENDS IN TECHNOLOGY (p. 23)

Summary: Technology usage is having a significant influence on social and business interactions and expectations of Hudson Valley residents. Cell-phone usage has become the backbone of communication and 24/7 access to information is now expected. Area businesses are challenged to stay up-to-date and to keep their employees' skills current. Schools are working diligently to develop students' technology skills, recognizing this as key to success in the world of work.

GENERAL ROLES FOR LIBRARIES

- ◆ To make library services convenient and accessible by taking advantage of new advancements in technology.
- ◆ To support the technology skills of the community with appropriate programs and resources.
- ◆ To demonstrate that libraries are ahead of the technology curve with tech savvy librarians and state-of-the-art equipment.
- ◆ To promote information literacy awareness and skills among library staff and the community. (For example, training on selection, validation, and evaluation of websites.)

Trends in Technology ACTION STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

INFORMATION

- ◆ Ensure library's website is user-friendly and educates the public about the library's role.
 - consider holding a focus group of new and long-time library users to evaluate these areas.
- ◆ Provide a link to Mail2Web.com – a website that allows people to check their personal email account from any PC with an Internet Connection. <http://mail2web.com>
- ◆ Have information about video-conferencing facilities.

PROGRAMS

- ◆ Sponsor online training courses.
- ◆ Offer workshops in advanced computer skills.
- ◆ Co-sponsor existing programs that are offered outside the library.
 - this might help raise awareness of the library.
- ◆ Offer programs or discussions about the future of technology and its impact on our lives.
- ◆ Host a computer-users group.
- ◆ Offer information literacy programs.

SERVICES

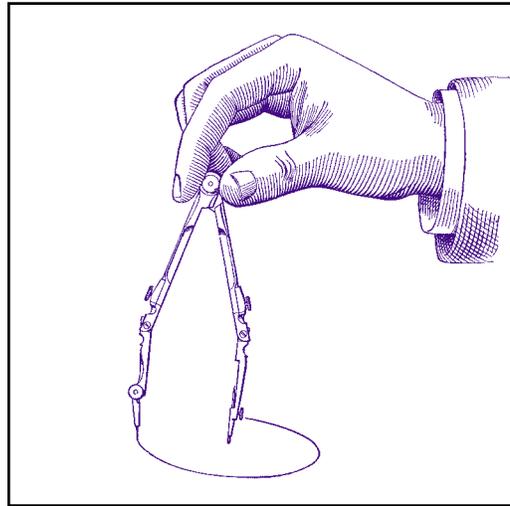
- ◆ Offer wireless Internet access.
- ◆ Permit attendance at library board meetings via conference call to increase participation.
- ◆ Allow access to library materials via cell phones.
- ◆ Have flexible policies regarding cell phone usage.
 - provide a space in the library for patrons to use cell phones
 - allow patrons to list a cell-phone number in their patron record.
- ◆ Set up online registration/booking for library programs and community room.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ◆ Supply meeting rooms where employers can conduct business meetings either remotely or in person.
 - if space is an issue, consider getting a sponsor to pay for a room or for furnishing it.
 - name room after business(es).
 - include room picture, policy, and booking on library's website.
- ◆ Become aware of development of virtual communication tools within the community.
 - virtual discussion boards, for example

Tools for Transition: Suggestions & Strategies for Libraries based on findings of the report, "Across the Valley: Changes & Trends"

For a copy of the original 2022 Project report, "Across the Valley: Changes & Trends," go to http://midhudson.org/admin/Across_Valley.pdf; for a copy of the report, "Tools for Transition," go to <http://midhudson.org/admin/tools.pdf>.



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Books and materials supporting planning and other administrative endeavors are listed in our Public Library Catalog (<http://gigcat.midhudson.org>), including those in the MHLS Professional Collection. Several of these materials were used in the creation of this toolkit and are listed below. When ordering from the Professional Collection, use the form available at http://midhudson.org/department/interlibrary/member_form.htm to make a request.

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