



Youth Development Initiative For Libraries Receiving Youth Development Funds as Part of Lunch at the Library

We are happy you have chosen to use youth development funds to enhance your Lunch at the Library-teen partnerships. We know that volunteering at a summer meal program can be a valuable youth development activity that provides teens with opportunities for social/emotional development, as well as workforce readiness skills. We also know that for libraries, teens can play an integral role in staffing summer meal programs, becoming partners in planning and implementing tie-in enrichment programming, and in helping to promote summer reading programs, library card sign-ups, and other key summer activities.

We are testing six outcomes developed by the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative* to help guide libraries in creating youth development programs that deliver the most impact for their teen volunteers. These six outcomes are:

1. Youth contribute to their community.
2. Youth feel safe in their environment.
3. Youth have meaningful relationships with adults and peers.
4. Youth achieve educational success.
5. Youth have marketable skills.
6. Youth develop personal and social skills.

*Funded by the Wallace Foundation

We look forward to finding out from you, at the end of the summer, whether these outcomes are a good fit for the Lunch at the Library youth development initiative.

The two Youth Development evaluation surveys that we are providing, one for your teen volunteers and one for library staff working with teen volunteers, will help measure whether the stated outcomes were achieved by your teen volunteers and offer the opportunity for feedback on your experience implementing your youth development program. Your responses, and the responses of your teen volunteers, will be integral to the development of resources that we hope will assist libraries statewide in successfully integrating youth development principles and best practices into their library teen volunteer programs. We look forward to your responses.

Some suggestions for enhancing the experiences of your teen volunteers:

- As you identify each teen's individual strengths, interests, comfort-zones, try to match volunteer assignments with individual teen volunteers.
- Plan regular check-ins with your teen volunteers to discuss how things are going and if any adjustments need to be made.
- Train teens to plan and facilitate programming for families who participate in the meal service to further enhance their skill set.
- Talk with teens about how the skills they are developing and using by participating in Lunch at the Library can help them in the future, e.g. in the workplace or on college applications.
- Invite human resources staff from local organizations to talk with teens about applying and interviewing for jobs.
- Write letters of recommendation for your teen volunteers, and assist them in creating a resume that incorporates their newly acquired summer work experience and skills.
- In addition to having teen volunteers complete the evaluation survey provided, hold exit interviews with teen volunteers to discuss in what ways they were an asset to the program, how they have enhanced their skill-sets (both interpersonal skills and work skills), how they can use these skills in the future, and in what ways the library can improve the program for future teen volunteers.
- With your Lunch at the Library Youth Development funding award, or through another source, provide teens with stipends to support their work on the Lunch at the Library project.

For information on working with volunteers, and for additional youth development resources, visit the Youth Development section of the volunteer page on the Lunch at the Library website:

lunchatthelibrary.org/toolkit/volunteers/

We look forward to hearing about your Lunch at the Library teen partnerships! Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions.

Lunch at the Library is a project of the California State Library, supported with funds from the State of California. Lunch at the Library was developed by the California Library Association and the California Summer Meal Coalition, with support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

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