Inclusive Library Programs for People with Intellectual Disabilities

AGENDA

I. Introduction to Contra Costa County Library Inclusive Plan
II. Definition, Philosophy and Goals
III. Volunteer Programs: How to be Inclusive
IV. “Library Insiders” - Definition and Ways to be Inclusive
V. Inclusive Storytimes
VI. Q & A

I. INTRODUCTION TO CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY INCLUSIVE PLAN

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I. INCLUSIVE LIBRARY PLAN

- Accessible Library “Products” and Services
  - Accessibility Committee
- Volunteers (teens and adults)
- “Library Insiders” (adults)
- Inclusive Storytime (children)
- Summer Reading (all ages/abilities)

Contra Costa County Library Accessibility Mission Statement:

Bringing People and Ideas Together: Improving access for people with disabilities means improved access for all.

CELEBRATE ACCESSIBILITY!
Inclusive Library Programs for People with Intellectual Disabilities

II. DEFINITION, PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

What is Inclusion? – Importance of Attitude
* Encouraging people of all abilities to feel comfortable and confident using the library
* Presenting library programs that provide a variety of opportunities for learning

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DEFINITION, PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

× What is Inclusion? – Importance of Attitude
  + Encouraging reading (or spending time with a book) according to ability
  + Using “People-First” Language
  + What the public perceives

III. VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS
HOW TO BE INCLUSIVE

× How to be inclusive
  × Benefits to volunteers and library
  × Tasks volunteers perform
  × How to recruit: Partners
  × Staff cooperation and sensitivity
  × Group brainstorm: How to get staff on board

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Volunteer Programs

- How to be inclusive
  - Benefits to volunteers and library
  - Tasks volunteers perform
  - How to recruit: Partners

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VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

× How to be inclusive
  × Benefits to volunteers and library
  × Tasks volunteers perform
  × How to recruit: Partners
  × Staff cooperation and sensitivity

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

How to get staff on board

GROUP BRAINSTORM EXERCISE

IV. “LIBRARY INSIDERS”

DEFINITION AND WAYS TO BE INCLUSIVE

Thank you for inviting us in. – Eva, Library Insider

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“LIBRARY INSIDERS”
DEFINITION & WAYS TO BE INCLUSIVE

× Someone who feels at ease navigating the library.

× An individual who approaches the desk with a question or comment.

× An individual who uses resources and/or attends programs that are available, as a library user.

CREATING AN “INSIDER” EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE

× For some individuals with intellectual disabilities, the library can be an intimidating environment.

× The goal of Library Insiders is to cultivate an “insider” experience for adults with intellectual disabilities.

× Specialized programs give library staff an opportunity to welcome someone who feels like an “outsider” into an “inside” library experience.
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LIBRARY INSIDERS PROGRAM
WALNUT CREEK LIBRARY

HOW TO GET STARTED

- Do you have adults in community-based groups visiting your libraries on a daily basis?
- Introduce yourself to individuals already in your library.
- Call local town/city/county adult community-based organizations (for example, ARC)

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

- Programs that encourage adults with developmental disabilities to feel comfortable and confident using all resources in the public library.
  - Behind the scenes library tour
  - Scavenger hunts (handout)
  - Library technology and computer tutorials
  - Summer Reading (reading record handout)

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TYPES OF PROGRAMS
• Programs that provide a variety of opportunities for lifelong learning.
• Exercise, Nutrition, Well-being
• Fire Safety
• Scrapbooking, Gaming, Picture Bingo
• Cooking, Measuring
• Local Environment (Ranger talks)
• Zine making (recipes, poetry, drawings, photos or other interests)
• Yoga

PARTNERS: AGENCIES & PRESENTERS
• Friends of the Library
• Library Foundation
• City Parks and Recreation Department
• Local Businesses
• Police and Fire Department
• Reading Therapy Dogs (ARF)
• Local Music Performers

FREQUENCY OF PROGRAMS AND SCHEDULING
• When working with local adult organizations it is helpful to determine a set schedule for programs.
• Most programs meet on a monthly or bi-weekly basis.
• Programs are publically promoted.

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SUMMER READING RECORDS
Example of literacy activities listed in Adult Summer Reading Record (see handout)

• Visit the library!
• Ask a librarian a question.
• Listen to music or books.
• Read or spend time with a book or magazine.
• Watch a movie.
• Write or draw a picture about your summer.

EXAMPLE OF ACCESSIBLE SUMMER READING RECORD: LIBRARY INSIDERS

HOW CAN YOU MAKE SUMMER READING MORE ACCESSIBLE?

• **2012 Adult Summer Reading Record Instructions**
  Read a book and write a short review to enter in the Library’s prize drawing. Ages 18 and older.

• **2013 Adult Summer Reading Record Instructions**
  Read a book and write a short review to enter in the Library’s prize drawing. Ages 18 and older. For other ways to participate, visit ccclib.org/summer. Ages 18 and older.

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STAFF COOPERATION

✓ Communication
  + Explain the importance of including everyone.
  + Share program feedback.
  + Foster introductions and relationships with staff and Insiders.
  + Get everyone involved.

IMPACT

✓ Participants report that they use the library more, feel comfortable asking questions of library staff, and are now attending a variety of library programs.

✓ Library Insiders gain independent public library skills and are equipped to navigate most public library resources/services.

✓ Staff appreciate the kindness and positive interactions received from Library Insiders.

V. INCLUSIVE STORYTIMES

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PARTNERS
A good place to start: Your Community!

PARTNERS
- Schools
  - Special Day Classes
  - Observe classes
  - Host a storytime
  - Special Education Departments
- Parenting Groups
  - Parent to Parent Networks
  - School affiliated parenting groups

PARTNERS
- Local Organizations Serving Children with Disabilities (211.org)
- Early Intervention Programs
  (WeCareChildren.org, Milestonesforautism.net)
- Any organization that reaches out to families, with services for children with disabilities

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WHAT IS INCLUSIVE STORYTIME?

A time to learn and grow for children of all abilities

- Inclusive storytimes are for all children, including children with disabilities.
- Inclusive storytime does not mean a storytime that is only for children with disabilities.

WHAT MAKES STORYTIME INCLUSIVE?

- Provide adaptations that enable all children, including those with disabilities, to participate.
- Modify books to make them easier to use and to comprehend.
- Add visuals, such as a picture schedule, along with “rules”/expectations.
- Slow down the pace.
- Provide fidget toys.

INCLUSIVE STORYTIMES

GROUP BRAINSTORM EXERCISE

HOW CAN YOU MAKE STORYTIMES INCLUSIVE?
ADAPTATIONS
* Adapted, or modified books expand learning opportunities for all children, but particularly for children with vision, hearing and learning disabilities.
* For example:
  - Laminate loose book pages
  - Add page turners
  - Create Velcro icons/images in order to clarify meaning

ADAPTED BOOK

INCLUSIVE STORYTIME KITS TRAVEL

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INCLUSIVE STORYTIME
FIDGET TOYS, PICTOGRAMS, ECHO-PHONE

STAFF COOPERATION AND TRAINING

- Biggest challenge – staff unfamiliar with learning differences and may fear failure.
  - Provide information on most common youth disabilities in your community.
  - Observe Special Day Class or Special Education class.
  - Present storytime to Special Day Class, utilize teacher’s support.
  - Contact school district or literacy organization for workshop information.

VI. Questions about Inclusive Library Programs?

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