

# Getting the most from your summer reading program:

## CLA's summer reading outcomes initiative

The California Summer Reading Program is supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.



# Today's topics

- About the initiative
- Why participate?
- How to participate
- Tips on participating successfully
- Case study from the Los Angeles Public Library



Outcomes-based summer reading resources are available on CLA's website:

[www.cla-net.prg](http://www.cla-net.prg)



# Contact us

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# Outcomes + Outreach = Outstanding Summer Reading Programs

ALA Preconference  
Friday, June 22, 2012  
1:00pm - 4:00pm

- In-depth training
- Effective techniques for planning and presenting successful outcomes- and outreach-based summer reading programs.

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# The outcomes

- Outcome 1

Children [or teens, adults, or families] belong to a community of readers and library users

- Outcome 2

[Desired number] of [underserved target group] participate in the summer reading program

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# Why participate?

Participating libraries generate data that

- illustrate the **impact** of their programs;
- tell the stories behind their summer reading statistics; and
- help their summer reading programs stay dynamic and relevant.

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# Early adopters (2011)!

- Alameda County Library
- Glendora Public Library
- Imperial County Library
- Kern County Library
- Los Angeles Public Library
- Long Beach Public Library
- Marin County Free Library
- Moorpark Public Library
- Oakland Public Library
- Riverside County Library
- Sacramento Public Library
- Santa Clara City Library
- Santa Clara County Library
- Yolo County Library

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# Summer 2011



- 79% of respondents reported that the library is a friendly place.
- 74% of respondents said they would return to the library after summer.
- 86% of children said they enjoyed the summer reading program.
- 66% of children said they like to share books or talk about the books they read.
- 1,447 new summer reading participants from previously-underserved communities.

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# Using the results

## **SUMMER READING 2011 READING MATTERS**

### **Public library programming and books for children make a difference.**

Of states ranking in the top half of all states on reading scores, more than 80% ranked in the top half on circulation of children's materials per capita. Of states ranking in the top half on reading scores, 70% ranked in the top half on attendance at children's programs per capita.



A summer reading information card produced by  
Sacramento Public Library

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# About the outcomes

## Outcome 1

- Children [or teens, adults, or families] belong to a community of readers and library users



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# About the outcomes

## Outcome 2

- [Desired number] of [underserved target group] participate in the summer reading program



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# How to participate

- Program in a box
- Extensive resources are available at:  
[www.cla-net.org](http://www.cla-net.org)
- Click:
  - >Resources
  - >California Summer Reading Program
  - >Outcome-based summer reading

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# Four key steps

- Adopt the statewide outcomes
- Design your summer reading program with the outcomes in mind
- Use surveys and focus groups to gather data
- Use your results

*“The two focus groups we did for teens were a lot of fun. We learned a lot about them, and they in turn discovered new library resources.”*



# Project checklist: stage 1

1. Let CLA know you're taking part
2. Decide which branches will participate
3. Develop a timeline
4. Conduct a staff orientation

*“The success for me was seeing so many new faces in the library. I continue to see some of them even after the close of the program, saying hello and of course checking out books.”*



## Project checklist: stage 2

5. Identify your underserved groups
6. Plan your summer activities based on the outcomes
7. Plan your program evaluation
8. Staff training

*“Outcome 2 forced us out of our comfort zone and made us think about who is out there who is not being served.”*



## Project checklist: stage 3

9. Check in with staff and volunteers
10. Administer surveys and do focus groups
11. Collate your data and send results to CLA
12. Follow-up with staff
13. Use your results



# Tips on participating successfully

- Planning your summer reading programs with the outcomes in mind



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# Tips on participating successfully

- Identifying and reaching out to underserved groups



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# Tips on participating successfully

## Surveys

- Goal is 100 completed survey forms for each age group, filled in as the readers complete the program.
- Survey forms are available on the website in Spanish and English.
- Get teen volunteers to help you manage the surveys.

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# Tips on participating successfully

## Focus groups

- Conduct 2 focus groups for each age group, towards the end of summer.
- Make this seem like a special activity or make it a formal SRP program.
- Serve food.
- Give participants paper, markers, Play Doh or other supplies to keep their hands busy while they focus.

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# Los Angeles Public Library

- 72 branches plus Central Library
- Children's and Teen Librarian positions at every library



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# Re-thinking SRP and Outreach

- Reasons for the summer reading program
- Thoughtful outreach is better for busy librarians



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# Outcome 1

- CLA survey with added questions



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## Outcome 2

- Targeted group
- # of targeted group
- Why targeted group was chosen
- Plan to achieve goal



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# Results



- Outcome 1: lots of love
- Outcome 2: we can do better

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# Lessons Learned

- More time for training and discussion on outcomes-based planning.
- Not just about outreach; what happens in the branch is just as important.



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# Benefits Gained



- Practiced a new way of thinking
- Branch and Area Managers got involved
- Oodles of valuable data:
  - for administration, donors, and more
  - for 2012 SRP planning and training

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# More benefits



- New and stronger links to organizations and schools
- Insights into what kids and teens are thinking and doing

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