



July 2020

## Connect With Fellow Youth Librarians



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### Get your questions about the annual survey answered and more at two informational sessions.

Since libraries have been expanding services and opening times, it's been hard to find time to get together virtually and discuss lessons learned and common issues. But as summer slows down, Angie is going to host two more sessions to answer some frequently asked questions and to give you a chance to chat with other librarians across the state.

Want to say hello to everyone and see how summer programming went along with chat about what you might have in store for the fall? This session will give you a chance to check in with your fellow youth librarians about their summer and brainstorm about fall. Hopefully, this will become a monthly meeting for librarians across the state to drop in and chat and share ideas. This session is not for CE and will not be recorded.

- Monday, August 17th  
**Youth Services Library Check-In Chat**  
2:00-3:00

**Do you have questions about the annual survey you want answered?** Do you want to know more about how to report your stats? Join us for a session with consultant Scott Dermont, who will answer your annual survey questions. I'll also be there to brainstorm other ways you can use the data you've gathered to tell your

library's story. **This session is not for CE, but it WILL be recorded** and shared on the State Library website if you can't make it live.

- Monday, August 24th  
**Youth Services Programming Annual Survey Conversation**  
1:00-2:00

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about either of these sessions or any other sessions that might be useful, please [email Angie!](#)

**Join Angie at either of these sessions by clicking the link below about 5 minutes before the session is set to start. Both of the meetings will use this link:**

**Angie's Zoom Room**



## **Oh no! My stats are terrible! What do I do?**

### **Telling Your Story**

While the State Library and the federal government have made numerous changes to what information we request be filled out for our statistical purposes, you should continue to keep track of what you are doing and who you are reaching so you can better tell your library's story to your local stakeholders. Just because we are not asking for something on the annual survey doesn't mean it isn't important for you to keep track of. Count everything you do so you can tell your story on the local level. The questions we have on the annual survey are used to tell the library story at the state and national level and because of its broad nature can not account for every service each library provides.

You might be panicked or sad looking at your summer numbers for this year (or maybe even for all of 2020!) What can you do to get the message across about the work you have done? What should you be counting? What does that mean and look like?

## Local Data Counts

It is important to communicate in a meaningful way to your library board how you have served the community during this public health crisis by adapting services. This includes virtual storytimes, grab and go bags, interactive social media posts, phone calls to patrons, newspaper articles, community partnerships for meal and book delivery...the list goes on and on. The numerous ways in which you serve your community have never, and will never, be captured in totality on the public library annual report; there are simply too many locally specific and creative means of providing library service. Use local data to tell your library's story *year round*. This is the essence of everyday advocacy--the best insurance policy to invest in.

## Grab and Go Efforts

When thinking about grab and go bags, or similar packaged independent activities, consider keeping track of how many were distributed, where, when, etc. These are numbers that will matter the most on a local level. You are looking here to report to your board how many kits or bags were taken, you do not need to qualify to them "we handed out 15 kits one week and 4 of them were to one family." Focus instead on the larger community connections you have made. If you took 15 kits to a meal site and they were all taken, focus on the partnership you built with the meal provider and how you were present at a community event in a new way.

## Managing Expectations

Every metric we are conditioned to use in our libraries has limited value right now. Statistics cannot accurately convey the ways we are responding to our communities through service, especially when one of those ways is to give everyone space (social distance and emotional distance). Regarding statistics, it comes down to managing expectations and letting go of certain numbers. We are used to reporting on the quantity, but this is an opportunity to focus on the quality. Also, we know that across the board when libraries switch to recording programs digitally, they see a decrease in participation. That is true in pandemic times or not! This is probably because it suddenly becomes a lot more "official" tracking instead of "just checking off how many paper logs we gave out." It doesn't suddenly mean your program has failed, it just means your patrons are adjusting to new ways of tracking and you are adjusting to new ways of encouraging engagement.

## Your Story is More Than Numbers

We anticipate seeing a decline in hours and weeks open to the public, program numbers and program attendance, circulation of traditional materials, and public computer use in Iowa public libraries. You should also accept that this will not be like any other year and try not to compare things to previous years. Rather than focus on what is out of your control, communicate what you are doing and the impact it is having. *Be specific and share examples of patron interactions and patron feedback. This is absolutely the time to ask your community to step up and share about why they love the library and how they use the library.* These are the stories that will matter the most in your community and in the long run. Whether it was helping someone get a printed document in the nick of time or providing hand-selected titles for an avid reader stuck at home, or the thank you notes from your virtual storytime fans or the caregivers grateful for your grab and go kits, you are making a difference. **Telling your story to your community and being available to serve them is the most important thing you can do right now.**

*(A huge thank you to Tessa Michaelson Schmidt, Youth and Inclusive Services Library Consultant at [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#) for the majority of this text. I modified and edited some of it to be relevant to Iowa but I borrowed most of the text from Tessa's awesome post for her Wisconsin librarians. I am grateful!!)*

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## NEW Collection Development Resource



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Since collection development is always a frequent request for training, Angie wanted to create a resource that could be constantly changing and useful for a variety of purposes. After trying several different free services and websites, she decided to create a [Wakelet](#) page. This is a page that will allow her to create several different "boards" spotlighting reader's advisory lists for a wide range of topics. New books and lists can be added as needed or even requested! You can use these lists for quick collection development or even share them directly with your own patrons to see what they might be interested in.

[Visit the State Library of Iowa on Wakelet](#)

Take a look at the first four boards:

- [Early Chapter Books with BIPOC Characters](#)
- [What to Read After \*Diary of A Wimpy Kid\* and \*Dork Diaries\*](#)
- [Picture Books for Opening BIG Conversations](#)
- [Young Adult Short Story Collections](#)

If you find a new book that you love, have questions, comments, or suggestions about other lists and collections that would be useful or want to share any feedback about this resource, please [email Angie](#), she would love to hear all kinds of feedback from you about this as she moves forward!

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## August Continuing Education Opportunities

### Pop YS Live

Thursday, August 20, 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Join us for a POP of continuing education! August's session will be extra special and include an awesome author chat!

**Discover Great Places Through Reading:  
Iowa's Selection**



Join us for a super special announcement! Every year, a list of books representing the literary heritage of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands is distributed by the Library of Congress's Center for the Book during the National Book Festival. This year, the festivities are moving online! Find out more: <http://read.gov/greatreads/>

We'll be revealing Iowa's awesome 2020 selection for the Discover Great Places Through Reading list at our August Pop YS session. And just to make it even more exciting, **we'll also be joined by the creators of this year's selection and you'll get to hear more about the book and how and why the book was made.** We'll also be giving you ways you can share the book at your library and in your library programming and take a look at the Discover Great Places Through Reading program.

You don't want to miss this announcement and author chat!

[Register for August Pop YS Live](#)



## YACHT Club Discussion - a NEW Youth Services professional development series

**Tuesday, August 25th, 10:00-11:00 AM**

Set sail with Youth Services Consultant Angie Manfredi on the latest CE opportunity from the State Library. Once a month the **YACHT Club (Young Adult/Children's Hot Topics) Discussion** will meet to chat about articles, a podcast episode, blog posts, or some other accessible-to-all youth services professional development resource. Participants will read/listen to/watch the resources, then we'll get together to discuss them and how they can apply to our work as Children & Youth Librarians in Iowa. The topic for August is **Evaluating and Understanding Non-Fiction for Young People**

You'll receive each month's assignment once you register. To ensure a productive discussion for everyone, sessions are limited to 40 people and you must have a microphone to participate. Sessions will not be recorded. While any library staff can attend, the topics will be focused on youth services, so we'd love to see a great turn out from our youth services specialists. Since space is limited and sessions are not recorded, please only register if you are able to attend live. Also because you must review the resources in advance of our session, registration closes 8/22/2020.

All aboard!

[Register for August YACHT Club Discussion](#)

## YS COVID-19 Idea Swap



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## Don't forget to check out our COVID-19 Programming Idea Swap!

After the May series of COVID Conversations, Angie realized there needed to be one space to round up all the amazing examples of programming and outreach for kids, teens, and families that were happening all over the world. That led to the creation of the YS COVID Idea Swap. This is a living document that you are invited to contribute to! New items are always being added and have been added since the list was shared last month. **You can find the newest additions in any section at the very bottom of each category** - if you are adding your own links and ideas, please share them there.

Meanwhile, Angie adds all the best and newest things she finds. That includes links to storytimes from around the globe, grab and go activity kits ideas, printables for sharing, videos for teens and families, and more. View or add to it anytime and check back often! If there's something you want to share but are hesitant about adding it yourself or you have ideas of what else would be helpful to be added, [email Angie](#).

Youth Services COVID-19 Idea Swap

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## Can't-Miss Professional Development



There are so many great webinars, videos, blog posts, and online programming examples being created it's hard to keep up! Here's a curated list from Angie with some she thinks can be the most useful.

- The Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) in collaboration with Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy (CLEL) has created **a comprehensive, easily accessible, genuinely wonderful Virtual Storytime Services Resource Guide**. This guide has information on accessibility, serving diverse communities, technology tools and more. [You can access the entire guide, including blog posts, now](#). I know I already have it bookmarked!
- Have you always wanted to attend Comic-Con? Not only did Comic-Con go online this year but so did the **Comic Conference for Educators and Librarians**. A joint collaboration between the San Diego Public Library and Comic-Con, this is a free conference. The panels will explore the role comics play in promoting education and literacy. There are so many great panels including topics about how to analyze text graphic novels to programming to looking at the power of teamwork in kids comics. Tons of creators, librarians, and scholars participated and [you can view all the panels at the San Diego Public Library's website](#).
- So many author festivals have moved online, creating a unique opportunity to watch panels with best-selling authors and people working in the industry. You can also share these videos on your social media channels as an easy way to do promotion. **The Juneteenth Book Festival celebrated Black American authors** and had an amazing line-up of panels for all ages, not just kids and teens. I especially loved the one on Black romance writing! [All the panels are now up on YouTube](#).
- Cressida Cowell, author of *How to Train Your Dragon*, is currently the UK's Children's Laureate. She has created a super cool collection of videos from authors and illustrators about creating and reading. But my absolute favorite is the collection from June 9th: **Read Around the World** which hosts videos from the Children's Literature Laureates from all across the world! **The Children's Literature Laureates from the UK, Wales, Ireland, Australia, The Netherlands, and the USA all read from their work**. I loved this look at international kidlit and the entire collection is really pretty neat and has tons of videos about writing, drawing, and creating that are awesome. [You can view the entire collection here](#). (I also loved the poetry day, there's even a video about how to read poems out loud. Such great stuff!)

- The Centers for Disease Control has created a series of webinars about COVID-19 and community impacts and I found the most recent one to be very helpful. They were joined in this session by staff from The National Child Traumatic Stress Network and **they covered a wide range of ways to support children and adolescents during COVID-19** as well as resources provided by the The National Child Traumatic Stress Network. [The webinar, slides, and transcripts are now posted](#), past CDC websites about COVID-19 are also linked on this page (look at the column on the left)
- [The Great Stories Club](#) is a nationwide program sponsored through ALA that encourages libraries to host small-group book discussions for teens, especially those that are traditionally underserved. You can apply annually to receive funding to be part of the Great Stories Club officially, but they also provide lots of free resources, including book discussion guides. **They recently had two webinars about Reading and Talking About Race that also highlights the Great Stories Club.** This was one of the first national projects I was ever involved in and I think it remains a great resource. I think now is the perfect time for [checking out both webinars](#) and the [list of resources](#)!
- [Story Seeds](#) is a fun project that brings kids and writers together. Basically, **kids provide published authors with a "story seed" and then the writers turn it into an actual short story. It's all brought together as a podcast.** Not only are these fun to listen to and are great to share but they also provide resources like [activity zines](#) and you could even possibly turn it into a program of your own: can you grow stories from the "seeds" shared by your kid patrons? Pair adult or teen patrons with growing the seeds? Work on them as a community? Lots to think about and dig into! (pardon the pun...)
- Another event that moved online this summer was the Scholastic Book Fair summer tours. These events traveled city to city and hosted authors, teachers, and librarians in conversation with popular authors. Now they've turned into #BookJoy conversations every week, hosted by John Schu, Ambassador of School Libraries for Scholastic. **Book Joy Live encourages reading, shares free resources, and spotlights can't-miss new books.** I always love watching these and fun stuff often happens - recently you could watch some authors open their Newbery medals live !! [you can find all the sessions on Facebook](#). Pick a favorite author or choose an author you've never heard of before and dive in.
- Whether you feel like a seasoned pro or like you're still getting your feet wet, I found this recent **WebJunction webinar [Getting Started with Digital Storytimes](#)** to be really useful. It has lots of tips, including how to promote your programs and how to feel more comfortable presenting virtually.

***What professional development have you been loving? Are there specific resources you're looking for? Drop your questions and your favorites in [an email to Angie](#) to be featured in the next round-up.***

## State Library of Iowa Youth Services

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