



Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff

I. Introduction

YALSA's *Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth* was first published in 1981 and last updated in 2010. Since that time the role libraries play in teen lives has gone through a paradigm shift, wherein library staff have been called upon to take a co-learner role in facilitating teen learning that is hands-on and interest-based. In addition, research revealed that the vast majority of public libraries and an increasing number of school libraries do not have full time staff dedicated to serving teens. In response to the paradigm shift and to current library staffing models, YALSA has published key documents over the past few years to help library staff transition to new models of service. These documents include:

- The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action
- The National Research Agenda on Libraries, Learning and Teens
- Core Professional Values for the Teen Services Profession
- Teen Programming Guidelines

YALSA's Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff, which replaces *Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth*, is the latest resource developed to help graduate schools, library administrators, and library staff guarantee that all teens receive high quality service from their public and school libraries, regardless of whether the library has the capacity to dedicate a full-time position to serving teens. It is intended to set a foundation for the education and professional development of all library staff, regardless of job title, and to provide guidance for determining practitioner skills and knowledge. It is also meant to provide a framework to enable those within and outside the field to understand the unique role library staff can play in helping teens prepare for college, careers and life, and to communicate that role to others.

YALSA's Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff can be used as a tool by several different audiences and purposes. It can be used to establish the role library staff play in the library and in the community, and to evaluate and improve service. It can also serve as a foundation for library and information science school curriculum, a guide for creating job descriptions and recruitment efforts, a framework for professional development, and a set of guiding principles for use when speaking out for the importance of library services for and with teens.

Audiences include:

- Library staff who work in public and school libraries
- School and public library administrators
- Graduate school faculty
- Graduate students
- Library training coordinators
- Library human resources staff

- State library agency staff
- Youth advocates and service providers working beyond the library

In developing *YALSA's Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff* we reviewed a number of documents including the 2010 YALSA Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth, the *Core Knowledge and Competencies for the Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals* published by the National Afterschool Association (NAA), and the *Remake Learning Competencies*. We also reviewed the competency documents of other ALA divisions including the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC). After reviewing the documents, we decided to model YALSA's new competencies document on the NAA's framework. This framework allowed YALSA to create a document that puts teens first and communicates to library staff the need to work with teens, their families, and their communities to provide high-quality library services. The framework also enables library staff to move toward the future of teen services envisioned in *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action* forward by describing the breadth of knowledge needed to provide high-quality library programs, services, and resources all teens deserve. The framework goes beyond library-centric knowledge and skills to encompass youth development, community engagement, equity, outcomes and assessment, and continuous learning.

Library staff play a central role in guaranteeing that youth in their community are able to access the resources and services they need to succeed in school, careers, and life. To achieve this requires special dispositions, knowledge, and skills. *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff* provides the framework for libraries to achieve this. It's up to all school and public library staff and administrators and graduate programs of library and information science to review, analyze, and integrate these competencies to guarantee staff have the skills required to support vibrant communities through high quality teen services.

II. Organization

Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff includes a set of dispositions and ten core knowledge areas which collectively define what all library staff—regardless of job title or position—need to know and do to provide quality library resources, programs and services for and with teens.

The competencies in each content knowledge area are grouped by three levels, beginning with developing, then practicing, and lastly transforming. Each level is a prerequisite to the next, with knowledge and skill in one level required before moving to the next.

- **The Developing Level:** describes the minimal skills and knowledge needed by library staff who are getting started learning about and/or implementing the competencies in their work for/with teens.
- **The Practicing Level:** describes the basic understanding and knowledge needed by library staff to apply or integrate the competencies into their own practice.

- **The Transforming Level:** describes the advanced knowledge and skills needed by library staff to apply the competencies in nuanced ways, to engage in evaluation, and to change mindsets about the ways teen services should be implemented inside and outside the library.

It is not expected that an individual will fall on the same level across each competency area. For example, it is likely that a staff member may be at the developing level in one area and in the transforming level in another.

III. Dispositions

Professional dispositions are the ongoing beliefs, values, and commitments that affect library staff's work for/with teens, their families and the community, and that impact their own professional growth. Dispositions cut across all the core content areas and the competencies, which follow later in this document.

A person well-suited to working with and for teens through libraries:

- Maintains an open and ongoing curiosity about the fields of teen development and learning
- Shows warmth, caring, and respect for all teens and their families
- Recognizes and respects the diversity of teens and their families, and understands this diversity impacts all areas of practice
- Recognizes the systemic inequities that exist in our institutions and communities and strives to dismantle them and to provide equitable access for and with all youth
- Takes an asset-based approach to working for and with teens and their families
- Values creativity and imagination in learning, and promotes those attributes in teens and in themselves
- Demonstrates responsible professional and personal habits in interacting and working with others, and models and practices a positive attitude
- Responds to challenges and changes with flexibility, perseverance, and cooperation
- Communicates respectfully, clearly, and effectively with all teens and adults
- Recognizes that quality library services support teens and families, and bridge the gap between school and home
- Values the importance of collaboration and engagement with youth development stakeholders, community members and organizations, and local decision makers
- Values ongoing professional development and continually seeks to increase their own knowledge and skills to support teen development and learning
- Upholds the right of all, including teens, to free expression and free access to a depth and breadth of ideas and information

IV. Content Areas

1. **Teen Growth and Development:** Knows the typical benchmarks for growth and development and uses this knowledge to plan, provide and evaluate library resources, programs, and services that meet the multiple needs of teens.

2. **Interactions with Teens:** Recognizes the importance of relationships and communication in the development and implementation of quality teen library services, and implements techniques and strategies to support teens individually and in group experiences to develop self-concept, identity, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with peers and adults.
3. **Learning Environments (formal & informal):** Cultivates high-quality, developmentally appropriate, flexible learning environments that support teens individually and in group experiences as they engage in formal and informal learning activities.
4. **Learning Experiences (formal & informal):** Works with teens, volunteers, community partners and others to plan, implement and evaluate high-quality, developmentally appropriate formal and informal learning activities that support teens' personal and academic interests.
5. **Youth Engagement and Leadership:** Responds to all teens' interests and needs, and acts in partnership with teens to create and implement teen activities and to foster teen leadership.
6. **Community and Family Engagement:** Builds respectful, reciprocal relationships with community organizations and families to promote optimal development for teens and to enhance the quality of library services.
7. **Cultural Competency and Responsiveness:** Actively promotes respect for cultural diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful library atmosphere that embraces diversity.
8. **Equity of Access:** Ensures access to a wide variety of library resources, services, and activities for and with all teens, especially those facing challenges to access.
9. **Outcomes and Assessment:** Focuses on the impact of library programs for and with teens and uses data to inform service development, implementation, and continuous improvement.
10. **Continuous Learning:** Acts ethically, is committed to continuous learning, and advocates for best library practices and policies for teen services.

V. Competencies

Content Area 1: Teen Growth and Development

Knows the typical benchmarks for growth and development and uses this knowledge to provide library resources, programs, and services that meet the multiple needs of teens.

Library staff understand teen growth and development, respond to the needs of teens, and develop relationships, programs and services that support them in successfully preparing for adulthood. Taking into consideration cultural differences and special needs affords library staff the opportunity to create experiences that reflect the developmental needs of the teens in their specific community.

Developing

- Is aware of basic benchmarks related to teens' physical; cognitive; language and communication; social and emotional; and creative development, and can describe developmentally appropriate library services and practices
- Accepts individual differences in teen development and values different attributes such as personalities, temperaments, and cultural influences
- Is aware of current teen cultures, including use of digital tools, language, and popular media
- Appreciates that all teens need to develop a sense of self, including a positive identity
- Understands the role of libraries in helping all teens succeed in school and prepare for college, careers and life

Practicing

- Engages teens in college and career readiness activities that build on their strengths and meet their individual needs, interests, learning styles, and abilities
- Uses tools and resources in library programming and services that are pertinent to teen needs, interests, culture, learning styles, and abilities
- Acknowledges and responds to individual differences in personalities, temperaments, culture, learning styles, and abilities
- Applies information on teen growth and development, culture, and learning styles to all areas of library practice, including collection development, reference and user services, outreach, and programming
- Promotes growth and development using appropriate and targeted library activities and resources that support individual teen development, including developing a positive sense of self

Transforming

- Connects current theories, research and best practices relating to teen growth and development to the development of library collections, programs, and services
- Advocates for library policies that support teen developmental needs and growth
- Connects with library staff and community partners to advance teen growth and development so that all teens are prepared for college, careers and life
- Teaches others, including library staff and volunteers, about teen growth and development and how it informs the creation of library services for and with teens

Content Area 2: Interactions with Teens

Recognizes the importance of relationships and communication in the development and implementation of quality teen library services, and implements techniques and strategies

to support teens individually and in group experiences to develop self-concept, identity, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

All activities library staff engage in, from homework help, to teen internship training, to community engagement, provide opportunities to build relationships with teens. These relationships have a powerful impact on teens and communities. It is through them that teens gain social skills and confidence, learn from adult role models, and gain agency. These interactions result in library staff building ties to the teen community that result in high-quality responsive and flexible services for the age group.

Developing

- Listens to and respects all teens' interests, opinions, and cultures in the development of library collections, programs, and services
- Maintains a library environment in which teen confidentiality and privacy is respected
- Communicates and describes the importance of positive interactions with teens to the development of quality library collections, programs and services
- Understands effective group and individual management strategies that are based on theories, research, and best practices for teen development
- Understands that interacting with teens requires going outside of the library and into the community
- Is aware of the community's teen demographics

Practicing

- Builds relationships with all teens throughout the community and with representatives of diverse cultural groups to inform the strategic development of library services and programs that address community needs and fill gaps, and to promote their use for/with all teens, including those unserved or underserved by the library
- Uses individual guidance and support for teens by employing methods, services, and resources that are developmentally appropriate and culturally sustaining
- Creates opportunities for all teens to express their needs and interests in a non-judgmental and welcoming environment
- Demonstrates positive teen interactions that are culturally sustaining, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate
- Partners with community agencies, groups, and institutions to create and facilitate meaningful interactions with unserved and underserved teens
- Collects data and information from teens and community members to identify teen needs

Transforming

- Advocates for and develops library policies that support positive teen interactions for all youth throughout the library and with all library staff
- Connects current theories, research and best practices related to successful teen interactions to the development of quality teen library programs and services
- Coaches and mentors library staff, volunteers, and community members on strategies for culturally sustaining, inclusive, developmentally appropriate, and positive interactions with all teens

- Expands opportunities for unserved and underserved teens to build meaningful connections with the library that helps them develop a sense of belonging and ownership
- Analyzes teen and community data and information, and applies findings to improve and enhance library interactions with all teens

Content Area 3: Learning Environments (formal & informal)

Cultivates high-quality, developmentally appropriate, flexible learning environments that support teens individually and in group experiences as they engage in formal and informal learning activities.

Library staff actively create learning environments that are welcoming and responsive to teen needs. It is through these environments that teens can develop social competence and gain a sense of belonging. Successful learning environments developed for and with teens provide opportunities to interact with library materials and resources, engage in informal and formal learning activities, and collaborate with peers, experts, and role models. Library staff know that to create these environments successfully, teen input, equitable access and encouragement of teens to use the space in ways that meet their particular needs is required.

Developing

- Understands the importance of maintaining developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive environments in the library that support formal and informal learning activities
- Understands the need to engage in on-going design and assessment of library learning environments
- Identifies aspects of developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive environments and that are inclusive of youth choice
- Provides resources and materials (physical and digital) that can be used in a variety of ways to encourage imagination and creativity, and to foster learning environments where teens develop creative skills and multiple literacies
- Acknowledges challenges to teen equity and inclusion that occur in the design and management of the overall library program

Practicing

- Provides space (physical and virtual, in the library and in the community) that is engaging for all teens and encourages them to join in individual, group, and collaborative activities to learn formally and informally
- Creates library environments that value, affirm, and respect diverse interests, needs, cultures, learning styles, and abilities
- Removes barriers of access to library learning environments
- Encourages teens' communication and interpersonal skills in a safe and inclusive environment
- Promotes equity and inclusion by designing welcoming learning environments for and with all teens in the community, including those unserved or underserved by the library
- Collaborates with library and community partners to ensure all library staff contribute to a positive learning environment for teens

Transforming

- Connects the library to resources needed for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to formal and informal learning experiences
- Connects library staff and administration to information about developmentally appropriate learning environments for teens with others, including library staff and administrators
- Regularly reflects on the effectiveness of learning environments to support teen needs, interests, development, culture, learning styles, and abilities and makes changes as warranted
- Teaches, mentors, and coaches others about how to foster and manage library learning environments that meet the needs of all teens
- Connects current theories, research, resources, best practices and policies related to the design of learning environments for/with teens
- Advocates for essential resources to support an inclusive, welcoming environment for/with all teens
- Models appropriate use and behavior within teen learning environments for other library staff and volunteers

Content Area 4: Learning Experiences (formal & informal)

Works with teens, volunteers, community partners and others to plan, implement and evaluate year-round, high-quality, developmentally appropriate formal and informal learning activities that support teens' personal and academic interests.

Libraries have always been associated with learning. Library staff provide formal and informal learning experiences for teens resulting in teens' ability to construct their own learning about topics that are important to them, build non-traditional and "non-tested" skills and literacies, develop 21st-century skills, content knowledge, and expertise, engage in peer-supported learning, and connect with a broader community of others interested in the same topics.

Developing

- Understands how teens learn, explore career options, and develop life skills through relationships, coaching, mentoring, and interest-driven activities
- Understands the connected learning framework and that all teens learn and develop through active participation and choice
- Recognizes that change, stress, and transition affect teen social emotional development, behavior, and engagement
- Recognizes the importance of developing and following a plan of action to facilitate and implement year-round learning across all aspects of service, from collections to programs to community engagement
- Recognizes the value of assessment and assists in evaluating the effectiveness of learning experiences
- Identifies and obtains resources necessary to support year-round teen learning experiences

Practicing

- Encourages teens to be inquisitive and try new activities and opportunities
- Uses a broad collection of effective teaching strategies, tools, and accommodations to meet individual teen needs, build on cultural strengths, address learning differences, and enhance learning
- Builds activities and interactions year-round that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, intellectual openness, and multiple literacies
- Encourages teens to participate in the design and implementation of formal and informal learning activities throughout the year
- Builds learning outcomes into the design and implementation of learning activities

Transforming

- Connects the library to community resources that support teen learning experiences
- Collaborates with other organizations, groups, and agencies to maximize year-round learning opportunities for/with teens
- Reflects on effectiveness of learning activities to support teen needs, interests, development, culture, learning styles, and abilities and makes appropriate changes
- Assists in strategic planning and goal setting for the improvement of year-round learning activities
- Connects current theories, research, resources, best practices and policies related to the design and implementation of year-round learning experiences
- Coaches and mentors others in the development of library policies that support teen formal and informal learning through libraries
- Advocates for and seeks out essential resources to support year-round teen learning

Content Area 5: Youth Engagement and Leadership

Responds to all teens' interests and needs, and acts in partnership with teens to plan and implement library activities and to foster teen leadership.

Library staff actively support the age group in developing personal agency, and in cultivating cultural, personal, and social relationships. Providing teens with opportunities to engage in youth voice experiences centered on co-learning and co-designing library and community projects is essential. These activities give teens the ability to develop their leadership skills and to create change in their lives and in the world around them.

Developing

- Supports active engagement of all teens in developing library collections, programs and services
- Shares leadership role with teens, and provides opportunities for teens to contribute knowledge and skills to teen collections, services, activities, and programs
- Fosters teens' critical thinking, goal setting, problem solving, conflict management, decision making, and other important life skills
- Provides meaningful opportunities for youth voice to be included in library collection development, planning, programs and activities

Practicing

- Engages teens in leadership activities in ways that are meaningful to them and that build a variety of interpersonal and workforce-ready skills
- Promotes teen-initiated and teen-led library collection development, programs and services throughout the year
- Designs activities that support teen acquisition of self-confidence, and leadership and teamwork skills
- Develops teens' capacity for self-reflection, communication, empathy, and appreciation of diverse opinions and cultures
- Encourages teens in opportunities to connect with the community through service learning and civic engagement projects

Transforming

- Connects with others to amplify youth voice in library and community planning and activities
- Advocates for and develops policies that recognize and support teen engagement and leadership
- Connects current theories, research and best practices related to teen leadership and engagement
- Assesses activities and programs to support teen leadership development
- Advocates in the library and community for expanded pathways for all youth to be heard and assume leadership roles, especially those from traditionally marginalized communities

Content Area 6: Community and Family Engagement

Builds respectful, reciprocal relationships with community organizations and families to promote optimal development for teens and to enhance the quality of library services.

Teens carry out their lives in multiple settings including parks, out-of-school time organizations, schools, public libraries, places of worship, jobs, and home. To create seamless opportunities for gaining social and life skills, through formal and informal learning, library staff work with community organizations, schools, and families. To do this staff implement culturally competent practices to connect teens and their families to the information and resources they need.

Developing

- Maintains open, friendly, cooperative, and respectful relationships with families, community partners, and other library staff and administrators
- Communicates regularly with other library staff, family, and community members about library collections, services and resources
- Identifies and uses community resources to support and assist teens and their families and to enhance teen library collections, programs, and services
- Works effectively with families from a variety of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds

- Fosters an asset-based lens to understand the larger community context within which teens and their families live and to identify potential community partners
- Recognizes the relationship between teen services and the library's mission and goals
- Understands the value of conducting a community needs assessment to inform the development of teen services priorities
- Recognizes the influence of community norms on relationships, environment, and learning, and the implications these have for library services

Practicing

- Builds and demonstrates reciprocal and cooperative relationships with other library staff and administrators, families, and community partners to meet the needs of all teens, including the unserved and underserved
- Engages library staff, families, and community partners in regular discussions and activities to improve library collections and services, and to promote engagement in support of teen library services
- Applies strategies to promote the value of high quality teen library services as part of the overall library's mission and goals through library strategic planning and governance, and the political process
- Implements and supports best and promising practices for volunteer programs that support teen services

Transforming

- Connects with others to assess teen and community needs
- Expands relationship with library and community partners to ensure equitable and inclusive services for/with all teens throughout the community
- Represents teens in collaborative community endeavors to support learning, development, and well-being
- Teaches, mentors, and coaches others about how best to promote and implement community and family engagement
- Advocates for and designs library policies that support teen, family and community engagement
- Connects current theories, research, and best practices as they relate to community and family engagement
- Interprets community needs assessments to guide the development of teen collections, services and programs

Content Area 7: Cultural Competency and Responsiveness

Actively promotes appreciation for cultural diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful library atmosphere that embraces diversity.

Library staff actively promote respect for and seek self-understanding of cultural diversity. They come to know and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and characteristics through interaction with individuals from diverse linguistic, cultural, socioeconomic, and other groups; and to fully integrate the culture of diverse groups into planning, implementing and evaluating

culturally sustaining and bias-free programs, services, and workplaces. The development of complex, interconnected, and evolving cultural competencies on both personal and organizational levels requires dedication and cumulative and consistent work.

Developing

- Is aware of own cultural beliefs and practices
- Recognizes and values cultural differences in teens, families, and communities, including how cultural differences affect interactions with peers, adults and institutions such as the library
- Communicates the value of equity and inclusion in library services for and with teens
- Recognizes and supports individual expression respecting cultural influences
- Recognizes barriers such as racism, ethnocentrism, classism, heterosexism, genderism, ableism, and other systems of discrimination and exclusion in the community and its institutions, including the library, and interrupts them by way of culturally competent services

Practicing

- Describes own understanding of different cultural groups, including one's own cultural identities, beliefs, practices, and biases
- Describes cultural and environmental effects on learning, behavior, and development and the implications this has for library collections, programs and services
- Creates inclusive, welcoming and respectful library spaces, collections, and services for and with all teens and their families
- Builds relationships with culturally specific organizations and other relevant community partners to improve and expand library services

Transforming

- Models the use of culturally diverse materials and resources through collections, services, and programs to support the cultural identity, beliefs, and practices of all teens and families
- Connects library services, including collection development, reference and user services, outreach, and programming, with the experiences and cultures of the community
- Advocates for and designs library policies that are culturally respectful and that promote equity and inclusion in teen library services
- Expands relationships with community partners to design and implement projects that support cultural experiences and address community needs
- Advocates for hiring culturally diverse library staff and engaging culturally diverse volunteers

Content Area 8: Equity of Access

Ensures access to a wide variety of library resources, services, and activities for and with all teens, especially those facing challenges to access.

Library staff actively break down barriers of access (intellectual, digital, and physical) and ensure that all teens have equitable access to resources, services, and programs. They model the change society wants to see with respect to confronting various forms of oppression (race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) that can be manifested in library policies, practices, and the dispositions of library staff.

Developing

- Recognizes the impact limited access to services and resources has on the day to day experiences and future opportunities of many teens, particularly those with the most need
- Communicates the value of intellectual freedom and equitable and inclusive access to library resources and services for teens and their families
- Recognizes the role the whole library and community play in supporting equitable and inclusive teen access to resources and services
- Fosters relationships with community members and families to advance equitable and inclusive services for and with teens and help teens build digital citizenship skills
- Provides unfettered access to information, including information of special interest to the particular cultural groups within the community
- Identifies opportunities to increase equitable and inclusive access to resources and services through the library and the community

Practicing

- Designs and implements library services that expand access for teens of all cultures and abilities, including those who are unserved or underserved
- Partners with other community members and agencies to ensure teens have the broadest possible access to library collections, resources and services
- Collaborates with the whole community and families to ensure equitable access to collections, resources and services for all teens
- Delivers library services and programs inside and outside the library to ensure equitable access for/with all teens that support the development of digital citizenship skills
- Creates opportunities for teens to actively engage in speaking up for the need for equitable and inclusive access to library services
- Encourages the creation and dissemination of information resources that meet teen and community interests and needs

Transforming

- Mentors and coaches others on intellectual freedom principles and how to promote and implement equitable access in teen library services
- Analyzes and applies current theories, research and best practices related to equitable access for/with teens
- Advocates for and creates policies that support intellectual freedom principles and equitable and inclusive access for/with teens
- Expands access to information and resources that support teen needs and interests and fosters digital citizenship skills

Content Area 9: Outcomes and Assessment

Focuses on the impact of library programs for and with teens and uses data to inform service development and implementation.

When focusing on the impact that services have on teen lives, library staff develop services that have meaning in teens' lives and in their futures. Having a clear plan for the outcomes based assessment of library activities for and with teens guarantees that library staff can evaluate practices and make changes to better support all teens. With clear assessment in hand library staff articulate and advocate for the value of the work they do with and for teens to colleagues, administrators, families, community partners, decision makers and elected officials.

Developing

- Follows the library's strategic plan and works to understand its role in assessment
- Recognizes the importance of library programmatic evaluation and knows it is an ongoing process
- Communicates and interprets library evaluation methods
- Supports collecting information and data to determine library program effectiveness
- Maintains confidentiality regarding evaluation information and results
- Understands program planning and evaluation
- Applies evaluation findings to library program development and implementation

Practicing

- Develops a strategic plan for teen services that aligns with the library's mission and community needs, and uses the plan as part of the assessment process
- Engages in ongoing assessment of teen services using relevant methods and resources, including as they relate to equity and inclusion
- Collects and organizes information to measure teen outcomes while following relevant procedures for observation and assessment
- Selects and uses results from assessments in planning and implementing learning activities, and does so in a way that maintains patron confidentiality
- Implements formal and informal assessments for individual and group learning
- Selects relevant assessment methods and tools for measuring teen outcomes, including longitudinal data, to measure short term and long-term impact and progress
- Uses data driven practices to inform decision making related to equitable and inclusive teen library services

Transforming

- Evaluates progress toward strategic plan goals and adjusts as needed
- Advocates for informal and formal assessments in teen services
- Analyzes and evaluates observation and assessment data, and applies lessons learned to practice and decision making
- Interprets assessment results and communicates them in a clear and supportive manner
- Connects current theories, research, best practices, and policies relevant to outcomes and assessment
- Connects with community to create partnerships for assessment with internal and external evaluators and researchers

Content Area 10: Continuous Learning

Acts ethically, is committed to continuous learning, and advocates for best library practices and policies for teen services.

Library staff proactively engage in ongoing learning to position themselves to support the experiences and environments needed to support teen development. Continuous learning requires regular evaluation of one's own current knowledge and experience, in relation to the community and teens, and seeking out opportunities to fill gaps and increase understanding. Continuous learners actively seek out others (both in the library field and community) to learn from and with.

Developing

- Seeks knowledge of current trends, emerging technologies, issues, research and best practices in library and information science, teen development, education, and allied fields
- Seeks knowledge regarding the impact of inequity on teens, their families, and their communities, and the need to create equitable and inclusive teen library services
- Seeks new knowledge regarding cultural values, beliefs, and practices
- Identifies professional development requirements of the field and demonstrates awareness of professional standards
- Follows a professional development plan
- Identifies qualities of leadership and ethical behavior
- Is aware of relevant professional standards, such as YALSA's Core Professional Values
- Accepts role as a co-learner with teens
- Follows the highest standards of the profession, including those articulated by ALA and YALSA

Practicing

- Builds personal and professional competency by using authoritative and relevant services and resources
- Participates in activities, projects, and events within the library and allied fields
- Develops and implements a personal professional development plan
- Displays leadership skills and behaves in an ethical manner
- Applies YALSA's Core Professional Values to everyday work
- Engages with teens as a co-learner in library activities and programs
- Practices ongoing self-reflection, self-assessment, and problem-solving strategies to promote professional growth
- Engages in continuous collaborative professional development
- Creates professional development, leadership, and advocacy opportunities for others
- Participates actively in leadership roles in the library and in professional organizations

Transforming

- Evaluates and selects resources for ongoing professional development for self and others

- Mentors graduate students, volunteers, and library staff, including new librarians and library staff
- Increases others' understanding of professional standards such as those from ALA and YALSA
- Models what it is like to be a co-learner with community members for other library staff and volunteers

VI. Glossary

Agency: youth actively engaging with systems, institutions, and technologies towards finding space for expression and resilience.

Asset-based Approach: Assumes that youth and communities have “assets that need to be recognized, validated, and used” in the development of programs and services. (McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004).

Community: Refers to the people and organizations that library staff work with and for in a library's service area. It includes school faculty, public and school library administration, colleagues in the library, organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club and Parks and Recreation Departments, colleges and universities, youth, parents and caregivers, elected officials, and so on.

Community Engagement: Library staff actively and proactively working hand-in-hand with community members, organizations, decision-makers, elected officials, and youth and families to determine the needs of the local area and methods for joining together to provide services that meet those needs.

Connected Learning: Connected learning is a framework for learning that happens with the support of peers, mentors and caring adults, and in ways that open opportunities for youth. Connected learning involves hands-on, interest driven activities.

Cultural Competence: The ability to recognize the significance of culture in one's own life and in the lives of others; and come to know and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and characteristics through interaction with individuals from diverse linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic groups; and to fully integrate the culture of diverse groups into services, work and institutions in order to enhance the lives of both those being served by the library profession and those engaged in service. (Overall, 2009).

Culturally Sustaining: A theoretical stance proposed by Django Paris (2012) that “seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling” (p. 93).

Disposition: Professional dispositions are the ongoing beliefs, values, and commitments that affect library staff's work with teens, their families and the community, and that impact their own professional growth. Dispositions cut across all the core content areas and the competencies.

Equity: Giving everyone what they need to be successful. Equitable library services and programs actively move everyone closer to success by “leveling the playing field.”

Formal Assessment: Methods for gauging learning that are data oriented and quantitative in nature. Formal assessments include tests and quizzes in which a score is given and that score translates into a particular level of knowledge, skill, or understanding.

Informal Assessment: Methods for gauging learning such as observation, conversation, and review of products developed that enable library staff to determine how well outcomes are being achieved. Although this type of assessment is considered informal, library staff continue to pre-determine what they will look for in these assessments to determine success.

Outcomes: Measurement of the impact of an activity or service on participants. This includes changes in behavior or attitude, increase in skills or knowledge, acquisition of competence and confidence, and/or development of specific understanding.

Professional Development: Taking part in learning opportunities ranging from formal one-time events (for example webinars or conference programs) and multipart classes to engaging in interactions with peers and colleagues that lead to insight and new understanding.

Teen: Young people aged 12-18

Youth: Young people from birth through 18

Youth Development: “... A process that prepares a young person to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood and achieve his or her full potential. Youth development is promoted through activities and experiences that help youth develop social, ethical, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies.” (National Alliance, 2010)

Youth Voice: Ensuring that young people’s voices are heard and respected by adults and that youth can express their ideas about the world, their interests, and their learning. (Rubio, 2017)

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