

# Toolkit for AAPI Library Programming

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this toolkit is to guide library workers in creating accurate, respectful, and inclusive programming for their Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. This toolkit invites library workers to expand their programming to offer a more balanced representation of other regions of Asia and the Pacific Islands, and includes more AAPI representation apart from the traditionally represented East Asian community. It's important to consider that geographically, Asia is divided into five subregions: East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia.

Additionally, the purpose of this toolkit is to assist library workers in connecting, facilitating, and engaging with their AAPI community members and local AAPI organizations to deliver educational programs beyond the 5 F's (food, festivals, folklore, famous people, fashion), and expanding it to include depth and nuance with sensitive topics, such as mental health and Anti-Asian Hate.

Finally, the guiding questions in creating this toolkit are from APALA's Youth Literature Evaluation Rubric:

1. How might this program impact AAPI young people's self-image?
2. What messages about AAPI does this program send to non-AAPI community members?

## **APALA Youth Literature Evaluation Rubric**

The APALA Rubric to Evaluate Asian American and Pacific Islander Youth Literature was created to evaluate books, but can also be helpful in asking the crucial questions required when creating culturally sensitive and inclusive programs.

While creating Asian American and Pacific Islander driven programs, consider the following questions:

1. What impact does this have on a child or teen's understanding of themselves and the world in which they live?
2. Consider the effects on an Asian American Pacific Islander young person's self-image
3. Consider the message about Asian Americans Pacific Islanders that the program sends to non-Asian American Pacific Islanders community members.

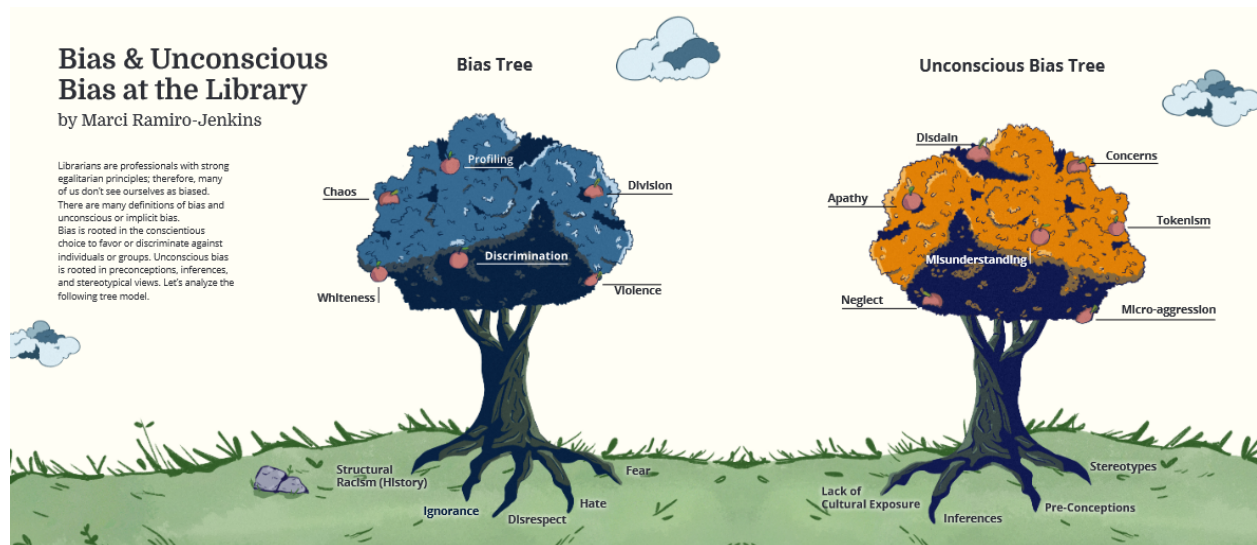
To view the rubric in its entirety, visit, [APALA Youth Literature Evaluation Rubric](#)

# PROGRAMMING

## Advocating for Funding and Challenges

**Purpose:** Before you even begin your programming, you need to make sure that it will be approved by your administration and that there will be funding. It's important to understand the challenges that can come with getting cultural programming approved and possible objections you might receive.

**Understanding Bias:** Librarians are professionals with strong egalitarian principles; therefore, many of us don't see ourselves as biased. There are many definitions of bias and unconscious or implicit bias. Bias is rooted in the conscientious choice to favor or discriminate against individuals or groups. Unconscious bias is rooted in preconceptions, inferences, and stereotypical views.



**Finding Funding:** Local, state, and federal funding is available for library programs, but often looking for organizations that have EDI and antiracism as their core mission will increase your odds of finding funding.

- [Asian Pacific American Librarians Association Talk Story Grant](#)
- [Institute of Museum and Library Services Grants](#)
- [Anti-Racism and Intersectional Justice Fund](#)
- [US Department of Education: Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions Program](#)
- [Federal Grants](#)
- State Libraries often offer opportunities for grants
  - Example: [PA State Library](#)

**Challenges:** Just as there are challenges to books there can also be challenges to programs. Having a policy in place that is available and ready in case challenges to arise can be useful. There are resources from the local to national level to help build policies. Examples of library policies can be found at organizations such as:

- [American Library Association](#)
- [Public Library Association](#)
- State Libraries
  - Example: [ME State Library](#)

# AAPI MENTAL HEALTH

**Purpose:** Since the beginning of the pandemic Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have experienced an uptick in hate crimes, about 150% more than were reported prior to the pandemic. These incidents cause increased anxiety, depressive symptoms, and sleep problems in a community that is three times less likely than their white counterparts to seek mental health resources, making them the least likely racial group to do so. The Model Minority Myth, stigmas associated with having and seeking help for mental health issues, and language barriers (about one third of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders do not speak English fluently) are some of the reasons Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders might hesitate to seek help. Because of these reasons, we believe Asian American Pacific Islander mental health and access to mental health resources is of utmost importance and needs to be addressed in libraries.

## **Program Planning: Mental Health Workbook Workshop**

Description: Facilitator-led guided sessions (can be a multi-part series) where participants work through a mental health workbook specifically created for Asian American Pacific Islanders.

How: This can be done in-person or virtually.

Other options: Also possible to have copies of mental health workbooks available for patrons to take home and do on their own time.

Resources:

- [#IAMNOTAVIRUS Mental Health Workbook](#)
- [South Asian Therapists Mental Health Workbooks](#)

## **Program Planning: Mental Health First Aid Training**

Description: This program might be more appropriate as a staff training as opposed to public programming, but can work as both. Mental Health First Aid training is a skills-based training course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-abuse issues.

How: Libraries can host a training session and/or staff can attend training locally or virtually.

Resource:

- [Mental Health First Aid](#)

## **Program Planning: Community Forum**

Description: Host a community forum/discussion/panel with local Asian American and Pacific Islander leaders, changemakers, and mental health experts.

How: Program can be held in-person or virtually.

Resources:

- [Example program](#)

### **Additional Resources**

- [Asian American Health Initiative](#)
- [Asian American Psychological Association](#)
- [Asian Mental Health Collective](#)
- [Asian Mental Health Project](#)
- [Asians for Mental Health Directory](#)
- [Asian And Pacific Islander American Health Forum](#)
- [Ayana Therapy](#)
- [Dr. Sherry Wang](#)
- [Inclusive Therapists](#)
- [Mann Mukti](#)
- [National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association](#)
- [National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network](#)
- [South Asian Mental Health Initiative & Network](#)
- [South Asian Therapists](#)

# Programming for Advocacy

**Purpose:** Since the rise of the coronavirus, there has been an increase of harassment and anti-AAPI hate incidents towards Asian American and Pacific Islander individuals. This portion of the toolkit is to assist library workers in creating and facilitating programs that will help create a space and educate AAPI and non-AAPI library members on how to be advocates and allies for their AAPI community members.

## **Program Description: Advocacy Training with Right To Be (formerly Hollaback)**

According to [Stop AAPI Hate](#), there have been approximately 10,905 hate incidents reported against Asian American and Pacific Islander individuals between March 2020 to December 2021. These incidents vary from verbal harassment to physical assaults with verbal harassment making up 63% of incidents. Women have reported 61% of hate incidents while reports from non-binary AAPI individuals have been shown to experience shunning (21.4%), being coughed on (13.9%), denial of service (8.3%), and online harassment (12.1%) in comparison to AAPI men and women.

To combat anti-AAPI harassment, partner with [Right to Be](#) and create a library program to teach community members how to safely enact bystander intervention tactics as a response to harassment against AAPI individuals.

Recommendations:

1. Present it as a Zoom webinar to minimize interruptions.
2. Require attendees to register in order to receive the Zoom link
3. Set aside additional time to encourage participation and questions from your community and find another staff to help with chat conversations and questions.

**Additional Resource:**

- [Let's Talk](#)

## **Program Description: Speaker Panel and Author Talks**

Create a platform for AAPI voices by presenting author talks or panel discussions with local or nationally recognized AAPI leaders and authors to discuss current events and their creative content.

Alameda County Library's Social Justices Services presented a panel event: [Standing Up to Racism: A Chat with Asian-American/Pacific Islander Leaders and Activists](#) in May 2021. The panel featured five Asian American Activists and local leaders in the county and discussed the



current climate of anti-AAPI incidents and what the AAPI community can feel hopeful about also.

## **Program Description: Community Conversations with Pre-teens and Teens**

Facilitate a space for your AAPI pre-teens and teens to safely and bravely talk about race and their lived experiences. Teens are rarely given their own space to express their own thoughts. As library workers, we can create a space free of judgment where they can express what is on their minds or have conversations about their shared experiences as AAPI teens.

### **Important to consider before you begin!**

One of the most important parts of preparing for this program is being aware of your own implicit biases, especially if you are facilitating as a non-AAPI library worker. If you want to do this work, you have to begin with yourself before you guide teens in these conversations otherwise you can cause further harm to your BIPOC teens.

Conversations about race are already difficult; your teens should not be held responsible to bear the emotional labor of holding you accountable for your implicit biases. Read [Let's Talk](#) to learn how to properly facilitate conversations before creating a conversation-based program.

## **Program Description: We Are Not a Stereotype: Breaking Down Asian American, Pacific Islander Bias Video Series for Pre-teens and Teens**

Create a video series to show teens and pre-teens the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center's [We Are Not a Stereotype](#).

Ask following questions as a conversation starter:

- What does it mean to be Asian American, Pacific Islander American?
- Who is Asian American, Pacific Islander American?
- What are the impacts of Asian American, Pacific Islander American stereotypes?

### **Recommendations:**

- Create Community Agreements to ensure conversations are not interrupted and participants are not disrespected. It's best to start a few agreements, but involve teens if the Community Conversations become a regular program.
  - An example of a few agreements:
    - One Voice, One Mic
    - Respect names and pronouns
    - We can't be articulate all the time but don't let that stop you from sharing your truth and believe everyone's lived experience
    - Be comfortable with the discomfort
- Set a limit of how many teens can participate. Set the number of participants to one where you are comfortable facilitating. Bring another staff for support in facilitation.
- Prepare an ice breaker unrelated to race to make teens comfortable
- Prepare questions, short articles, or short videos

- Articles to use as examples:
  - [What Is the History of Anti-Asian Discrimination in the United States? A Timeline](#)
  - [What AAPI Heritage Month is and how to celebrate it](#)
- Questions from Talk About Race to begin the conversation
  - [Talking About Race | National Museum of African American History and Culture](#)
    - When were you first aware of your race?
    - What childhood experiences did you have with friends or adults who were different from you in some way?
    - How, if ever, did any adult give you help thinking about racial difference?
- Define and learn the difference between terms
  - [Anti-Defamation League Education Glossary Terms:](#)
- Allow for teens to message the main facilitator privately if they are uncomfortable speaking up.
- Don't forget the BIPOC experience is not just about the struggle – incorporate the joys of their cultural heritage and generational relationships in your conversations too.
- Set aside time to debrief at the end of the program. Allow teens to stay longer if they need to so they don't leave the meetings carrying the heavy emotions of the conversation.
  - Ask what the teens have learned, if they have any action they will take after the meeting, what they took away from the program
  - Engage in mindful breathing exercises

## Resources:

- [Anti-Opressive Facilitation for Democratic Process](#)
- [Courageous Conversations](#)
- [Let's Talk](#)
- [Implicit Bias Explained - Perception Institute](#)
- [Resources for Talking About Race, Racism, and Racialized Violence with Kids](#)
- [Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism](#)
- [Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center: We Are Not a Stereotype: Breaking Down Asian Pacific American Bias](#)
- [Talking About Race](#)
- [Teen Vogue: Race and Ethnicity in America](#)

# Historical and Contemporary Issues

**Purpose:** As library workers, it is vitally important that we gain an authentic understanding of the communities we serve. In this section, programmers and other library workers can expand their understanding of potential obstacles the Asian American Pacific Islander communities face. In addition, this section provides questions that programmers can ask themselves, to ensure they are providing services to these communities in the most informed and respectful way possible.

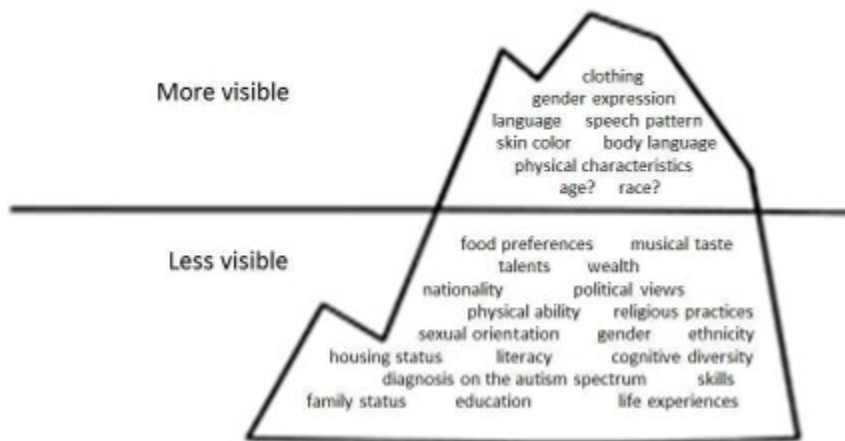
- Consider effects on Asian American Pacific Islander's self-image
  - [The Bamboo Ceiling](#)
    - Topics & Themes: Model Minority Myth, Racial Imposter Syndrome, Breaking, Glass & Bamboo Ceilings, Microaggressions
- Consider the message you are sending about Asian American Pacific Islanders.
  - [Let's Talk](#)
    - Presented by the Southern Poverty Law Center
    - Prepares educators to have critical conversations about racism, gender bias, ableism, anti-immigration sentiment, religious & LGBTQ+ bias, & more.
- Does the program represent both historic and contemporary stories of Asian American Pacific Island communities? Does the programmer understand that Asian American Pacific Islanders are not a monolithic culture?
  - [Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Resources List](#)
  - A list of topics from reputable sources
  - Features current & historical events
- Does the presenter have experience with Asian American Pacific Islanders subculture? How qualified is the presenter to host the program?
  - [Engaging Multilingual Communities and English Language Learners in U.S. Libraries](#)
  - Describes how to reach out to diverse groups, how to make diversity a part of your library culture and how to help people feel comfortable in your space.

# Programming Best Practices Resources

**Purpose:** Programming best practices are ever changing, in this section you will find resources that help programmers and other library workers to provide thoughtful, culturally informed programs.

- [Going Beneath the Cultural Iceberg to Communicate With Your Community](#)

## Sample Cultural Iceberg



- [Skills for 21st Century Librarians](#)
  - ALA convened a task force of twelve leaders in libraries and library education to explore how library programming skills can be taught in library degree programs and professional development training.
  - Cover topics like [Lesser Taught Programming Skills](#)
- [Event Planning ≠ Program Planning: Teaching](#)
  - Explains the difference between “program planning” (i.e. content, program name) and “event planning” (i.e. logistics, supply needs, location, accessibility.)
- [SOAR Analysis: 16 Questions to Improve Your Community Engagement](#)

	Internal	External
S	strengths	O opportunities
A	aspirations	R results

# Resources

## Section Summaries

- **Advocating for Funding and Challenges:** Gives an introduction on challenges you may encounter when trying to do AAPI programming, including lack of funding, how to educate fellow library workers and resources on how to help you handle those.
- **AAPI Mental Health:** Between the uptick in hate crimes that have happened to AAPI individuals since the beginning of the pandemic and other barriers (i.e. language, available resources), AAPI Mental Health has become an important topic. This section includes program examples to help libraries support AAPI mental health.
- **Programming for Advocacy:** Gives examples in creating and facilitating programs that will help create a space and educate AAPI and non-AAPI library members on how to be advocates and allies for their AAPI community members.
- **Historical and Contemporary Issues:** There are many barriers that AAPI community members face in every aspect of life. This is an introduction into issues that AAPI have faced beyond the recent rise in anti-AAPI hate.
- **Programming Best Practices:** Topics like race and culture are complicated. These are some considerations to have when planning a program and the difference between a library program and event.

## Reading List

- [APALA Talk Story Recommended Reading List](#)
- [APALA Literature Awards](#)

## Ready To Go Programs

- [Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center](#): includes ready made learning modules include: ready made lesson plans, free webinars, a “Learning Lab” with ready made presentations to share with patrons during programs
- [Right To Be](#): Bystander Intervention to stop anti-AAPI harassment & xenophobia, bystander Intervention 2.0, conflict de-escalation workshop, how to respond to harassment for people experiencing anti-AAPI harassment
- [Discussing Anti-Asian Racism with Students: An Educator's Guide](#)
- [Let's Talk! Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students](#): includes Via Teaching Tolerance, printable materials to get groups talking, step by step program instructions

## Websites

- **Introduction:**
  - [APALA Youth Literature Evaluation Rubric](#)
- **Advocating for Funding and Challenges**
  - Understanding Bias: [Oregon Library Association EDI & Antiracism Toolkit](#)
  - Funding:
    - [Asian Pacific American Librarians Association Talk Story Grant](#)
    - [Institute of Museum and Library Services Grants](#)
    - [Anti-Racism and Intersectional Justice Fund](#)

- [US Department of Education: Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions Program](#)
    - [Federal Grants](#)
    - State Libraries often offer opportunities for grants
      - Example: [PA State Library](#)
  - Challenges
    - [American Library Association](#)
    - [Public Library Association](#)
    - State Libraries
      - Example: [ME State Library](#)
- **AAPI Mental Health**
  - Program Planning
    - Mental Health Workbook Workshop
      - [#IAMNOTAVIRUS Mental Health Workbook](#)
      - [South Asian Therapists Mental Health Workbooks](#)
    - Mental Health First Aid
      - [Mental Health First Aid](#)
    - Community Forum
      - [Example program](#)
  - Additional Resources
    - [Asian American Health Initiative](#)
    - [Asian American Psychological Association](#)
    - [Asian Mental Health Collective](#)
    - [Asian Mental Health Project](#)
    - [Asians for Mental Health Directory](#)
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    - [South Asian Mental Health Initiative & Network](#)
    - [South Asian Therapists](#)
- **Programming for Advocacy**
  - Advocacy Training with Right to Be
    - [Stop AAPI Hate](#)
    - [Right to Be](#)
    - [Let's Talk](#)
  - Speaker Panel and Author Talks
    - [Standing Up to Racism: A Chat with Asian-American/Pacific Islander Leaders and Activists](#)

- Breaking Down AAPI Vias Video Series for Pre-teens and Teens
  - [We Are Not a Stereotype.](#)
  - [What Is the History of Anti-Asian Discrimination in the United States? A Timeline](#)
  - [What AAPI Heritage Month is and how to celebrate it](#)
  - [Talking About Race | National Museum of African American History and Culture](#)
  - [Anti-Defamation League Education Glossary Terms:](#)
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