

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Annual Conference, Chicago  
June 28 – July 2, 2013**

**Topic:** Mega Issue Discussion

**Background:** Mega issues are issues of strategic importance, which represent choices YALSA needs to make in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of YALSA’s Envisioned Future, and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing YALSA. The Board can use these questions to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about issues facing the association and/or profession YALSA serves. In order to ensure that topics of strategic importance get addressed by the Board, the Board agreed to place one of them on the agenda for each meeting.

**Action Required:** Exploration

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**Mega Issue:**

*How can YALSA be better at identifying and supporting best practices?*

In the fall 2012 survey, this activity was rated as the second most pressing interest members had, but members gave YALSA low marks on meeting that need. This question can be broken into several questions:

- How do we define “best practice?”
- How to identify existing best and promising practices
- How to identify and validate new best practices
- How to promote best and promising practices among YALSA members and the library community

**What is a ‘best practice?’**

A best practice can refer to an activity, strategy, methodology, system, process, technique, tactic, or approach. “Best practice” status is sometimes conferred either officially – by a government body, professional association, or other authoritative entity – or by published research results. In general, a method or program gains such status by being measurable, successful and replicable.

**Current Best Practices Activities**

- Some YALS articles highlight innovative, new or best practices
- Some blog posts highlight innovative, new or best practices
- Best practices are identified via member awards and grants
- YALSA competencies and guidelines set some standards that could be used to identify best practices
- Some book length publications highlight best practices

- Some conference programs highlight innovative, new or best practices

At this time, YALSA does not have a coordinated approach to identifying and promoting best practices, nor does the organization have a clearly defined set of what best practices in library service for and with teen are.

### Questions for Exploration

- What is the logical first step?
- What existing resources can we leverage to identify and promote best practices?
- What resources do we need to achieve significant progress in this area? (staff, volunteers, funds, etc.)
- How do we implement the effort(s)?
- How will we measure success?

### Resources to Explore:

- Identifying and Promoting Effective Practices, <http://ow.ly/m5jxh> (.pdf)
- Identifying and Promoting Promising Practices, <http://ow.ly/m5jnE> (.pdf)
- Promoting the Adoption and Use of Best Practices, <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/MainSection19.6.aspx>