

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco
June 26 – 30, 2015

Topic: Request for Board Action: Homework Help

Background: In March of 2015 the co-chairs of the RUSA/YALSA Interdivisional Committee on Young Adult Reference Services submitted a document to their Board Liaison, Carrie Kausch, and inquired about obtaining YALSA Board approval to adopt the document and make it official. Carrie and Beth Yoke scheduled a call with the co-chairs to review the document and made several recommendations for improvement, including 1) aligning the content with the Futures Report; 2) adopting the format/structure of YALSA's other national guidelines; 3) clarifying whether the document was about providing homework help services or creating homework help centers; 4) finding more up to date content to put in the bibliography; 5) adding content about community needs assessments and outcomes/evaluation; and 6) incorporating research and best practices around homework help from the afterschool community. The co-chairs agreed to revisit the document and their latest version has been provided by Jessi Schulte-Honstad with the request for the Board to review and adopt it.

Action Required: Action

HOMEWORK HELP BEST PRACTICES

*Compiled and written by Erinn Paige, Member Young Adult Reference Services Committee; Programming Librarian at New Canaan Library in New Canaan Connecticut.
Edited and approved by Allyson Evans Malik, Co-Chair Young Adult Reference Services Committee; Young Adult Librarian at Charles County Public Library, Waldorf, Maryland.
And Jessi Schulte-Honstad, Co-Chair Young Adult Reference Services Committee; Young Adult Services Supervisor at Skokie Public Library, Skokie, Illinois.*

June 2015

INTRODUCTION

After-school homework help library programs can help improve teens' academic performance in areas where this need is not already met by local partners. When a library provides homework help collections and services that enhance local school curricula, it recognizes different learning styles by allowing access to different technologies, allows access during after-school hours, and supports students' social needs to interact with and help each other.

According to research that forms the basis of YALSA’s guidelines “The Future of Library Services for and with Teens,” young adults learn best when their lessons are connected to their passions, desires and interests. Libraries are able to provide access to new technologies and other resources that cater to these interests, allowing teens to build skills and develop deeper understanding of their world outside the classroom.

In recognition of the importance of homework help in libraries, these best practices were created in 2014 by the Young Adult Reference Services (YALSA/RUSA) Committee. Responses to the In-House Homework Help Discussion Forum held at ALA Annual in 2014, a review of professional literature that addresses homework help as a service, and a survey of 17 libraries that currently provide homework help were used to develop these best practices.

An annotated bibliography of sources, survey notes, and discussion forum responses follow this document.

BEST PRACTICES

Needs Assessment

- Research current after-school homework help opportunities to identify whether the library should develop its own program.
- Conduct a community needs assessment survey to determine whether there is a call for the library to provide an after-school homework help initiative.
- Consider providing library resources to community organizations that already meet this need rather than duplicate those efforts in the library.

Partnerships

- Establish or strengthen partnerships with
 - Local schools to ensure that tutoring services in the library are prepared for and support relevant projects and curricula.
 - Local colleges and universities with outreach and community engagement initiatives
 - Community centers and other cultural institutions
 - Parent organizations
 - Municipal committees, if any, that deal with city / town-wide initiatives to manage out-of-school time
 - Local homeschool networks

Policies

- Establish a clear age and subject focus for services to ensure that training for tutors is appropriate and that patrons understand the intended audience.
- Have rules for conduct and equipment use in any homework help center or designated tutoring space

Promotion

- Collaborate with partner organizations to promote free library tutoring services and resources at point-of-need.

Space

- Designate a space where homework help / tutoring is the primary service, and where all associated materials and equipment, if any, are assembled
- Allocate computers to be used only for tutoring at specific times, if offering online tutoring services

Staffing

- Designate specific in-house staff to manage homework center, coordinate volunteers and schedules, and communicate with partners on a regular basis
- Consider local sources for qualified volunteer tutors
 - Retired / former teachers or new teachers
 - National Honor Society students (peer-to-peer)
 - College / university students
 - Educational organizations (writing, test prep)
- Establish appropriate training / vetting for tutors to ensure quality and align with library policy on working with children and teens

Timing

- Set specific hours for in-person tutoring services in the library during out of school time (e.g., 3-6pm)
- Clearly post times, cancellations, and scheduled holidays

Collections / Services

- Draw on in-place collections and services (materials, databases, etc) and re-brand to connect to tutoring services.
- Establish a reference collection specifically for in-house use by tutors and students. Liaise with school representatives / school librarian to ensure materials to support projects and curricula.
- Develop an online collection of resources by subject.
- Offer online tutoring services like Tutor.com, Live Homework Help, BrainFuse, Dial a Teacher, Ask a Librarian etc., especially if specific volunteer tutor programs are not possible.

Evaluation

- Evaluate the program on an ongoing basis with two means of assessment:
 - Quantitative: Space, equipment, attendance, and other use statistics will help to determine whether the library is meeting the core requirements of the program
 - Qualitative: Anecdotal evidence, self-reporting, secret shopper and survey data should reflect whether the outputs are driven by the teens' needs and should indicate the skills or knowledge they gained.

Funding

- Request funding to support the after-school homework help program
 - As its own planned program in the library's budget
 - From grants, especially collaborative grants with partner organizations

YALSA Board of Directors – Annual 2015
Topic: Request for Board Action: Homework Help

- From Friends groups and associations
- As sponsored donations from corporate donors

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anna, Leeann. "A Vision for Serving Teens in the Public Library." *Pennsylvania Library Association Bulletin*. Jul-Sep2012, Vol. 67 Issue 3, p12-14. 3p. Retrieved November 2014.

The article presents information on the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania which helps the teens to become contributing citizens, library supporters and lovers of literacy and learning. The Teen Impact Study conducted by CLP revealed that teens want to have laptop computers, gaming, homework help, and tutoring in the library.

"Boston tutoring program takes teachers to students." *American Teacher*; April 2005, Vol. 89 Issue 7, p17-17. Retrieved November 2014.

The Boston Teachers Union's Homework Helper Program involves union members offering their services in local libraries one night a week to help students with their homework.

Brannon, Sian and WyLaina Hildreth. "Teen Homework Centers--Minimum Resources for Most Budgets." *Texas Library Journal*, Spring 2011, p19 - 25.

Includes an extensive needs assessment questionnaire for determining collection necessities, including reference materials, for homework help centers with recommended resources in basic subject areas (math, science, writing, history, and languages), research writing (style manuals, resume and research guides), and test prep (SAT, ACT, etc). This article also re-iterates the importance of partnerships and liaisons with schools in order to build and maintain responsive homework center collections and services that respond to school projects and curriculum.

Braun, Linda et al. *The Future Of Library Services For And With Teens: A Call To Action*. 1st ed. Young Adult Library Services Association, 2014. Print.

Created in response to a paradigm shift of teen library users and the technologies they require, this document summarizes recent research into teen needs and makes recommendations on how libraries can meet those needs.

Cigale, George. "Partners in Advocacy." *Library Journal*, v130 n13 p46-48 Aug 2005. 3 pp. Retrieved November 2014.

Provides an overview of Tutor.com, a popular online tutoring service that includes Live Homework Help. Tutor.com actively worked with libraries to build their service in response to community needs and supported library advocacy efforts when it came to creating homework centers to support teens and other students.

Gartelmann, Tracy. "Got Homework? Homework Center Manual: Your guide to setting up a Homework/Literacy Center in your library." Mid-Hudson Library System. 24 pages.

This extensive practical manual for setting up library homework centers addresses the research that supports such community support for youth, the importance of needs assessments for community-specific services, and the logistics of staffing, space, and hours. In addition, the manual points to the necessity of properly promoting these services to maximize their efficacy, and to partnering with other organizations (schools) to make sure

services speak to curriculum and seasonal projects. This manual also includes an extensive appendix of sample promotional materials, and guides for hiring and training Center staff, including interview questions.

Gish, Wendy. "Homework Help Helps." *Public Libraries*; Sep/Oct2012, Vol. 51 Issue 5, p8-9, 2p. Retrieved November 2014.

Discusses the in-person homework program called Homework Help at the Johnson County Library (JCL) in Kansas City, Kansas. Some of the benefits from the program include providing knowledge and social skills to students, opportunities for volunteers, cultural exchanges and a venue for students to make new friends and have fun learning.

Intner, Carol F. "Homework Help from the Library: In Person and Online." ALA Editions. 216 pp. 2011.

Argues that children's and young adult librarians are crucial links to effective learning for students and offers practical advice on the best ways to help young people with their homework, including how students' different learning styles and current technology inform the homework process; staff training and community outreach; and options for working more closely with both students and teachers

"Johnson County Library Offers Homework Assistance." *Public Libraries*. Mar/Apr2006, Vol. 45 Issue 2, p17-17. Retrieved November 2014.

Provides information on the Homework Help program offered by Johnson County Library locations in Shawnee Mission, Kansas. The program provides homework coaches, trained community volunteers and library staff who are available to assist students in grades four through eight after school. The objective of the program is to teach students how to use library resources to complete their homework assignments. The program is an extension of the work that librarians provide, as many students come to the library to work on projects and homework assignments and ask for help.

Mediavilla, Cindy. "Homework Helpers." *School Library Journal*. Mar2003, Vol. 49 Issue 3, p56. 4p. Retrieved November 2014.

Presents evidence that after-school homework programs help kids improve their math and reading abilities and discusses how public libraries can aid students in doing their homework with a variety of case studies (Monterey Public Library in California, Monroe County Public Library in Indiana). Also includes practical suggestions for how libraries can offer effective after-school homework assistance.

Ries-Taggart, Jennifer T. "Partnership Promotes Online Help for Students." *Public Libraries*, Jan/Feb 2007, Vol 46 Issue 1, p 16-16.

The author reports that the County of Los Angeles Public Library, ClearChannel Radio and Azusa Pacific University in California are collaborating to promote Live Homework Help. LHH is a service of librarytutor.org, a web service that connects students grades 4-12 and on to the community college level with tutors online. The service is operational for designated hours each day in both English and Spanish.

Spielberger, Julie; Horton, Carol; Michels, Lisa; Halpern, Robert. "New on the Shelf: Teens in the Library. Findings from the Evaluation of Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development, An Initiative of the Wallace Foundation. Final Report ." 2004, Chapin Hall Center for Children. 173 pp.

This study reports on findings from the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development (PLPYD) Initiative, which developed innovative models for public libraries to provide high-quality educational enrichment and career development programs for underserved low-income children and youth. The evaluation reveals that in addition to providing access to technology and a "safe" place to be during out-of-school hours, libraries can provide high-quality youth employment programs that include training in both specific job skills and more general personal and social skills. The study notes that these beneficial programs require time, financial resources, dedicated staff, consistent leadership, and alignment of youth program with library's core mission and goals and public libraries need to assess and build their capacity for youth programs and services in a systematic way.

SURVEY RESPONSES

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Arlington Heights Memorial makes the chat window prominent on the homework help page. Online resources also accessible 24-7 with library card sign-in, each with a note about age range of resource and subject focus. Databases range from K-12+, with most focusing on K-6 and some with an upper level focus.

Features:

- age focus: K-12, but appears much more useful for younger students
- resources: curated online / database resource list
- in-person / online: Online. Live chat window prominent on the school help page and connects with a reference librarian.

Links

- http://www.ahml.info/kids/school_help

Boston Public Library

Boston Public Library supports a very large multi-branch Homework Help program in partnership with Harvard University's SmarTALK tutor training program. This program focuses on support for students in grades K-12. Tutors are high achieving high school students trained by SmarTALK. This initiative is part of a larger regional push for afterschool education with the goal of helping students develop academic and social skills outside of school.

Features:

- partnership/organization – Harvard University
- specific staff / managers
- trained volunteers – high school students
- specific hours - in-person help available at most branches M-Th 3:30-5:00, and on weekends at the main branch. Schedule available online.
- specific age focus: grade K-12
- support / funding – Boston Public Library Association grants
- in person / online: in person

Links

- <http://www.bpl.org/homework/>

Brooklyn Public Library

BPL provides homework help and tutoring programs at several locations, all of which are posted on their events calendar. Volunteer Homework Helpers assist staff by providing students in grades 1-8 with after-school homework assistance. Homework Helpers range from retired teachers to high school students. These volunteers receive training and are able to assist with homework in various subjects, such as English, math, science, social studies. The Homework Help service also includes vetted resource lists and homework help sites compiled by librarians which are available online. Students can also schedule 30 min appointments with a librarian for one-on-one research assistance. Dial-a-Teacher is also listed as a resource that can connect students with classroom teachers during specific times; these teachers are able to provide assistance to both students and parents and in a variety of languages.

A partnership with 826NYC (a non-profit focused on supporting writing skills for students 6-18) also provides tutors at the Williamsburgh location.

Features:

- partnership / organization: 826NYC with the Williamsburgh branch.
- trained volunteers: retired teachers to high school students receive training for in-person homework help at branches
- specific location: Superhero Annex at Williamsburgh Library for 826NYC services
- specific hours: hours posted for each branch. Help via Dial a Teacher also available during specific times.
- specific age focus: grades 1-8 in-person. 6-18 for 826NYC. No limit for Dial a Teacher or Book a Librarian.
- resources: Homework Help page has specific database links for different age groups, plus a math-focused page of resources
- in person / online: in person and online

Links

- <http://www.bklynlibrary.org/homework-help>
- <http://www.bklynlibrary.org/support/volunteer/after-school-homework-hel>

Chicago Public Library

CPL has Homework Help at all locations, and is one of the largest in the nation. The Teacher in the Library program places certified teachers and trained homework helpers assist students in finding the right learning strategies and the best resources for finishing their homework assignments. Homework helpers are also available to answer parents' questions about their children's homework and offer suggestions on how parents can help kids with school assignments at home.

Features:

- partnership / organization: Teacher in the Library program
- specific hours: Homework help hours vary by location but are scheduled in advance.
- support / funding: funded by grants to the [Chicago Public Library Foundation](#).
- trained staff: certified teachers / trained helpers
- in person / online: in person

Links

- Homework Help at CPL page: <http://www.chipublib.org/news/free-homework-help/>
- 2013 press release about CPL's homework help program being the largest in the nation: http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2013/october_2013/chicago_public_librarynowofferslargesthomeworkhelpprograminnatio.html

Iowa City Public Library

ICPL offers drop-in Teen Homework Help from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Koza Family Teen Center. Tutors from the University of Iowa give one-on-one assistance to students in seventh- through 12th-grades. Teens are expected to bring all materials needed to complete their assignments. Teen Homework Help won't be offered when the University is not in session.

Features:

- partnership / organization: University of Iowa
- specific hours: 6-8 pm on Wednesdays when the university is in session.
- specific space: Koza Family Teen Center
- specific age focus: grade 7-12
- training: through Univ. of Iowa
- in person / online: in person

Links

- ICPL Blog post: <http://blog.icpl.org/2014/09/25/teen-homework-help-wednesdays-at-the-iowa-city-public-library/>

King County (Washington) Library System

KCLS has "Study Zone" hours at each branch that focuses on tutoring help, which is not only for K-12th grade students, but also "anyone up to age 21 studying for their GED." Hours at each branch vary but are generally the after-school hours. Librarian curated databases, and tutor.com, are also linked on the Teen Help site. Volunteer tutors (retired teachers—high school juniors) are trained and have to pass a WA state background check. Tutors work with 1-5 students in a group setting, but private one on ones for intensive study are not guaranteed. Subjects covered include SAT prep, all subjects K-6, and advanced / college prep level subjects for grades 7-12. Tutors speak a variety of languages.

Features:

- specific hours: posted for each branch, mostly focused on afterschool hours.
- specific space: no – "Study Zone" is merely a designated time.
- resources: not specified.
- specific age focus: generally K-12, but also GED students.
- trained volunteers: yes
- in person / online: in person and online via tutor.com

Links:

- <http://www.kcls.org/studyzone/>

Lafayette, CO Public Library

LPL offers homework help at the Gaea Shaw Homework Center, which is billed as a welcoming place where students can get academic help. Volunteer tutors offer free tutoring in a variety of subjects for students from 3rd grade through high school, and bilingual tutors are available. Tutoring sessions are held during the school year, M-Th 2:45-6:30, and bus transportation is available for students from the middle school. Specific Math and Physics tutoring is also offered specifically for high school students M-Th 5-6:30 pm in a separate study space.

Features:

- specific space: Gaea Shaw Homework Center / group study rooms (HS math and physics)
- specific age focus: grades 3-12
- transportation: provided for middle school students
- specific time: after school hours M-Th during the school year
- volunteer training: not specified
- in-person / online: in person

Links

- <http://www.cityoflafayette.com/index.aspx?NID=316>

Los Angeles Public Library

LAPL uses Tutor.com’s Live Homework Help service online. This service is not limited to teens, but covers all students K-12, College, and Adult Learners. Patrons can use LHH from home, school, or the library itself so long as they have a library card and an internet connection.

Features

- specific times: online service available 3-10 pm daily in English and Spanish, 4-7pm for Vietnamese.
- specific age focus: no, but K-12 service includes support for all subjects and essay review.
- funding: sponsored by City National Bank
- in-person / online: online only.

Links

- tutor.com
- <http://www.colapublib.org/children/tutor/>

Multnomah County Library

MCL uses Tutor.com’s Live Homework Help service online. This service is not listed as a teen-specific service, but indicated that it can assist with: proofreading for papers, math problems, practice questions and study guides for the PSAT, Spanish as a foreign language tutoring. The service is available 2-10 pm daily in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The Homework Center resources linked below refer not to specific space but a curated collection of resources and databases for a variety of subjects and typical HS projects. Learning Express Library is also linked on the Live Homework Help page, and a “Chat With a Librarian” feature links patrons to librarians all over the world 24/7.

Features

- specific times: online service available 3-10 pm daily in English and Spanish, 4-7pm for Vietnamese.
- specific age focus: no, but website is pitching to 6-12.
- resources: curated database collections by subject, Chat with a Librarian, Live Homework Help
- in-person / online: online only.

Links

- tutor.com
- <https://multcolib.org/resource/live-homework-help-tutorcom>
- <https://multcolib.org/homework-center>

Paul Pratt Memorial Library, Cohasset, MA

PPML has a Homework Center in partnership with the Discovery Museum. The program Our program runs on Tuesday evenings from 5:30 to 7:00. National Honor Society students from the high school serve as tutors under the direction of a Homework Center Coordinator, who is a certified teacher. This year, the Library plans to promote the service more heavily to the middle school and high school. The Center provides ten laptops for the students to use for homework.

Features

- partnership: Discovery Museum
- specific hours: 5:30-7pm every Tuesday
- specific location: top floor of Discovery Museum
- funding: Friends of the Cohasset Library
- specific staff: yes. A trained teacher serves as Homework Center Coordinator.
- equipment: laptops
- specific age focus: no. Students as young as 2nd grade attend
- PIZZA
- in person / online: in person

Links

- <http://www.cohassetlibrary.org/ya-homework-center.html>

Queens Library

QL has a Homework Help page for kids that has vetted lists of databases and internet links arranged by subject. Patrons are also directed to Dial-a-Teacher for one on one help. On the Teens side, live homework help is supplied by Brainfuse HelpNow and Brainfuse StudyNow, and math-specific help is provided by Ask Dr. Math. BBC and NYT resources for foreign languages and news and information for parents and students are also linked.

Features

- specific space: no
- specific time: no
- specific staff: no
- in person / online: online / phone

Links

- <http://www.queenslibrary.org/kids/homework-help>
- <http://www.queenslibrary.org/teens/highschool>

Sacramento Public Library

SPL provides trained volunteers to serve as Homework Coaches to students in grades 1-8 at all SPL branches. Generally, Homework Zone times are from 3:30-5:30 one to three days per week at each branch. In-person Homework Coaches are only available during the school year. Access to online tutors is also provided by Brainfuse's Homework Help Now. A librarian-curated Research page also offers more online tools to help with projects and homework.

Features

- specific space: no, but each branch hosts
- trained staff: yes
- specific age focus: grades 1-8
- specific times: 3:30-5:30, specific days for each branch
- in person / online: both
- resources: research page curated by librarians by subject

Links

- <http://www.saclibrary.org/Services/Homework-Coaches/>
- [http://www.saclibrary.org/Research/Students-\(K-12\)/](http://www.saclibrary.org/Research/Students-(K-12)/)

San Diego Public Library

SDPL provides homework help at the Union Bank Homework Center on the second floor of the Central. The center provides access to Internet-ready desktop and mobile devices, printers, encyclopedias, dictionaries and other reference books, as well as basic school supplies such as paper and pencils. The Homework Center is geared toward K-12 students during after school hours, and volunteers are ages 15+ and older. Each library also offers easy online access to websites such as tutor.com for online help. Open 7 days a week with after school hours.

Features

- specific space: Union Bank Homework Center
- specific time: 3-6 or 2-5, 7 days a week
- resources: online resources and in-house materials and computers, books, etc available in the center.
- funding: Union Bank
- volunteers: homework coaches 15 years or older. A background check is required; no training mentioned.
- in person / online: both
- specific staff: yes. The library's Youth and School Services Librarian coordinates the Center, and library staff run it daily along with the volunteer tutors.

Links

- <http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/kidsandteens/unionbankhwcenter.shtml>

San Francisco Public

SFPL has an extensive calendar of drop-in homework help times at their branches, but most of these windows are specified as K-5 specific. Other times are open to K-8. In terms of collections, there is a Teen Online Homework Center page on the website, which includes curated collections of digital resources and databases arranged by subject. One-on-one online tutoring is also available via a prominent Live Homework Help link (via BrainFuse).

Features

- No specific space
- no specific staff
- specific times listed on calendar
- online / in-person: both, but mostly online
- collections: digital, curated from library's databases by subject

Links

- <http://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=2000669901>

Seattle Public Library

SPL offers homework help to students of all ages and grades both online and in-person at many branch locations.

Homework Help volunteers are trained and vetted adults who help students in kindergarten through high school at all branches during specific times (usually in a 3-7 window after school). This program is centrally coordinated by a specific staff person, but each branch's YA Librarian determines and manages that location's schedule. In addition the Homework Help page online collects a variety of databases and other resources available 24/7 (some require a library card login) and Online Homework Help via Brainfuse. Ask a Librarian portal also included.

Features

- specific staff, including a homework help coordinator and YA Librarians at participating branches to coordinate location schedules.
- specific space: no, but services offered at many branches
- specific times: each branch determines specific times, most between 3:30 and 7 pm.
- training: yes, volunteer tutors are adults, and are vetted and receive training.
- in-person / online: both (online = Brainfuse)
- collections: databases

Links

- <http://www.spl.org/using-the-library/get-help/homework-help>
- HW Coordinator: Josie Watanabe josie.watanabe@spl.org

St Louis Public Library

Part of an out of school time initiative in St. Louis, and supported by grants (MetLife). STLPL has homework help at every full service branch. Scheduling is up to each branch, supervised by manager or youth librarian. Homework Helpers are available to help with assignments and basic explanations and encouragement for students, but if a student is seriously struggling and needs in-depth tutoring, the library refers them to other sources. Each branch keeps statistics on the number of students and sessions. Anecdotal evidence is encouraged.

Features

- specific staff – no; this managing HH is an extra duty for YA Librarians / managers. HH are volunteers
- specific space? no
- specific times – yes
- training? not specified; Homework Helpers are noted in Reference Service policy as “staff” but it’s unclear who they are.
- collections? no. This HH program consists entirely of one-on-one appointments
- funding? Yes, SLPL Foundation, corporate grants for larger OOST initiatives in the city

Links

- <http://teens.slpl.org/How-Do-I/Get-Homework-Help>

Vigo County Public Library, Indiana

VCPL offers Reading Coaches for Kids in the library, where Indiana State University students are teamed up with kids for a semester of reading coaching in the VCPL LifeLong Learning Center. This is geared toward students in grades K -5 are pre-tested for their reading level and matched to an ISU student who has been trained in a literature-based coaching program. Reading Coaches and children are matched one-to-one, for two 30 – 45 minute sessions each week. Post-testing is conducted to assess gains in reading levels. Registration forms are available in the LifeLong Learning Center. The program begins approximately 3 weeks after each ISU semester begins and ends prior to ISU’s final exam week.

They also have an Assignment Alert form for teachers to complete so public librarians can have resources ready when the kids come in! (linked below)

YALSA Board of Directors – Annual 2015
Topic: Request for Board Action: Homework Help

In terms of teen-specific services: databases linked on Teen page, as well as Ask Rose homework hotline for free math and science homework help (grades 6-12). Ask a Librarian chat reference also linked on the teen homework help resources page.

Features

- partnership with Indiana State University / Sycamore Readers
- specific space: yes, VCPL LifeLong Learning Center
- specific time: yes
- specific age: grade school (reading), 6-12 for online homework hotline
- collections: databases
- in-person / online: for teens, only online

Links

- <http://www.vigo.lib.in.us/lc/reading-coaches>
- <http://www.askrose.org/>
- <http://www.vigo.lib.in.us/assignmentalert>

DISCUSSION FORUM RESPONSES

In-House Homework Help Discussion Forum - ALA Annual, June/July 2014, Las Vegas NV.

What are the obstacles to offering HW in libraries?

- The students who really need it are hard to get in the library.
- Lack of subject expertise
- So many levels
- Money/staffing
- Large school systems lots of students
- Qualifications
- Not wanting to learn
- Staffing, budget
- Staff may not remember materials for some subjects
- Communication w/local schools to see what help is needed (public)
- Find out what assignments are happening when via embedded/liaison librarians (school)
- Learn it all over again
- Lack of experienced/knowledgeable volunteers
- Training volunteers
- Too many other groups
- School honor code
- Fear of putting school librarians out of work
- Open hours
- School librarians fear helping students do HW the wrong way for the teacher
- Space
- Staff don't remember and don't want to relearn
- Abundance of choices
- Time
- Space
- Staffing
- People able to tutor (librarians might not remember, are volunteers qualified?)
- Marketing
- Peer volunteers might require training
- Other choices
- School honor code/policies
- If using library staff, they might not have the knowldefe to help – not qualified
- No way to assess teen volunteers – how do we know they're qualified?
- Teens who need help aren't receptive to help from non-peers
- Resources divorced from personnel

How do we offer in-house HW without the use of library resources (funding, staffing)?

- Find alternative funding sources – grants, partners
- Need to be able to make case to admin why it's necessary

YALSA Board of Directors – Annual 2015
Topic: Request for Board Action: Homework Help

- Partnering with outside organizations and non-profits. Especially utilizing HS volunteer tutors. This could limit staffing by assigning one coordinator
- Grant money
- Market our existing resources
- Internet resources page by subject
- Tutor.com
- Volunteers (used to have college professor come in)
- Grants
- Retired teachers, former teachers
- Community service
- Market the resources we do have – tutor.com, reference
- Retired local teachers
- High school volunteers (mentor program, peer tutoring)
- Professionals that are now stay at home moms might want to break back into teaching
- Local college students
- Volunteers
- Partner w/ other orgs.
- Use public spaces, not reservable rooms
- Databases
- Reference librarian
- Market resources we do have
- Big bros and big sisters (outside organizations)
- Church
- Marketing resources we do have
- Partnership with other groups or schools
- Using public spaces
- Market resources we do have
- Use of public spaces
- Incentivize teen volunteers to help with hw
- Market what we do have
- Partner with local school honor societies etc.
- Market resources we do have

How should we evaluate alternative tutoring services?

- Vet them – do they do background checks, for example? Create a list of criteria you need/expect and see if they fill it
- Cost/usage
- Survey students and parents
- “secret shopper” – ask a question tutor.com
- Post surveying of the students receiving tutoring and possibly the parents
- Anecdotal
- Secret shopper
- Survey students/parents

- Secret shopper for online tutoring
- Self reporting
- Secret shopper with teen volunteers
- Self reporting
- Secret shopper
- Statistics
- Yearly survey

What would be the most help to you to provide HW help in your library?

- We have an extensive HH program, but we still struggle with attendance
- Money and staff
- Communication with school district
- Maybe redirect the friends groups resources toward homework help
- Support from administration
- Training on using available databases
- List of free resources
- Liaison program
- Communication
- Library pays tutor – friends group pays half
- Support from administration
- Training for existing materials
- Compilation of free resources
- Resource/manuals for training volunteers/tutors/librarians
- Administrative support
- Current homework help resources training
- List of free resources online

Should ALA officially encourage libraries to provide in-house HW?

- Yes, absolutely. We have paid homework helpers, funded by library foundation mostly. Started with a grant program. St Louis Public Library has a HH at every full service branch. Scheduling is up to each branch, supervised by manager or youth librarian. Each branch keeps statistics on # of kids and sessions. Anecdotal evidence is encouraged. We do not do tutoring, HHs are available to help with assignments and basic explanations, encouragement. If a child or teen is seriously struggling and needs in-depth tutoring, we refer them to other sources.
- Yes.
- No
- 4.3
- Reiterate the 4.3
- Support building this/marketing the resources by providing educational articles
- Yes
- Reiterate point and offer blogs/the training/marketing existing services
- Yes
- Yes

YALSA Board of Directors – Annual 2015
Topic: Request for Board Action: Homework Help

- Yes