



Metropolitan Group

Communications that make a difference.

# **BUILDING AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION FOR SUMMER READING PROGRAMS**

American Library Association  
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[www.metgroup.com/libraries](http://www.metgroup.com/libraries)

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## **ASSESS YOUR PROGRAM'S CURRENT SITUATION**

- Establish what your summer reading program currently does well.
- Identify your vision for the program's future.
- Determine what your program's challenges or weaknesses are.



## ESTABLISH GOALS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- Describe specific goals that you would like to accomplish.
- Identify your audience. Who do you want to reach?
- What do you hope will be the impact of your program on your audiences?



## IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCES

- Youth—ages, populations
- Parents and families
- Educators and youth service providers
- Key decision-makers, influencers and policymakers
- Potential funders and partners



## SHAPE YOUR MESSAGES

- What are three key messages that distill your goals?
- Refine these key messages for your specific audiences.
- Repetition is the key.



## STRATEGIES – PROGRAMMING

- Decide what programming you would like to have in your summer reading program relative to your goals. What enhancements would you like to make?
- Determine how the librarians will use new programming. Will they benefit?
- Determine how your programming resources will be managed and distributed.



## STRATEGIES – MATERIALS

- What materials and outreach tools will you need to communicate with your specific audiences?
- Materials serve the message.
- Materials provide funders with strong value.
- Create a clear timeline for design, production and distribution of materials–budget time for funders.



## STRATEGIES – FUNDRAISING

- Establish your needs.
- Prepare a description of your program that will serve as a case statement for your potential donors.
- Identify prospects and their pathways.
- Develop a timeline for submitting grants and cultivating potential sponsors – grant deadlines, timing sponsor cultivations, scheduling time for contacting prospects.
- Create fundraising roles and responsibilities for your volunteers and leadership.



## STRATEGIES – MARKETING AND OUTREACH

- Seek and take advantage of community partnerships and other youth service organizations.
- Media sponsors provide advertising and other marketing incentives for potential sponsors.
- Organize kickoffs and other special events.
- Cross-market with other summer activities in your area.



## STRATEGIES – MEDIA RELATIONS

- Build a media database for the area your program serves.
- Prepare media tools:
  - News and calendar releases
  - Summer reading fact sheet
  - Public service announcements and ads
  - Stories about Summer Reading programming, events, partnerships, etc.
  - Summer Reading materials like a poster, bookmarks, flyers or professional artwork
- Prepare media timelines in advance.
- Build relationships with reporters.



## BUDGETS AND TIMELINES

- Preparing a comprehensive budget is necessary for implementation and fundraising.
- Look ahead: project cash flow.
- Use your budget for tracking fundraising plans and results for funders.
- Prepare a long-term timeline that reflects benchmarks and goals.
- Allow advance time for fundraising.



## STRATEGIES – PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Develop a plan to evaluate the success of your Summer Reading Program.
- Prepare an evaluation tool for librarians that asks them to report on the number of participants, the number of program finishers, attendance at events, number of volunteer participants, and information about help provided by sponsors or others in the community.
- Follow-up.



## PROGRAM EVALUATION CONTINUED . . .

- Seek feedback from small groups of librarians, parents and kids:
  - How did they hear about the program?
  - Why did they decide to participate?
  - How easy was it to join and participate?
  - What did they like best?
  - What improvements would they like to see?



## PROGRAM EVALUATION CONTINUED . . .

- Document and evaluate the total promotional value of your program:
  - What was the advertising value?
  - What was the ad value of earned media placements?
  - What was the total value of marketing materials?
  - Was there any added or in-kind value provided?
  - What were the total number of impressions that your publicity made in the community (how many people saw or heard about your program and how many times were they exposed to your messages)?



## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

- Develop a long-term strategy for sustaining your Summer Reading Program before it grows.
- How will you maintain funding?
- What other resources or support mechanisms will you need?
- Who will focus on the program's evolving goals and strategies?
- Who will manage yearly implementation?
- What organizational capacity will you need in the long-term?



## QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



## METROPOLITAN GROUP AGENCY PROFILE

- Library services:
  - Capital campaigns
  - Endowment campaigns
  - Program and annual funds
  - Summer reading program campaigns
  - Public funding initiatives
  - Brand communication plans
  - Strategic planning



## METROPOLITAN GROUP AGENCY PROFILE

- Library clients
  - City and county libraries
  - State libraries
  - Research libraries
  - Archives and special collections
  - Friends organizations
  - Library foundations
  - Library associations



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