

Effective Strategies

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Strategies to Overcome Barriers

Strategy #1: Collaborate

- Partner with agencies that work with YSN to obtain needed expertise and services.
- Diversify library board membership.
- Get community input via teen and adult advisory boards.
- Network and collaborate with other libraries and with community and state organizations.

Strategy #2: Plan to include youth with special needs

- Work with YSN to design programs and services.
- Invite ownership.
- Address special needs as part of overall library planning.
- Conduct needs assessments and use focus groups
- Survey non-users.

Strategy #3: Train staff

- Develop and train staff.
- Promote knowledge and understanding while respecting differences and celebrating commonalities.
- Offer workshops focused on sensitivity training and cultural awareness.
- Utilize the Wisconsin Library Association's *Wisconsin Public Library Youth Services Guidelines*.
- Recruit minorities for library staffs

Strategy #4: Diversify materials and services

- Develop appropriate collections.
- Increase resource allocations and seek funding for technology, information resources, and materials in special formats.
- Present programs that address issues of interest and concern to YSN.
- Welcome and involve youth as much as possible at the library as volunteers, mentors, employees, and planning group members.
- Adapt activities to be more inclusive.
- Be visible.
- Adopt user-friendly policies with input from YSN and their advocates.

Strategy #5: Ensure physically accessible library buildings and equipment

- Make libraries more inviting and accessible.
- Obtain assistive equipment.
- Rearrange library facilities for greater access.
- Implement outreach programs to nontraditional sites.

Strategy #6: Market library services

- Create a marketing plan to reach all publics, including staff and governing bodies.
- Develop and promote a welcoming attitude.
- Be proactive in sharing information about library services and resources with schools, day cares, and community agencies.

Strategy #1: Collaboration

Collaborate and network with community agencies to provide the best possible services to youth with special needs (YSN), their families, and advocates.

Public Libraries

- Send staff to workshops that provide continuing education on networking opportunities.
- Allocate staff time to identify and work with community groups, agencies, organizations, and networks that serve YSN.

Possible Partnering Agencies:

- Parent groups
 - Churches
 - Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, youth centers
 - Domestic abuse and homeless shelters.
 - Title 2, special education teachers, reading specialists
 - English as a second language teachers
 - Alternative high schools, teen parent programs, juvenile detention facilities, and residential institutions for youth.
- Partner with educational and community agencies and civic groups.

Possible Activities:

- Invite agencies serving YSN and their families to hold meetings and activities at the library.
- Encourage these groups to create displays for the library and to place brochures in the library.
- Provide library bookmarks and bibliographies to agencies.
- Seek agency suggestions regarding library resources for their clients.
- Partner in grant applications and program sponsorship.
- Offer library tours and visits for agency clients and staff.
- Contribute articles to agency newsletters.

- Assure library is a source for information about community agencies.

Possible Activities:

- Develop a central source for information on community organizations serving YSN.
 - Maintain a public bulletin board for community notices.
 - Include links to community resources for YSN on the library's web page.
 - Publicize agency events.
 - Work with YSN advocates to encourage library use.
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Systems

- Provide continuing education opportunities that bring together libraries and community agencies that serve YSN.
 - Gather and disseminate to member libraries information on regional and county agencies serving YSN.
 - Gather and disseminate information on residential facilities for YSN (e.g., juvenile correctional facilities, group homes for teens with developmental disabilities.)
 - Collaborate with regional and county agencies that work with YSN. Keep them informed about library services, or help public libraries do this.
 - Encourage and assist member libraries to initiate or continue cross-agency activities that improve services for YSN.
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DLTCL

- Offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in developing partnerships with relevant community groups, agencies, organizations, and networks.
 - Collaborates with systems in offering regional diversity and ability awareness training.
 - Provides continuing education opportunities that bring together libraries and community agencies that serve YSN.
 - Disseminates information about library services for YSN to agencies and organizations that work with YSN.
 - Keeps libraries informed on issues affecting YSN, including legal issues, through contacts with other state and national organizations.
 - Educates the public and public officials about the needs YSN have for public library services by collaborating with other state organizations.
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Strategy #2: Planning

Include youth with special needs (YSN), their families, and advocates, in planning, implementing and evaluating library services.

Public Libraries

- Designate a staff person to work on YSN issues.
 - Send library staff to system sponsored workshops.
 - Use available demographic information on YSN (Schools are an excellent source).
 - Identify community services and programs for YSN.
Possible Activity:
 - Contact schools, social service agencies, advocacy groups, and local planning departments.
 - Develop plans that include YSN as a customer group.
 - Include YSN or their representatives in library planning and on advisory and governing boards.
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Systems

- Designate a staff person to work with member libraries on YSN issues.
 - Send special needs consultants and youth services liaisons to DLTCCL's annual meetings and assist with state planning efforts
 - Conduct workshops on planning services for YSN.
 - Gather and disseminate information on locating data and other information about YSN and community services.
Possible Activities:
 - Assist individual libraries with gathering data for grants.
 - Pass along information from DLTCCL.
 - Request assistance from DLTCCL in identifying data sources as needed.
 - Consider the needs of YSN in planning processes.
 - Share with DLTCCL and other systems information and experience in services to YSN.
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DLTCCL

- Funds a consultant position to work with systems and libraries on planning services to YSN.
- Hosts annual meeting for special needs consultants and youth services liaisons.
- Gathers and disseminates demographic data for systems and libraries on YSN.
Possible Activities:
 - Have summaries of Census data broken down by system.
 - Post updates in monthly electronic postings and other appropriate tools.
- Collaborates with relevant sections of Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and other state level organizations.
- Includes librarians who work with YSN on DLTCCL committees, as appropriate.
- Reviews its long-range plans for inclusion of YSN.
- Advocates for adequate funding for YSN library services.
- Provides guidance in the use of the public library standards regarding YSN.
- Creates publications related to planning YSN services as appropriate.

Strategy # 3: Training

Welcome youth with special needs (YSN), their families, and advocates to the public library in a responsive, sensitive, and appropriate manner.

Public Libraries

- Offer internal diversity and ability awareness training to all staff on a regular basis, and send staff to workshops.
Possible Activities:
 - Annually schedule YSN as a topic at staff training.
 - Include trustees in awareness training.
 - Provide opportunities for staff to attend training on sign language or other language training.
 - Invite YSN advocates, parents of YSN and youth to present awareness training for the staff and/or public.
 - Provide training for all staff and volunteers on using library assistive technologies and equipment.
 - Write and regularly review policies to ensure they welcome library use by YSN.
Possible Activities:
 - Train all staff on library policies.
 - Build flexibility into applications of policies affecting YSN.
 - Have policies reviewed by YSN and their advocates.
 - Include YSN in employment, training, and volunteer opportunities.
 - Invite YSN advocacy groups to hold their meetings or programs at the library.
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Systems

- Offer diversity and ability training workshops and inform members about other training opportunities.
 - Offer workshops and technical assistance to libraries in developing policies that welcome YSN.
 - Offer opportunities for library and system staff to attend non-library sponsored training, and to attend state, regional, and national training related to serving YSN.
 - Share information about regional and statewide providers of diversity and ability training with DLTCL and other systems.
 - Cooperate with the DLTCL in collecting information on the status of special needs services and issues.
 - Assist libraries in identifying employment and volunteer opportunities for YSN.
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DLTCL

- Collaborates with systems in offering regional diversity and ability awareness training.
- Offers support and resources to public libraries and systems for staff training.
- Assures DLTCL staff attend training to update their knowledge of services to YSN.
- Identifies and distributes information about regional and statewide providers of diversity and ability awareness training opportunities and presenters.
- Surveys systems and libraries on current status of services and issues related to YSN, compiles progress comparisons, and disseminates results.
- Showcases adaptive technologies at meetings and training sessions and libraries that use such technology.

Strategy #4: Diversification

Offer a diverse range of resources, services, and programs that are relevant to the lives of youth with special needs (YSN), their families, and advocates.

Public Libraries

- Showcase examples of adaptive technologies at meetings and training sessions and libraries that use such technology.
 - Develop and maintain, or provide access to, current collections for and about YSN.
Possible Activities:
 - Include the needs of YSN and their families in collection development policies.
 - Weed and update materials for YSN regularly.
 - Evaluate and respond to the need for foreign languages and alternative formats to serve YSN.
 - Refer eligible users to the Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
 - Design programs that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of YSN
Possible Activities:
 - Provide and publicize accommodations to enable YSN to participate in programs.
 - Arrange for a sign language translator as needed.
 - Make accommodations and use appropriate methods and media at programs to ensure YSN and their families can participate.
 - Schedule programs at times that are convenient for YSN.
 - Work with the families and advocates of YSN to understand the needs of individual children and adjust programs as needed to include them.
 - Maintain flexible program rules to allow children to attend programs for older or younger children if the programs better meet the child's needs.
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Systems

- Provide workshops and training on materials, programming, resources, and technology related to YSN.
 - Ensure member libraries are knowledgeable about adaptive technology for YSN.
 - Assist member libraries in locating sign language interpreters and CESA occupational therapists.
 - Facilitate group purchase of materials and equipment related to serving YSN.
 - Identify and disseminate information about YSN funding sources.
 - Assist libraries in writing YSN grants or write system grants on behalf of members.
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DLTCL

- Offers support and resource to public libraries and systems providing services and programs for YSN.
 - Provides systems with information and training about services, resources, and technology for YSN.
 - Identifies and publicizes funding sources for services to YSN.
Possible Activities:
 - Manages the Library Technology and Services Act (LSTA) program and provides funding as available for services to YSN.
 - Collaborates with other DPI teams and state level agencies in addressing the needs of YSN.
 - Collaborates with Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) to provide programs on YSN issues at state conferences.
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Strategy #5: Accessibility

Ensure that public library buildings and technologies are fully accessible and inviting to youth with special needs (YSN), their families, and their advocates, and provide outreach services to assure accessibility.

Public Libraries

- Provide services for YSN where they can be best used.

Possible Activities:

- Develop policies that are responsive to the need for outreach services for YSN.
 - Offer on-site collections of materials and library information at agencies where YSN are served.
 - Place library information such as general brochures and bibliographies at agencies that serve YSN.
 - Provide access to the library through bookmobiles, traveling vans, and outlets in neighborhoods.
 - Visit alternative high schools, juvenile detention centers, domestic abuse shelters, teen parent programs, immunization clinics, low rent housing units, day care centers, Head Start programs, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs, and residential facilities for YSN.
 - Offer homebound services to families who have YSN.
- Work with government agencies and local advocacy groups to ensure access for YSN to library facilities and services.

Possible Activities:

- Arrange for provision of bus passes for transportation to library programs.
- Design, remodel, build, and maintain facilities that are accessible and inviting to YSN.

Possible Activities:

- Do an annual tour of the library with YSN representatives to identify barriers.
 - Develop a plan to eliminate barriers or enhance the youth area to better meet the needs of YSN.
- Identify and work to reduce neighborhood barriers to library access. (e.g. safety issues, automobile traffic, curb cuts in sidewalks).
 - Write, regularly review, and implement plans to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Possible Activities:

- Examine library policies.
 - Work with local governing bodies in achieving compliance with the ADA.
 - Educate library staff and trustees about the requirements of the ADA.
- Identify alternative revenue sources for programs and resources.
 - Assure YSN have access to library resources through technology.

Possible Activities:

- Collaborate with schools and other agencies in providing YSN with access to technology.
 - Include links on the library's web page to resources for YSN.
 - Provide assistive technology as needed to assure YSN have access to online resources.
 - Own or have access to adaptive equipment specifically designed for YSN.
 - Develop and maintain an accessible web site.
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Systems

- Provide information and workshops on outreach services.
 - Assure all training sessions are held in accessible locations.
 - Explore new ways to deliver workshops and training sessions.
 - Model accommodations availability statements on meeting and training notices.
 - Demonstrate assistive technologies at meetings and trainings.
 - Encourage and assist member libraries in developing fully accessible collections, services, and buildings.
 - Assist libraries in getting information regarding the ADA and keep libraries aware of accessibility issues.
 - Cooperate with the DLTCCL in updating information on libraries with accessibility issues, and new, and remodeled buildings.
 - Ensure accessibility to resources for YSN when addressing system-wide technology.
 - Help libraries develop accessible web pages, and maintain and model an accessible web page using universal design for the system.
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DLTCL

- Provides information and workshops on outreach programs and services.
- Assures that all training sessions are held in accessible locations.
- Models ways of using developing technology and networks to provide virtual training opportunities.
- Models accommodations availability statements on its meeting and training notices.
- Demonstrates assistive technologies at its meetings and trainings.
- Offers support and technical assistance to public libraries and systems in developing fully accessible collections, services, and buildings, including meeting requirements of the ADA.
- Annually updates information on libraries with accessibility issues, and new construction and remodeling projects.
- Provides periodic accessibility progress reports.
- Models universal design on all web pages.
- Highlights examples of excellence in outreach services.
- Collaborates with WLA to highlight new buildings and features that improve library accessibility.
- Provides systems with information on statewide resources and/or providers to help make programs accessible, such as sign language interpreters and CESA occupational therapists.
- Ensures accessibility to resources for YSN when addressing statewide technology issues.

Strategy #6: Marketing

Market public library services, collections, and programs to youth with special needs (YSN), their families, their advocates, and their communities.

Public Libraries

- Use a variety of methods to publicize library services to YSN.
Possible Activities:
 - Maintain contacts with local newspapers and other media, including alternate media such as newsletters and ethnic publications.
 - Inform trustees regularly about library services to YSN.
 - Use of word-of-mouth in publicizing services to YSN.
 - Develop channels to keep local, county, and state officials aware of public library services to YSN.
 - Develop and implement a public information plan that includes YSN.
 - Exchange newsletters with agencies serving YSN.
 - Promote reading programs and homework help activities via school fliers.
 - Send fliers to hospitals for new parents.
 - Include instructions on requesting accommodations routinely on all program marketing pieces.
 - Work with YSN advocates to encourage library use.
Possible Activities:
 - Provide tours of the library.
 - Make printed information available in alternate formats and languages.
 - Use portable displays.
 - Display books and materials at agencies that serve YSN.
 - Develop public service announcements and press releases.
 - Use non-print promotional media such as cable TV, billboards, and ethnically oriented radio.
 - Attend meetings of agencies that work with YSN to keep them aware of library programs and services.
 - Keep adaptive tools such as wheelchairs visible and easily accessible.
 - At meetings put out signage and adaptive equipment such as assistive listening devices for self-service.
 - Maintain a welcoming atmosphere toward YSN.
Possible Activities:
 - Make creating a welcoming atmosphere for YSN a high priority for staff.
 - Establish policies that are responsive to the needs of YSN.
 - Use visual displays in-house that feature people of color and with disabilities.
 - Promote different issue-awareness days, weeks, or months.
 - Cultivate a multilingual staff.
 - Seek employees who understand and are sensitive to the needs of YSN.
 - Allocate staff time and funds to market library services to YSN.
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Systems

- Offer staff training and technical advice in developing and implementing public information plans that include YSN.
- Assist libraries with routine formats for press releases, write releases for libraries, or create generic news releases for programs.
- Produce and/or print public information and marketing materials for members.
- Include statement on requesting accommodations on all program marketing pieces.
- Promote system-owned and other special needs collections and assistive technology.
- Assist libraries in locating translators for library materials that are needed in a language other than English.
- Help libraries identify potential locations and methods for publicizing YSN programs.

DLTCL

- Offers support and resources to public libraries and systems in marketing library services to YSN.
- Cooperates with libraries and other organizations in the promotion of library services to groups that work with YSN.
- Incorporates ideas on how to reach and serve YSN in division publications.
- Gathers and distributes information on state agencies and other organizations working with YSN.
- Shares information on library services to YSN with state agencies and organizations.
- Shares information about library services to YSN with the library community through print and electronic media and by providing training.
- Periodically sends reminders of guidelines for people with vision problems and non-print marketing techniques for people who can't read or read in English.

