

Engaging Grown-Ups: Programming for Adults

Michigan Library Association Conference / October 16, 2024

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Why is Adult Programming So Important?

- Get New Patrons in the Door
 - Not all library patrons are the same
 - They'll have different needs/wants/expectations
 - Programming, especially a diverse variety, will bring users who may not come in for any other reason
 - Team & Family programs are great to bring in patrons
 - Team Trivia & Family Board Game nights are just two examples of programs that encourage regular patrons to bring in non-traditional patrons (more below)
- Advertise Services & Collections
 - Utilize the services & collections that your library already offers as a jumping off point for program planning
 - Have a library of things? Plan a class about how to use them-
 - Canning
 - Bird Watching
 - Sewing
 - Highlight a collection on your shelves-
 - Local/Michigan History
 - Spanish Language
 - Local Authors
 - The prep is already there for you and it can lead to an increase in your usage & circulation!
- Entertains & Makes the Library Fun!
 - Can you believe that there are still people who think of a library as just a building with books?
 - Or, worse, those who don't think of libraries at all!
 - We want to show those who might not think or know much about the library that we are still vital to our communities
 - What better way than to have our current patrons singing our praises!

How Does This Increase Support?

- Get's people thinking about the library
 - “I came to your art club and got inspired. Do you have any books on watercolor painting?”
 - “I’m glad you offer story time for my little one, but what cool stuff do you have coming up for adults?”
 - “I might not use the library all the time, but it is there when I need it.”
- Support looks different
 - Patrons who come in weekly for the latest Patterson are great, but they are not our only patrons
 - Programming brings in non-traditional patrons. Once they are in the doors, they see what they’ve been missing
 - “Buy-in” can come in many forms-
 - Circulation
 - Word-of-Mouth
 - Partnerships
 - Voting

Budgeting & Marketing

- Utilize the collections & services that your library already offers-
 - Library of Things
 - Specialized Collections
 - Libby/Overdrive/CreativeBug
 - MeL eResources
- When bringing in presenters, ask right out-of-the-gate if there is a fee and if so, how much. If it’s too much, counter.
 - Educational/Non-Profits often will present free (outreach)
- Partner with other entities within the community for higher cost programs/speakers.
- For arts/crafts - use what you have & what you can get free/cheap.

Anna’s Steps to Finding Program Presenters-

1. Think of an idea for a presentation.
2. Ask staff, Friends, and regular patrons with community ties.
3. Google it! Check for local options first. Then, expand to the closest cities.
4. Reach out to other area libraries/co-ops/etc. Then, Mich-Lib Listserv.
5. Hang my head in shame... Add it to my list and circle back.

Put the Call Out

Post on social media, website, in-house, and ask for experts, artists, etc.

- Market towards your audience
 - Some programs market themselves - crafting, food, etc.
 - Some programs require a bit more marketing
 - Target audience - email or in-person
 - Social Media paid ads
 - Free online calendars
 - Print flyers & newsletters
 - Outreach / External signage
 - Invites
 - Nothing beats word-of-mouth!
 - If you include a feedback survey, ask where they heard about the event

Programming Ideas

Team Trivia

- Once a month (seasonal)
- Community teams
- Pub-style creates a chill atmosphere
- Play music & serve snacks
- Winning teams gets bragging rights
- **Cost:** Snacks/Water \$

Family Game Night

- Partnered with Teen Librarian
- Used board games we had in our collection
- Multi-generational brought out moms & dads
- **Cost:** Pizza & Soda \$\$

Adult Art Club

- Once a month (seasonal)
- Give the participants the materials to make what they want
- Use what we have instead of new stuff
- **Cost:** Supplies, sometimes \$

Escape/Mystery Games

- One-Offs
- Make your own to cut costs, then circulate them after
- Purchase monthly subscription boxes to save time
- **Cost:** Initial Supplies/Boxes \$

Cookbook Club

- Once a month (seasonal)
- BIG HIT right off-the-bat
- Unique idea resonates with patrons
- Brings out a range of adults (ages 20-70+)
- **Cost:** \$0

TV Game Shows

- Found PowerPoint templates for Wheel of Fortune & Family Fued
- Different from trivia & more immersive than board games
- **Cost:** Prizes (optional) \$

CreativeBug Workshops

- Seasonally
- CreativeBug leads the program, I just facilitate
- Able to present art/craft tutorials that are beyond my creative abilities
- **Cost:** Supplies \$\$\$

Murder Mystery Parties

- Events – Saturdays/Friday Evenings
- Encourage groups/families to come together
- Special events create demand & attention
- **Cost:** Props, snacks, mystery kit (if not original) \$\$\$

Meet Michigan Authors

- Partnership with our Friends of the Library & local Rotary chapter
- Spring & Fall - 3-4 authors each
- Built in audience from other groups
- **Cost:** \$500 year \$\$\$

Adult D&D

- Staff member who already loved Dungeons & Dragons
- Targeted parents whose kids come to our Teen D&D
- **Cost:** \$0 (staff time) \$

Guest Presenters-

- Baseball Museum
- Local actor & his mom
- Importance of Humor
- Disability Network of SWMI
- Local Tea Shop
- Estate Planning
- Lavender Farm
- Food Waste Collection
- Railway History
- Bike Repair
- League of Women Voters
- Canning/Preservation
- Forage Walk
- How to Play the Ukulele
- Green Burial
- Mending & Quilting Classes
- Live Dance Troupe
- Local Lore & Myths
- Gilmore Car Museum
- Zero Waste Cooking
- Seasonal Gardening

BINGO Beyond Barriers

- Partnership with local care facility
- Targets an audience that may normally not come to traditional programs
- **Cost:** Prizes & snacks \$

Finance & Retirement

- Free informational programs from local banks, financial firms, & investment companies
- They are encouraged to offer outreach/community programs
- Can cross promote their services
- Be aware of not allowing them to 'sell'
- **Cost:** \$0 (coffee) \$

Passive Programs

- Ask a question
 - Why did you come to the library today?
 - Would you rather have more money or time?
 - Soda or Pop?
- Swap some puzzles
- Hold a contest
 - Photography
 - Writing
 - Art
- Put out some 'easy' crafts