

Summer Reading Ideas - Alternative Service Models

This is a working list of suggestions developed by youth services consultants at state libraries across the U.S.

General:

- Push your start dates back, shorten your program, or offer it as a fall reading program.

Offering programs accessible to all (even those without internet access):

- SRP partnerships in grocery stores or other critical service areas
 - Leave postcards for registration with collection box in service areas
 - Completed cards collected every week
 - Trackers could be available onsite at services areas or mailed out to new registrants
 - Provide directions for parents
 - Include information about how to access reading material online
 - How would we provide reading material for those without virtual access if we are still closed?
 - Completed trackers dropped at service areas or library
 - Completion certificates/prizes mailed to homes
- Summer Learning Home Challenges
 - Create kits available at critical service points containing projects for littles
 - Summer learning challenge worksheets for middle school and teens.
 - Do the challenge and then teach three others. Your siblings, or others through social media. (Baking, building, teaching littles, creating music, etc)
- Storytime over the radio! One Indiana library is partnering with a local radio station to offer an audio storytime over the radio that will reach families in areas without cell service.
- Create Story Walks in your community
- Install and stock Little Free Libraries in your community, If they can be installed near low-income housing developments, health clinics, or open social services, that will provide the greatest access to those that may have little access to books. Same goes for Little Free Pantries.

Ways to get prizes to patrons:

- Could utilize e-gift cards for some prizes, especially if your library normally offers some sort of prize basket/drawing.
 - I like this idea. Maybe the raffle wouldn't have to happen until the libraries opened back up. Maybe just move away from small prizes entirely and to a raffle prize system. That would do away with the hassle of trying to figure out how to disburse prizes during a pandemic and the cost of disbursement for small prizes.

- If you've already purchased prizes and participation is too high to mail them all out, just promise to make all prizes available for pick-up once it's safe--even if that is a few months in the future. Or, organize prizes by family with name on outside of bag and deliver them curbside when patron pulls up (pending, of course, whether you are totally locked down/allowed to work in the building).
 - I linked the information about the additional IMLS funding that could potentially come our way in the YSCON meeting notes. I asked whether we could interpret that bit about logistics to mean paying for things like postage for summer reading mats/prizes and was told "yes". We would just need to figure out how we'd do that...

Programs and Presenters:

- Work with previously-hired presenters to see whether an online program for patrons-only might be an option. May be able to accomplish this with a FB group or YouTube live stream if the link is set to private/only available to those with link/in group--this would need to be investigated more fully.
- Focus on do-at-home activities, including programs like [Citizen Scientists](#), [Citizen Archivists](#), etc.
- Record craft and game tutorials to put on Facebook.

Additional Ideas:

- Partner with food distribution groups to provide pre-packaged kits and/or books.
- If you have a good relationship with your schools, once things calm a bit and principals/teachers have time to be more receptive to partnerships, have a discussion with them to see if they can help you reach their students virtually/more directly.
 - How are they reaching those without internet access?
 - They have a vested interest in staying in contact with their students and encouraging them to participate in summer reading, now more than ever.