**Subject:** [Libraryyouthservices] Virtual programs and the 2020 Ohio Public Library Survey

Good afternoon,

State Library data consultant Kirstin Krumsee is preparing advice for libraries about virtual programming and the Public Library Statistics. This advice will be shared widely, including on the LYS list. Please note that it specifically addresses the statistics that your library provides to the State Library of Ohio for our report to IMLS. There is a lot of library activity that isn’t “counted” for that purpose, but that is still significant and impactful. I encourage you to keep statistics on ANY activity that is meaningful to your community and stakeholders. You can share activity results with your Board, administration, community partners, funders, and the general public even if they are not statistics that are collected by the State Library.

Some specific youth services situations that came up at yesterday’s Ohio Youth Services meet-up or elsewhere:

* **Views on Facebook Live**: It’s safe to assume that in many cases, for early childhood programming, an adult and one or more children are viewing a screen together. But it’s one screen and will register on the FB count as one view. For the 2020 Ohio public library survey, count one view as one program attendee UNLESS you can document multiple attendees. Specifically, if you ask attendees to comment with how many people are viewing the content, you can then add the additional numbers you receive to the number of live views. So if a patron comments that two people are viewing from one device, you’d add +1 to the live viewer number.

* **Also about views on Facebook Live**: FB will register a view even if someone only watches for a few minutes and doesn’t view the entire program. That is OK. You can count as an attendee someone who attends part of a traditional program, and you can do the same with online programs.

* **Downloads of virtual kits, storytime resources, readers’ guides, etc.**: There is no IMLS category for these; similar to traditional passive programs which are also not counted in the public library survey. I know no one likes that – you put a lot of work into passive programs, and now, into virtual kits, and we respect that, but we just don’t have a category. Call it government bureaucracy if you like, and count those downloads for your local communications.

* **Live moderated discussions**(such as book discussion groups on FB/Twitter): if led by a library staff member, you may count it as a program and count the number of unique commenters as attendees.

* **Views of recorded programs**: For IMLS purposes, a program is only a program if it’s live. Kirstin hopes to add a section to the 2020 Ohio public library survey on COVID-19 and library responses, to cover things like views of recorded programs. But IMLS will not count these. We ask that libraries count views of recorded programs separately during the public health emergency and be prepared to report those numbers to the State Library separately from live programs.

**Please note that these recommendations apply only to statistics collection for the 2020 Ohio Public Library Survey.** If your library has not yet submitted the 2019 survey, please do not alter your 2019 statistics to reflect what is in this email or in future advice from Kirstin (and get your 2019 survey in!).

**Kirstin will sit in on the Ohio Youth Services meet-up on Tuesday, April 21** (i.e. in 2 weeks) to address any other statistics questions and to clarify the above.

Many thanks for your continued diligence in counting and recording your program statistics on top of everything else that is going on. You truly rock.

Sincerely,
Janet



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