

Maine Reads Community Literacy Project Planning Grant Final Report

Please fill out the following final report and return within 60 days of the end of your grant or before filing a Maine Reads Community Literacy Project implementation grant, whichever comes sooner. The 2005 implementation grant deadline is April 15. This form is available on line and we would appreciate your return of this final report by copying it from our site www.mainereads.org and emailing it back to us at info@mainereads.org. If you do not have email, you may mail it to us at Maine Reads, 28 Winter Street, Portland, Maine 04012, but the electronic return is preferred. You will find that most of the questions listed below are the same as those we suggested you address at the Public Forum.

Library: Southern Maine Medical Center Library
Address: 1 Medical Center Drive
City, State and Zip: Biddeford, Maine 04005
Librarian(s): Dina McKelvy
Contact person: Dina McKelvy
Phone: 283-7289 Email: library@smmc.org
Website if any: www.smmc.org

Please respond to the following questions.

1) Names of members/groups on the Advisory Panel and affiliations and titles:

Shirley Gagne, Coordinator, Healing Heart, Southern Maine Medical Center
Stephanie Limmer, Director, Kennebunk Free Library
Vicki Smith, Director, McArthur Public Library, Biddeford
Kristen Stevens, Executive Director, Literacy Volunteers of America, Saco/Biddeford
Affiliate
Anastasia Weigle, Director, Dyer Public Library, Saco

2) Did you hold the following meetings and what were the approximate number of attendees:

Meeting I Focus Group # of attendees 6
 Meeting II Public Forum # of attendees _____
Location _____
 Meeting III Project Meeting # of attendees _____

3) What did you discover were the top 5 underserved populations in your community?
(Please list them in descending order)

Poor/Homeless
Uninsured/Working poor
Homebound &/or rural patients
Elderly/Chronically ill

Children/Adolescents of low readers

4) What literacy programs/activities are currently taking place in your community?

The Literacy Volunteers of America matches students with tutors in the community. Kristen also does outreach and informational programs to raise awareness of literacy issues. The McArthur Library has materials available for new adult readers and provides space for tutors and outreach to daycares and other children's programs. The Kennebunk Free Library has these programs as well as community reader programs (visiting patrons and reading to them at home). Southern Maine Medical Center provides written materials at an 8th grade level or below and educational programs for the chronically ill. The Patient Education Committee reviews brochures and raises awareness of literacy issues throughout the hospital.

5) What is the most important contribution your organization makes to your community and how does it work towards the Vision, Goal and/or Objectives of the Maine Reads Community literacy Project?

Our project most clearly exemplifies the idea of cooperation among several organizations. In our case, the grant recipient is the library at Southern Maine Medical Center, which seeks to improve the health of the community in Saco, Biddeford and the Kennebunks. The hospital already reaches out into the community with health initiatives such as classes and flu clinics. This program will enable us to partner with libraries and organizations that serve our patients in other ways, improving their health and quality of life.

6) What overlaps in services or groups served did you discover if any?

We did not find any overlaps, although some of us provide parallel services in different locations.

7) Please describe potential community partners and projects to reach the under-served.

I also spoke with Sue Stableford, Director, AHEC Health Literacy Center at the University of New England and Anita Findlen, Director of Biddeford Adult and Community Education. Other community partners include the Biddeford Free Clinic, pharmacies, assisted living centers, home healthcare providers, homeless shelters, food pantries, schools, adult education programs, daycares, and support groups.

8) What literacy projects do you think are needed to fill the gaps in service in your community?

We felt that hands-on cooking and exercise classes would be well-received and would welcome individuals of varying literacy abilities. Nutrition and simple recipe information distributed to food pantries would be useful. Nutrition classes at assisted living centers would be helpful for residents who are new to cooking. Classes on "How to talk to your doctor" would give patients the tools they need to communicate effectively with their providers.

9) What is your plan of action? How do you plan to address your communities literacy needs?

The programs described above can be adapted for different settings such as those listed in the answer to question seven. The grant can provide the funds to rent space, purchase easy-read cook books, pedometers, and the materials to promote the programs. We plan to invite representatives from the settings listed to a Public Forum meeting in May. At that time, we can better shape the activities and materials for each location.

10) Describe what you learned and how the project helped Maine Reads to reach its goal to strengthen families and support lifelong learning?

I learned that in our community we are all serving the same people in different ways. By working with the public libraries and literacy specialists I feel we are able to view and serve our patients as the unique individuals they are.

Other comments?

To help other literacy organizations gain a better understanding of literacy needs and projects in Maine, may we share your responses and post them on the Maine Reads website? Yes No

Please feel free to provide a success story or information about how we may improve the Maine Reads Community Literacy project grants process. Thank you for your support!

