

TRENDS IN MINORITY SERVICES DECEMBER 2013

THE OLDER ADULT REPORT

Regional Programming Targeting Older Adults

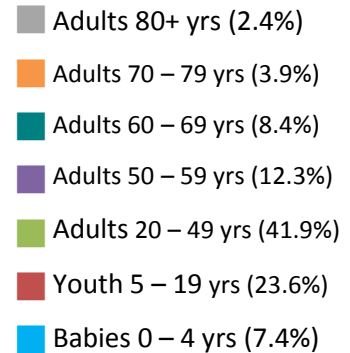
- Arlington: TechLiNK vehicle visits Arbrook Retirement Community
- Dallas: 1:1 Computer Assistance; Bridge Group
- Denton: Applying for Social Security

(Inter)National Programming Targeting Older Adults

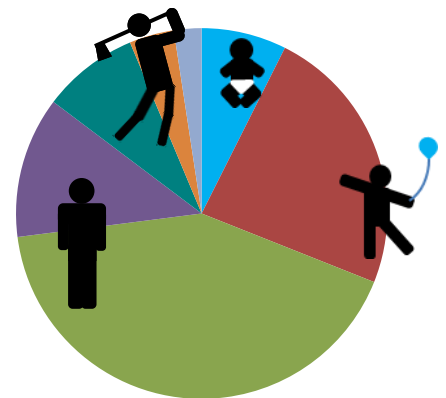
- Cumberland County, NC: Downton Abbey Tea Party Series (historical talks followed by trivia); Herstory: Women Writing Memoirs
- Des Plaines, IL: Rotating deposit collections (50-100 items) at nursing homes and senior living centers*
- Hialeah, FL: Meditation Workshop; Reiki Workshop
- INFOLINK, NJ: “Senior Spaces” (Dedicated spaces in libraries)
- Madison, WI: 1:1 Computer Assistance; Memoir Writing Workshop;
- Mecklenburg County, NC: Shutterbug Club (Digital photography series)*
- Orlando, FL: Ebay.com for Seniors; Foster Grandparents (Joint Program of FL Senior Programs, Inc.); Memoir Writing Presentation
- Ottawa, ON, Canada: Techno Buddies (paired teen and older adult tech sharing sessions)
- Queens, NY: Memoir Writing Series (Pieces subsequently published and included in the local collection.)*
- Terre Haute, IN: Bits ‘n’ Bytes computer program offered at the Westminster Village Retirement Community*

* Spotlighted in Librarians As Community Partners Part 2: Senior Outreach

Our Diverse City by Age



Data from the 2012 American Community Survey



Description of Needs and Expectations

According to the 2012 ACS, over a quarter of Garland residents are 50 years of age or older, half of which belong to the Boomer demographic. As this group retires from the workforce they will be looking to continue life-long learning in the general interest areas of **Wellness/health, Financial planning, Computer classes, Spirituality, Travel, Social/civic engagement, Physical fitness, Genealogy, and Arts & culture**. This group sees themselves as staying physically and mentally fit and as such do not consider themselves “Senior Citizens,” nor will they be interested in “stereotypical programming” such as “bingo.” (Mehling, 37-39)

Butcher and Street point to Cohen’s Four Developmental Phases of the Second Half of Life as indicators of the

types of programs and services older adults may seek from libraries. Phase I (40s—late 50s): Mid Life Re-evaluators will look for services like career assessment as they focus on exploration and transition in their personal and professional lives. Those in the Liberation phase (late 50s- early 70s) may enjoy learning new skills, such as mastering digital photography, as experimentation and innovation become possible options. Those in the Summing Up phase (late 60s – 80s) will want to contribute their knowledge in programs such as local memory projects and memoir writing as a way to provide personal recapitulation and resolution. Finally adults in the Encore phase (late 70s to end of life) will appreciate opportunities for continued engagement and socialization through intergenerational programming, such as Foster Grand-parenting and child—adult storytelling sessions, as they continue to reflect and celebrate their lives. (Butcher, 63-64) Many of the programs spotlighted above address the needs of these phases.

One final note by Xie and Jaeger is to not dismiss programming and services as just addressing the topic, but to use programming as ways to support socialization needs. They recommend using a program such as computer classes as a way to introduce older adults to their peers and to encourage them to create library supported groups such as computer clubs where they can build relationships while supporting each other in the acquisition of a new skill.

Definition of Minority Groups

ALA's Policy Manual recognizes that libraries serve differently diverse communities, but states that special groups include "those who experience discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity, immigrant status, religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression; language or literacy-related barriers; economic distress; cultural or social isolation; physical or attitudinal barriers; racism; or barriers to equal education, employment, and housing." The Policy Manual expands the definition of minority to include groups beyond racial and ethnic makeup. ALA's Office for Literacy and Outreach Services focuses on the following outreach areas:

- Adult New and Non-Readers
- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender People
- Incarcerated People and Ex-Offenders
- Older Adults
- People of Color
- People with Disabilities
- Poor and Homeless People
- Rural, Native, and Tribal Libraries
- Bookmobile Communities

This is the first of a series of reports focusing on services to these underserved and special groups of interest.

Bibliography

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