

**CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY  
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)**

**Final Program Narrative Report  
(LSTA Form 9)**

**Grant Information**

Library Jurisdiction	Merced County Library System
Project Title	Friday Night Fun- Reaching Foster Youth
Grant Award #	40-8283
Grant Period	Jully 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014
Amount of Grant Award	\$10,250
Amount of Grant Expended	\$10,250
Local Match	\$2211
In-Kind	\$4,500
Total Amount of Project (amount expended + match + in-kind)	\$16,961
Number of Persons Served (should not include total population of service area or potential population to be reached)	202

**Project Director**

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This report is due on the date listed in the LSTA Grant Guide for this project. Follow this link to view the Grant Guide. <http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/manage.html>

Email this report in "word format" to [lsta@library.ca.gov](mailto:lsta@library.ca.gov) then mail ORIGINAL and 2 copies to:

California State Library  
P.O. Box 942837  
Sacramento, CA 94237-0001  
Attention: Fiscal Office - LSTA

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please sign in blue ink)

## Project Final Report

A final narrative report is required on the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds following the completion of a project during each project year. The information you report will be used to complete the California State Library report of how funds were expended. Excerpts from this report may be submitted to the Federal government in their evaluation, or may be published by the State Library or shared with other institutions. Please answer all of the questions thoroughly. Please attach any reproduction copies of photographs of project activities or media produced for the project.

### Project Purpose

Include your program purpose statement here

Foster Youth between the ages of 13-15 1/2 attend Friday Night Fun events to experience a variety of activities in the Library after hours to promote literacy, engage youth, socialize with other foster youth and mentors, learn library skills, participate in book talks, and enjoy board and electronic games to enhance library skills and share books they have read through book talks. The youth will be presented with a library card to encourage consistent use of the library, minimizing barriers.

The Library and Human Services Agency (HSA) will also submit a program proposal for the 2014 CLA Conference and possibly develop a webinar to share experiences on how we developed our partnerships. The Library and HSA have already developed additional programs to engage other County departments. Once this program has started the Director of HSA and the County Librarian plan to write an article for our perspective professional journals. This may appear to be an odd project purpose, but sharing the partnership with other colleagues is important to expand resources. Foster Youth have been a challenging population to serve due to their mobile status, yet are probably one of the more challenging populations to serve.

### Project Activities and Methods

How did you accomplish the project? What were the steps involved? How did you engage the target audience?

Friday Night Fun started one year ago. There were challenges with getting the youth excited to participate and maintain a variety of fun activities. It seemed like a natural partnership for HSA to include the Library. Once the Library started to participate, the volunteers shared they were re-energized and excited to try a new venue. The Library staff, HSA staff and volunteers from Soroptimists met once a month to debrief and finalize the next event. The big meeting was after the first event in October. The youth gave input for future program ideas and things they would like to do. The youth also voted on favorite games. The meeting set specific programs, dates, responsibilities and future meeting dates to evaluate progress and strategize future programs.

Library staff completed the flyers that were then sent to HSA staff for distribution. They have a distribution list of clients that are age appropriate and assigned to a case worker. It was an easy way to communicate with the target audience. Youth would RSVP so we had a head count for food and enough supplies for each participant. We made a point to have extra for those that were just dropped off without communicating with the HSA lead. The more controlled groups were picked up from their homes by case workers. Participating in the events was for many the only time they had to socialize with their friends due to transportation issues or being moved to a new home. HSA serves more than 600 youth in this program throughout Merced, but anticipated 30-50 to participate in Friday Night Fun.

Participation varied through out the period of the grant. We noticed one month with very low participation. After review and discussion, we realized it was the month after HSA staff had drafted an agreement which participants and care givers signed. The reason for the agreement, one that should have been done at the beginning, was youth were leaving without being signed out; care givers dropping off the youth an hour or more before start time and care givers were picking up the youth an hour after the end time of the program; consideration of others was lacking; and certain behaviors as well as expectations needed to be addressed and expressed.

These were lessons learned.

**Project Outputs**

What was created for the project and how much? (For instance three promotional brochures were created and 75 copies distributed; or three training classes were designed; two sessions of each were held, and 80 people were trained)

**Project outcomes:**

1. There were 8 (eight) monthly Friday Night Fun programs presented at the Library or the Youth Center.
2. A total of 202 participants attended during the 8 programs
3. A total of 32 library cards were distributed to the participants. Two care givers asked to have the library cards deleted from the system.
4. 427 books were purchased. Each program, up to 40 books were distributed. It varied by participants. The participants decided they wanted some of the books added to the collection so they can then check them out. Participants also helped in the selection of books and based on the theme of the event, materials were purchased accordingly. For example the duct tape program, we purchased "how to" books.
5. Table manners were more challenging. Participants arrived up to 30-45 minutes after the start time, which made it difficult to teach manners. We were able to get everyone to leave food for the late arrivals and to clean their area. Volunteers also discussed individually in small groups how and when to use a napkin, eating slow, taking food from the buffet. We added food that required knives and forks and had everyone set their place before they selected their food.
6. Library skills varied with each program. For example, the scavenger hunt taught 10 skills. Movie night discussed types of materials available in libraries for free.
7. UC Merced was more involved with programs that involved sports and personal growth. As the program developed, we discovered it was more challenging to have so much going on with only two hours.
8. There is a change in management. It was not possible to develop a teen advisory board at Main. The program was shared with other sites within Merced County. The games and books were sent to libraries with high teen populations such as Le Grand which is located on a high school property; Delhi which is located on a high school property; Los Banos and Atwater with the highest circulation in teen material. The games will be available to use in the libraries.
9. Participation at each program varied considerably. The smallest number of participants was 12 and the largest was 50, with an average around 30.

**Project Outcomes (if applicable)**

Please state the outcomes and the results of your evaluation.

1. Only 15% of the participants came back to the Library to check out material. Transportation was a barrier for many. Even Saturday was difficult for most youth to get to the Library.
2. 80% of the participants enjoyed sharing the books. 30% brought them back to swap. The books were wrapped and decorated with clues. It became more common (60%) of the youth to stand by the table and share their idea of what book was wrapped. It turned into a game for some (10%) to guess and then try to swap with someone if they guessed wrong. On many occasions, we let them switch one time. We discovered they wanted to open all of the wrapped books and pick.
3. At the last event, the room was cleaned by all participants and the youth helped carry things to the volunteers and HSA staff cars.
4. There was only one scavenger hunt during the program year. And all but 5% (2 participants) did not complete all 10 clues. They worked in teams to get the answers.

**Additional Project Outcomes**

Please state any additional intended or unintended outcomes and what data sources you used.

1. Prepare guidelines and expectations for the youth to present at the first event.
2. Create projects that allow interaction and social conversation.
3. Games can be anything from electronic, board or large pieces of post it paper on walls.
4. Use a location that is secure. Care givers must sing in and out each youth.

#### **Anecdotal Information**

Tell us a story. Give two or more examples of how the project has helped an individual or group in your community.

Participants actually voted on program ideas. One very popular idea was a movie night. We had short films (under 20 minutes) before. We picked a month for movie night, put out voting pads to see which of the 5 movies to watch, popcorn and the traditional games on the wall. (We put large post it papers with tic-tac-toe, hangman and connect the dots each program.) After about 20 minutes into the movie, we noticed 95% of the participants were in the lobby sitting and visiting demonstrating the importance to be able to socialize and interact.

Two young boys had never been in a library or on an elevator. They kept hanging around the elevator. I approached them and asked what was so interesting. They explained they just wanted a ride on the elevator. I agreed to go with them. Then discovered they had not been in a library. I took them on a tour as most of the other participants had been at the scavenger hunt. They took pictures of what they believed to be important parts of the library. One of which was an etched mural in the literacy lab. It was time well spent.

Each program brought new learning experiences for the adults. We learned not to take anything for granted and be open to conversation- listen more, talk less. The board games were the least expensive piece, yet engaged most youth and the volunteers. It provided a way for everyone to connect. The duct tape program engaged not only the youth but even the designed the duct tape journal. Everyone shared their ideas and designs. One of the staff from HSA shared at the next month program that she used the duct tape journal for a party game at her daughter's birthday party.

#### **Exemplary Project**

If you feel your project was exemplary and others could learn from it and replicate it, please tell us why.

This project is exemplary due to its successes partnering with a variety of organizations that provide a service to youth. Foster youth received their first library card due to the partnership with the Library and the Director of HSA by structuring the responsibility of the card to HSA. And other programs developed as a result of this partnership. Little Libraries were constructed and painted by older foster youth and social workers. The Library provided materials for the Little Libraries. Over 85% of the Library's Literacy program is funded through HSA. And the Library provides volunteer activities for the youth.

#### **FEEDBACK FOR THE CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY ON THE GRANT PROCESS**

We want to learn and improve our grant processes. Please let us know what worked and what we could do differently to make it a better experience. Thank you!

Merced County Library System would not have the funds to provide such a worthwhile program without the support of the State Library. The Library used the movies purchased through a previous grant. The only part that was challenging was purchasing the games through the County process. And I am not sure the State Library could do anything. It delayed using the games for a couple programs.

*file:mcp/lsta/managegrant/1314*