



REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING DATE: THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2011

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	Child and Youth Network: Update
Prepared By:	Julie Brandl, Coordinator of Children's and Youth Services
Presented By:	Susanna Hubbard Krimmer
Purpose of Report:	For Receipt and Information Only

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Library Board receive this report.

Issue / Opportunity

The London Public Library has been a member of the Child and Youth Network (CYN) since its inception in the spring of 2007. Much has happened over the past year as a result of the work being done on the CYN and the Library continues to play an active and vital role.

Background & Review

Overview:

"Happy, healthy children and youth today; caring, creative, responsible adults tomorrow." This is the vision of the CYN which has grown to over 140 organizations dedicated to doing what is best for children, youth and families in London. By focusing our collective efforts on four priorities - poverty, literacy, healthy eating/healthy physical activity, and creating a family-centred service system – we will improve outcomes for children, youth and families. Each of these priorities has a concrete action plan; we are now in the second year of implementation and are starting to see an impact on the way services are provided, are maximizing opportunities as they arise, and are creating innovative partnerships. Most CYN members are aligning their priorities with those of the Network, and in 2010 over \$1 million of direct and indirect/in-kind contributions to made by agencies in support of the CYN. The Library's contribution in 2010 was approximately \$80,000; this was all in-kind contributions based on staff time on various CYN committees, meeting room space provided, and book discounts for CYN projects using Library vendors.

System Reengineering:

In order to create a family-centred service system which will make it easier for families to navigate the system to get the support they need, London has begun reengineering its services for children (prenatal to 12 years) and their families. Families told us that the current system is not meeting their needs and at the same time, local and provincial initiatives such as the Pascal Report “With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario” provided a catalyst for change. In London, we will proactively meet these challenges and opportunities to create Neighbourhood Child and Family Centres (NCFC) which will provide families with a single door to more efficient and integrated services. The vision of these NCFCs is: “In every London neighbourhood, residents will open a single door to multiple opportunities that support children and families in achieving their full potential.” Julie Brandl has been attending the System Reengineering meetings to represent the Library and to ensure that the Library has a role in these NCFCs.

One exciting outcome of the work of this group was the “Engage for Change Conference” held in November in which members explored and learned about tools available (Integration Assessment Tool and ACE Communities Tool Kit) to help build capacity within neighbourhood and to move toward a more integrated, family-centred service system. Several LPL Managers, Coordinators and Operations Supervisors attended the conference and identified themselves as community champions going forward.

Ending Poverty:

Goal: To reduce the proportion of London families who are living in poverty by 25% in five years and by 50% in 10 years. To reach this goal, the Ending Poverty Implementation Team is following a three-part strategy to: increase social awareness and community engagement; to reduce the impact of poverty and make day-to-day life better; and, to break the cycle and stop the next generation from living in poverty. One highlight of 2010 was the launch of “The Real Issue” campaign with a website, linkages to social media, and advertising in the community to begin a conversation with Londoners by demonstrating the complexity of the issue. The media launch of the campaign was held at the Central Library in September.

LPL staff members sit on the Ending Poverty team to represent the Library and to offer suggestions, expertise, and support and to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. They are Central Branch Information Librarians Heather McDonald and Anita McCallum and Customer Services and Branch Operations Manager Arlene Thompson.

Lead the Nation in Increasing Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity:

Goal: To create environments, neighbourhood and opportunities that promote and support daily physical activity and healthy eating for all our children, youth and families. This team is working to improve outcomes of the strategy including: families eat healthy diets; children, youth and families participate in regular physical activity; neighbourhoods support healthy and active lifestyles; London enjoys a culture of healthy eating and healthy physical activity extending to workplaces and the daily lives of its citizens; and, more and better information is available in London about eating and activity habits of its citizens.

The Library has looked for opportunities to align this goal into its programs and services. Some examples include: incorporating healthy physical activity and healthy snack options

into existing programs such as Reading Rocks and Family Literacy Day celebrations; and, creating a resource list and partnering with *in motion*TM to distribute Menu Makers and to display books and materials on the topic.

Supervisor of the Children's Library, Anne McCambridge, sits on this Implementation Team to represent the Library. Several staff members attended events hosted by the team including a Community Collaboration Forum in May with speaker Paul Born and presentations by Dr Mark Tremblay on how families, service providers and researchers can incorporate healthier life choices into their programming and daily lives.

Making Literacy a Way of Life:

Goal: To improve literacy in London by using an integrated approach based on collaboration between home, school and community by 2011, and to be a provincial leader in child, youth and family literacy by 2015. The Literacy Implementation Team's strategy focuses on promoting literacy from birth, improving family literacy, and taking a neighbourhood approach to literacy to ensure that: all children will be ready to learn in Grade 1 and no one will fall below the standards in reading, writing and math; all youth will pass their Grade 10 literacy tests and graduate from high school; all students will be engaged in their school community; and, all community members will be engaged in activities that improve literacy. In 2010, the Literacy Team began work in the Huron Heights neighbourhood to engage residents and community partners. The Beacock Branch Library is located in this neighbourhood and is pivotal to the work being done; it really is the heart of the community and many literacy activities take place at the Library. Some of these are Library-directed and community partners carry others out. The Beacock Branch received funding from the CYN's Neighbourhood Development Fund to partner with two area schools to create family literacy programming in the schools. In addition, to promote literacy from birth, Baby's Book Bags are distributed across the city in Libraries at MLHU prenatal health classes. While literacy is, of course, a core value of the LPL, services and programs are being more closely aligned to emergent and family literacy.

Coordinator of Children's and Youth Services, Julie Brandl, is Chair of the Literacy Implementation Team and also sits on many of the various sub teams. In addition, Coordinator and Operations Supervisor, Brian Rhoden, has sat on this team. Beacock Branch Librarian, Katie Riewald, sits on the Huron Heights Neighbourhood Literacy Working Group. Literacy Facilitator, Frances Cutt, acts as a resource to staff at the Beacock Branch and has been involved in neighbourhood community conversations.

Next Steps

The Library is fully committed to and endorses the goals of the CYN and System Reengineering. We will remain engaged on the various neighbourhood and implementation teams and will continue to seek out opportunities wherever possible to align our work with that of the Network and to move the Agenda forward.