NNLM All of Us Program Center Funded Projects

Improving You in 2022

Project Lead Organization: Community Libraries of Providence

Funding Year: 2021

Funding Amount: \$16,500



Populations of Focus

Race & Ethnicity

Project Goal

To increase health literacy and community engagement in physical and mental health resources.



Project Summary

New You in 2022 is an initiative by Community Libraries of Providence (CLP) to encourage patrons to become better informed about their emotional, mental, and physical health. In this program, the nine community libraries increased availability and accessibility of resources that promote physical and mental health and awareness of medical research to the communities of the nine branch libraries of the CLP system.

Libraries such as the Olneyville Library are fully bilingual in Spanish and supported all programs in English and Spanish. Various speakers were also bilingual and offered programming in a variety of languages reflective of CLP's community interests and needs.

The intended impact on the community is to offer free resources to encourage and support people to be physically active, be mindful of both their physical health and mental health, and improve awareness of medical research in these areas. CLP staff created a variety of programs such as yoga, tai chi, and dancing. These programs are generally expensive and they were able to eliminate the cost component for patrons. They discussed the *All of Us* Research Program at virtually all programs and also hosted some workshops for teens where staff shared health information resources such as <u>MedlinePlus</u>.

Throughout CLP's programs, they improved access to physical and mental health resources, promoted various community partners such as the local food bank's nutrition programs, healthy cooking programs at a farmer's market, and various clinics, and encouraged community members to learn more about the *All of Us* Research Program.

Key Words

Health Literacy

Physical Health

Mental Health

Project Impact

One of the biggest challenges in this phase of the pandemic is that people struggle with social isolation. The importance of community programming that has allowed people to safely congregate and engage with others cannot be overstated.

Based on the survey responses received, a lot of people learned about *All of Us* for the first time and were interested in learning more. The community partnerships CLP created to improve health literacy have yielded various programming on nutrition, safely navigating the internet, and awareness of mental health resources. Due to the collaborations formed with this program, their libraries are more comfortable working on health-related programs.

The formal (survey data) and informal feedback (patron conversations) received through this grant has encouraged CLP to try and get community health workers in the library. They are currently working on a grant to hire a community health work and a social worker for the library. Ultimately, this grant will allow CLP to create a more engaged library that sees health programming as an important component of what the library does.



Olneyville Library Window Health Programming

Recommendations

Hosting projects across nine different libraries was extremely challenging. While the impact and decisionmaking to include so many libraries was a net positive, fewer libraries may be easier to coordinate. Also, remain flexible with delays in receiving purchased items and funds.

> Want to know more about this project? View the <u>Project Record</u> on NNLM.gov







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