**The Community Connector: Referring Social Services at the Library Learner Guide**

**Event Description:** Every day, patrons enter libraries around the country with questions about health, housing, employment, counseling and other essential human services. And libraries are there to make these crucial connections for them. Many libraries are now exploring ways to expand their role as connector to community social services through resources such as webpages, mobile apps, and databases. These services might refer somebody to a free meal, legal assistance, support groups, and much more. Join us to hear examples of how referral services and resources have augmented the social services connections that contribute to community vitality.

**Presented by:**

* **Suzanne Moore**, Ashe County Librarian, Ashe County Public Library (NC)
* **Diane Adams**, Library Director, International Falls Public Library (MN)
* **Jasmine Africawala**, Community Engagement Administrator, Dallas Public Library (TX)

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| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** | |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |

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| **Activity 1** |
| Understanding what social services are available to members of your community is a critical part of providing effective referrals to patrons. Presenters explained how they connected with other agencies. Do you connect regularly with social service providers? Brainstorm and make a list of those agencies in your area that you currently or potentially could connect with, along with names of individuals within those organizations.  1.    2.  3.  4.  5. |
| **Activity 2** |
| Using the [Ashe County Wellness Circle](http://arlibrary.libguides.com/AsheWellnessCircle) dimensions, assess which of the following areas you currently cover in the services or resources you provide to your community, in your collections, on your website, or through referral services. And add ways that you might supplement your current services and resources:  **Physical:**  **Emotional:**  **Spiritual:**  **Occupational:**  **Social:**  **Environmental:**  **Intellectual:** |
| **Discussion/Reflection Question 1** |
| The Coffee & Conversation program at the Dallas Public Library has these goals:   * Humanize the homeless * Reduce misunderstandings * Create a space for open dialogue * Connect on commonalities * Address library concerns * Have a good time!   What could you do at your library and in your community to meet similar goals? How do these align with your library’s current mission? |
| **Discussion/Reflection Question 2** |
| There is a trend toward providing social services in-house, with some libraries hiring nurses or social workers. Explore the examples outlined in [From nurses to social workers, see how public libraries are serving the homeless](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/see-libraries-across-country-serving-homeless/) from PBS. While your library may not have the capacity or funding to enlist a social worker or nurse, explore ways you might start the conversation with potential partner agencies or funders in your community. Is there a way you could provide connections to such services once a quarter, monthly or weekly? |

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| **Action Plan:** (include next steps, who, when, etc.) |
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