**Community Health Challenges: Training, Language and Programming
for Libraries**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/scams-fraud-and-identity-theft.html>

Public libraries are uniquely positioned to help their communities address substance misuse, homelessness, and mental health concerns, by connecting residents with accurate information and resources. Libraries are seen by many as safe, neutral spaces; but some topics carry fear and stigma that can have an outsized impact on staff and community members’ ability to respond. Compassionate training, policies, programming, and choice of terminology can help remove barriers that prevent people from seeking help for themselves or others, and give library staff the information and support they need to address this and other public health crises. This webinar will use several examples of library responses to the opioid crisis to highlight approaches, resources, and programs that can help reduce stigma and fear and promote healthier communities.

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| **What are your goals for participating in this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Activity** |
| Choosing and using non-stigmatizing language is a big part of contributing to successful engagements with the community. Consider ways that you could help yourself, staff and colleagues improve:* Post Language Matters flyers in the library or staff areas (<https://www.addictionpolicy.org/language-matters>)
* Host a discussion or training session for staff or the public talking about the steps we can take together. Trainers may be accessible through local partnerships with organizations.
* As you design internal and external messaging around the topic, review the tips under [Breaking the Cycle: Tips for Avoiding Stigmatizing Language](https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/services/resources/words-matter-how-language-choice-can-reduce-stigma) (pages 4-5).
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| **Working with the Health Department**  |
| The New Orleans Public Library partnered with the local health department to offer Bystander Response Training. Your library may have access to a state or local health department with resources and ideas for supporting community health issues. Reach out, set-up a time to talk and learn about:* What public health issues they are currently or planning to focus on for the community.
* What the library can do to support the health department priorities (safe space, public access computers, distribution of materials.)
* What resources they make available to organizations to distribute. Can the library receive copies for distribution?
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| **Mental Health First Aid Training** |
| There are Mental Health First Aid training options available throughout the U.S. Explore the training calendar for resources in your area. And remember to check back for new opportunities that are scheduled!<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/find-a-course/> Date:Location:Larger library systems/consortia can also consider having a staff member become an instructor through a train-the-trainer program. <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/become-an-instructor/>  |
| **Action Plan:** (include some simple next steps, along with who, when, etc.) |
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