



YALSA Monthly Chat: Advocacy

October 2009

Beth Gallaway: Hello and welcome!

Meg Anastasi: Hi, Beth! I'm Meg from the Meekins Library in Williamsburg MA

Beth Gallaway: hi Meg! how are things out in Williamsburg?

Meg Anastasi: Anyone else here? Good! We just started our Fall programming and are getting ready to rock!

Beth Gallaway: well, Angelina just joined us :) Welcome!

Angelina Manfredi: Hi, sorry, I am here!

Meg Anastasi: Hi, Angelina!

Beth Gallaway: Meg, that's great! I know there are some interesting budget issues going on, in MA - any new news, and what does it mean for teen services in general, and at your library. might be an advocacy opportunity! ;)

welcome, Linda! :)

Meg Anastasi: Well, W'burg doesn't have alot of the struggles or politics that a lot of other libraries in MA have had.

Linda Braun: Hi Beth, and everyone else.

Beth Gallaway: oh, how fortunate :)

Meg Anastasi: The director is EXCELLENT and just doesn't play the politics game

Angelina Manfredi: What part of the state are you located in, Meg?

Meg Anastasi: Western MA, right on the Conn. River. Small rural town in the foothills of the Berkshires

What about you Angelina?

Beth Gallaway: Angelina, what library are you from?

Angelina Manfredi: I am in Los Alamos, New Mexico. and you can call me Angie, also :) hi!

Beth Gallaway: and how are things in NM, Angie? :)

Angelina Manfredi: well, New Mexico is always poor, so, um ... so, basically, we're working on maintaining and trying to be there more than ever for patrons. but many places, of course, have small libraries or bookmobile only service.

Meg Anastasi: Yup, that's what its all about...maintaining

Beth Gallaway: do you think it's difficult to advocate for more...when your time is energy is spent maintaining?

Meg Anastasi: Absolutely!

Beth Gallaway: *and energy :)

Meg Anastasi: I spent at least two full days just trying to get prizes for my Summer Reading Program

Angelina Manfredi: yes, it can be a fine line to walk.

Meg Anastasi: I thought I was pulling teeth. I thought everyone would be head over heels to donate for the teens. Hah!

Beth Gallaway: what worked? :)

Meg Anastasi: Begging. And following up ... and following up

Angelina Manfredi: which is, in a way, the most classic for of advocacy, right? following up and following up

Beth Gallaway: i think that's the key, yes - that it isn't a one time thing...but a strategic, planned effort over time

Meg Anastasi: It will be interesting to see who donates for TRW...maybe I will have softened up some hearts LOL! I think it is making the CONNECTIONS over time. Keep the teens in the front of everyone's minds.

Beth Gallaway: definitely!

Linda Braun: Meg and Angie when you go out and talk about teens what kinds of things do you talk about?

Meg Anastasi: For me- all of the cool things that the teens WANT to do at the lib. but can't because of \$\$

Angelina Manfredi: 11,000 people, max. looks like my first message was lost? our town is small.

Beth Gallaway: welcome, Penny :) and Jack!

Linda Braun: Beth, just so you know - I hear that people are having a hard time logging on.

Angelina Manfredi: in many ways, our STATE is small. most of the librarians 'know' each other.

Jack Martin: heya

Penny Johnson: Hi everyone! Sorry I'm late! Busy holding a practice for Thriller...Yes, Linda, I had a hard time getting on....

Beth Gallaway: oh :(thanks Linda - we'll hope for the best, and remember, if you drop - we are archiving this :)

Meg Anastasi: MA is pretty small too. Everyone SEEMS to know each other ;->

Angelina Manfredi: so, I talk about what teens need in our COMMUNITY. How they need a place to go and a place to feel welcome. (and I logged on OK, but it seems like there's lag.

Meg Anastasi: Hi Penny and Hillias!

Beth Gallaway: Angie, do you tie those needs to library mission or developmental assets? any framework?

Angelina Manfredi: yes, to our library mission and long range plan (hi new people!) our long range plan is my go to for everything I want to do. :)

Meg Anastasi: I talk about how there is really nothing for the teens to do (besides school stuff) in our little town

Penny Johnson: Personally I am fortunate to have a very supportive director. But I am doing the YALSA road trip presentation on advocacy for our state convention in two weeks

Mary Hastler: glad to be finally here...took a while...

Penny Johnson: so I'm interested in hearing what challenges the rest of you have.

Beth Gallaway: focusing on local, and looking the big picture, are both good strategies :)

Penny Johnson: What do you think I should be prepared to tell my audience about advocating for teen services?

Beth Gallaway: Welcome Mary! yes, I'm hearing folks are having some challenges, thanks for persevering :) Penny, I'd love for you to share some of the tools we have on the YALSA wiki!

Penny Johnson: Yes, we are indeed using the powerpoint presentation. Certainly appreciate the ready-made stuff!

Beth Gallaway: ignore the "attack site" warning - it's been repaired.
http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Main_Page#Advocacy

Mary Hastler: for starters teens are future funders for libraries and if we continue to provide excellent service it will only benefit the community as a whole

Beth Gallaway: Absolutely, Mary! but, we also need to recognize teens matter right now, when they are teens...and not just because they will grow up to be future taxpayers :)

Meg Anastasi: That's what I've been saying (what Mary said) to potential donators

Angelina Manfredi: and everyone (i.e. the general public) gets misty eyed thinking of wee children 'loving' and using their libraries;

Penny Johnson: One of the best things we did here was presenting a half-day inservice to our entire library staff on the needs of teens, teen services, etc.

Mary Hastler: absolutely and that is why local businesses can be some of your very best supporters of teen services

Angelina Manfredi: I try to make people feel the same way about teens. community AND staff.

Penny Johnson: I used the 40 assets materials and we discussed how the library can help provide many of those asset-building activities

Meg Anastasi: Yes, what about other staff that are, ahem, cool to the teens?

Penny Johnson: I am definitely the "voice" for teens in my library. Sad to say there are some staff that don't trust teens

Beth Galloway: I heard in a presentation recently, that donors need to be thanked 7 times! if you want them to donate again and it made me wonder if any of those can be advocacy opportunities

so yes, you thank in person and by phone and send a note...but you could send a copy of your quarterly report, that mentions their donation and thanks them or write a letter to the editor about the program (and the need for more or the same) that mentions your donor

Jack Martin: I say the more contact with your donors, the better.

Linda Braun: Does anyone work with other community agencies in advocacy efforts?

Jack Martin: Definitely. It's always a great idea to partner with another agency when applying for funding or partnering with an agency who has funding already.

Beth Galloway: when I was in a public library, the Haverhill Teen Network took the initiative to invite all the youth serving agencies to lunch together

Penny Johnson: I've worked with the middle school and high school, of course, and I've wanted to connect with Boys & Girls Club, but no luck yet (no time!)

Beth Galloway: we met monthly, at someone else's facility every time

Penny Johnson: Beth, that sounds fabulous. I'm going to have to try that!

Beth Galloway: the library hosted it, when they lost their funding

Meg Anastasi: I have contacted the 4H office and gotten some publicity that way (a lot of 4H ers here)

Penny Johnson: Anyone taken teens to a state or national Legislative Day? My director would like me to do that next February.

Meg Anastasi: What a great idea Beth!

Beth Galloway: Penny I love that idea! Laurie, hi!

Linda Braun: Jack didn't teens go to Albany with Sarah this year?

Penny Johnson: I've got some logistics to work out, of course, because we live 45 miles from the capital.

Beth Gallaway: you know, you could make teens a presence at local events too... Friends Group, Trustees meeting

Jack Martin: They sure did. There are videos on Youtube, even. They were great! We love our TAG vets!

Penny Johnson: Our Friends group has a teen on their board.

Beth Gallaway: Anthony Bernier said, bring 3- one to talk, one to learn (for next time), and one for moral support. Jack, got a link? :)

Penny Johnson: Three is perfect -- I can fit them in my car!

Meg Anastasi: Ohhh, I am thinking of a perfect teen to be a Teen trustee. I wonder how they would take the suggestion?

Laurie Cavanaugh: I'm sorry I'm so late. Forgot until 8:30 and then had trouble getting in. I'm going back over what everyone has said.

Linda Braun: Do the teens who go to leg day or sit on Boards get any kind of training first?

Beth Gallaway: Penny, how did you advocate for a Teen to be part of the Friends Group?

Jack Martin: here's the link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OR7lq4eS8vs>

Penny Johnson: Actually it was an idea that came from the Friends. I guess I'm blessed around here!

Jack Martin: actually that was a video of them prepping for Albany...still good, though.

Meg Anastasi: Good question Beth. I'd like to know a bit more b4 going in front of the Board

Penny Johnson: My teen on the Friends board didn't need any training. She's really involved in other leadership things as well.

Beth Gallaway: is she a voting member, Penny?

Penny Johnson: I am going to do some training before Leg Day. We all need more training for that! Yes, Beth, she is.

Meg Anastasi: What are someother ways folks are advocating?

Jack Martin: Training is key, I think. You need to help them understand who they're talking to; what the ground rules are.

Penny Johnson: Our new youth services department head was a member of our first TAB group, so that has given all of this a positive slant.

Beth Gallaway: Jack, what were the ground rules?

Meg Anastasi: Is there any training for US for leg day?

Beth Gallaway: i believe we are planning a program on this topic at Annual... :)

Linda Braun: Meg that is something YALSA is working on and Beth as Chair of the Advocacy TF is intricately involved ;)

Penny Johnson: But Annual is after our state leg day. bummer!

Jack Martin: Basically to make sure that the teens were representing themselves as best as they could. Again, remind them of who they're talking to and then let them decide how they want to proceed.

Beth Gallaway: there is a webinar on how to talk to your congress reps :)

Jack Martin: This upped the ante for the conversation and helped the teens focus on what was most important in their minds.

Beth Gallaway:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/wo/gettinginvolved/onlineadvocacy/OnlineAdvocacy.cfm>. it's free :) I'll add it to the wiki...

Meg Anastasi: Cool! Thanks!

Laurie Cavanaugh: That sounds good.

Mary Hastler: and the representatives love to hear from teens

Beth Gallaway: short version: <http://tinyurl.com/ycbp4tu>

Penny Johnson: Representatives love to hear from anyone. When I was on a school board, it really made a difference when even one person spoke up.

Thanks for the tiny URL, Beth!

Meg Anastasi: What an opportunity for the right teens! That could launch a career methinks

Beth Gallaway: Jack, that's great advice, and I bet it applies to librarians making visits to reps, too :)

Jack Martin: Exactly.

Laurie Cavanaugh: Yes, and calling city councilors and/or selectpersons, as well?

Mary Hastler: Do you all have access to Capwhiz?

Jack Martin: Here's a kicker: what do you do when someone doesn't listen to the 40 assets?

Penny Johnson: No. What is Capwhiz?

Jack Martin: Or that teens are the future of the library?

Laurie Cavanaugh: Yes, I love it.

Beth Gallaway: yes! <http://capitoladvantage.com/capwiz>

Penny Johnson: Why wouldn't someone listen to the 40 assets? I think they are fabulous!

Beth Gallaway: Jack, I tell them, they don't need to use the whole thing - not everything on the list applies to libraries...but I show it has some tie-ins to physical brain development

Mary Hastler: Capwiz is a tool that ALA supports in which alerts and talking points are sent out. Provides links to your representatives and how to contact, etc.

Makes it incredibly easy to contact the right people.

Linda Braun: Jack do you mean that the legislators or funders or whatever don't get the assets or the teens visiting?

Beth Gallaway: ie, teens need boundaries, the part of their brain responsible for understanding boundaries is under construction...

Jack Martin: I mean, what if none of the assets are working? where do you go next?

Beth Gallaway: I also sometimes use the National Middle School Association's list of Developmental needs...

Jack Martin: @linda: yes that's what I mean.

Beth Gallaway: and then there is a ladder of engagement too...

Linda Braun: I'm always looking for the few words that I can say to someone that I want to provide support that they'll get and understand

Jack Martin: But they're not interested in teen participation or the assets..that's what I'm sayin.

Linda Braun: Sort of the silver bullet of advocating for teens

Mary Hastler: Find out before visiting the rep what their interest and where they put their support and tie it in with teens

Linda Braun: Mary, that means the message can't be the same for every1 we talk to on the topic right?

Beth Gallaway: find a way to make it personal... even if it's = this is who will be making decisions that will affect you and your welfare

Meg Anastasi: What Beth said. Personalize the message

Jack Martin: But the personal part is what doesn't work...that's what I'm saying.

Mary Hastler: right and you have to know what their priorities are and figure out how advocating for teens fits in

Jack Martin: Is there a silver bullet?

Beth Gallaway: hmm, so, assets don't work, personal doesn't work... *thinking*

Penny Johnson: bribery???? LOL

Beth Gallaway: lol

Jack Martin: LOL!

Laurie Cavanaugh: What about knowing population demographics?

Meg Anastasi: Sometimes you have to just put the bug in their ear and hope it sticks

Mary Hastler: politicians listen to their constituents because they want to get elected and/or stay in office

Laurie Cavanaugh: What percentage of your community's pop. is 12-18.

Beth Gallaway: sure, using statistics could help :)

Jack Martin: I'm working right now on the formal vs.informal learning relationship

Beth Gallaway: right Mary. I think I'm with Meg, and it goes back to sustained effort over time

Meg Anastasi: OT: This is why Teddy K was so popular. He listened to EVERYBODY.

Mary Hastler: usually you are talking with aides and you have to be credible. yes he was and if you were clear on what you wanted him to do, you had much better luck that he would do it

Beth Gallaway: put a bug in their ear, thank them! for their time, and try again :)

Mary Hastler: yup and always keep in mind what do you want them to do

Meg Anastasi: and again, and again..Wear 'em down that's what I do ;->

Beth Gallaway: and if you can spin it, on how it is good for THEM...just like talking with the library director, right? talk about how it will make the library look good...

Mary Hastler: absolutely!

Beth Gallaway: talk about return on investment

Meg Anastasi: That's it!

Laurie Cavanaugh: Thanks for tips, everyone. I've got to go.

Mary Hastler: and why they should support your request over the request of hundreds of other good causes/efforts

Laurie Cavanaugh: Sorry I missed most of chat.

Beth Gallaway: it will be archived Laurie - we all had a little trouble :)

Laurie Cavanaugh: Thanks!

Meg Anastasi: Me too (Criminal Minds is calling LOL)

Beth Gallaway: GLEE is on :D

Penny Johnson: I'm going, too. Thanks for the ideas!

Beth Gallaway: thank you all for your participation, questions and ideas! :)

Meg Anastasi: Glee. I forgot!

Mary Hastler: Thanks!

Beth Gallaway: I'm happy to linger for anyone who wants to continue :)

Meg Anastasi: Thanks Beth & Linda! tata!

Linda Braun: Thanks Beth and thanks for hanging in with the tech difficulties.

Beth Gallaway: no problem :) thanks for the opportunity to talk about this