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Public Libraries as Community Health Partners

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Abstract

Public libraries are a combination meeting space, educational resource, information repository, and community building organization. As such, they are already positioned to act as a valuable partner in the public health arena. This article researches the basic tenets of public health and identifies areas that public libraries could participate in productively. This article also reviews literature about the potential of public libraries as health partners, as well as what is already being accomplished from the perspective of both library/information sciences and public health studies. This will include the benefits that libraries can bring to public health work and the barriers that need to be overcome for a successful partnership. It also discusses existing methods in library service that can be used to promote public health objectives and describes several library-based public health initiatives and the opinions of Central Texas librarians regarding providing health information services to their patrons.

Introduction

Public libraries are well-established public assets that provide a wide variety of services and tools to their communities. Known for providing books and literacy activities, public libraries also serve as community meeting spaces, adult education providers, makerspaces, and information hubs. In addition, they are adept at analyzing the needs of their communities and responding with appropriate resources including books, technologies, and classes and programs. An additional area that public libraries could valuably contribute to is supporting public health initiatives through community health partnerships.

Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and communities through education, policymaking, and research. In this context, health is not just regarded as a lack of disease; it involves physical, psychological, and social well-being. The core functions of public health are assessment (collect, analyze, and promote information on healthy communities), policy development, and assurance (ensure that people can get the services they need).¹

There are many areas of concern within public health in the United States, including a low level of health literacy amongst the population. Health literacy, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.”² Unfortunately, a staggering 88% of Americans were found to be non-proficient in health literacy levels.³ This has resulted in significant barriers in people's ability to access appropriate health services and to understand information regarding their or their loved ones' health.⁴ General literacy rates also play a part in this, as they are tightly connected with graduation rates and employment levels, which are also closely tied to health literacy and many health outcomes.⁵

Another area that public health officials work to understand is the social determinants of health. This can be understood as “conditions in the environments in which people are born, live,

learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.”⁶ Understanding an area’s social determinants of health is essential to making changes that will yield desired and lasting results.

Why should public health officials and other health-related entities be interested in partnering with public libraries? Elements necessary to provide these health services already extensively overlap with existing library services, programs, and staff skills. Public librarians are already front-line workers in consumer health literacy⁷ and are offering programs directly related to improving a community’s social determinants of health.⁸ People make health decisions with limited information because they cannot get the necessary resources to make informed decisions.⁹ While public libraries cannot replace the need for health care and social service professionals, they can certainly support them and mitigate some of the stress placed on these providers.¹⁰

This article seeks to investigate public libraries’ role as community health partners, including what opportunities they would present as a partner, barriers to these partnerships, and examples of successes. Resources used include a literature review with emphasis on research from both the library and public health-focused perspectives, an interview with a Master of Public Health student in her final semester of classwork, and a survey of public librarians to gauge their opinions regarding the importance of community health resources through libraries.

Literature Review

Opportunities

The question of public libraries as community health partners is discussed in existing library and public health-focused literature. Both areas bring up several reasons that public libraries provide an excellent opportunity for this kind of partnership; in short, public libraries are already here, and they already have the skills and resources needed. In “Beyond Books,” Morgan et al. discuss the pervasive nature of public libraries in the United States. More than 16,000 libraries in the United States serve about 95% of the total population. In 2016, almost 50% of Americans had visited a public library within the past year, with higher usage rates among minorities and lower socioeconomic groups. Pre-pandemic, public libraries consistently had well over one billion visits per year since the early 2010s.¹¹ Due to their ubiquitous nature, public libraries can assist communities overcome deficits in their health care access, especially in rural communities with limited access to health care providers.¹² Over 90% reported that closing local public libraries would impact their community, and 66% say the closing of their local public library would have a major impact on their community, although notably, only 33% believe it would directly impact them and their families.¹³ Morgan et al. in “Public Library Staff as Community Health Partners” emphasize that public libraries are one of the very few entities in America that are free and open to all, with no economic expectation of users, and are accessed at high rates by potentially vulnerable populations.¹⁴

Public libraries already have existing resources needed to support people’s health information-seeking behaviors. It is a part of their mission to understand their communities and provide appropriate resources to match that community’s needs, whether through books or handouts available in multiple languages, Internet access, programming, or other means.¹⁵ Being familiar with the community also means being aware of literacy levels and digital literacy. After a major flood event, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) workers serving in South Carolina were astounded by the low literacy rates and lack of digital access. Library technology

and staff members were essential to connecting these communities with FEMA services.¹⁶ Internet access is an especially important factor, as online resources are often a user's first stop for medical information.¹⁷ However, paywalls prevent expedient usage of much information; 83% of users that encounter a paywall just move on to another source, no matter how promising that site looks. Another 13% just give up searching altogether.¹⁸ Lack of real-time information can be a community health vulnerability; circumventing this problem through a trusted library source can help overcome this vulnerability.¹⁹

Lastly, librarians and library staff trained in reference services already have many of the skills needed to assist people with their health information needs. They already value listening to their patrons, evaluating their needs, and helping to relieve the anxiety that accompanies this need for information.²⁰ People come to the library for information and should be welcomed with a non-judgmental, empathetic ear by a professional that can take the time to assist them.²¹ Librarians tend to be analytical and are trained to evaluate resource validity, even if they are not experts in a specific field.²² Because of their accessibility, knowledge, and commitment to public service, librarians often become de facto health and social service system navigators.²³

Barriers

Although this field presents great opportunities, there are still barriers and challenges to getting public libraries fully involved. First, there is the question of if public libraries and librarians should be involved with their patrons' health services in any manner other than providing access to books and Internet services. Health information can be very private and embarrassing; as such, patrons may choose to avoid staff assistance.²⁴ Even when librarians are approached for help finding information, there can be a conflict between gathering enough information to help them and intruding on their privacy.²⁵ Another barrier is that public libraries must prioritize their services and decide what areas will get more time and resources than others. Even in organizations where health initiatives are welcomed and participation is encouraged, there can still be a conflict between providing general services and addressing more pinpointed needs. Ideas are easy; implementation takes time and resources.²⁶ Also, providing high-quality information for consumer health questions can take significantly longer than other common reference needs.²⁷ Some services are also disfavored by the public, such as the administration of naloxone to patrons who experience opioid overdoses or providing needle disposal containers in public library restrooms. This can lead to accusations of enabling drug users and the risk of losing funding.²⁸

Another barrier that is repeatedly covered in literature from both the public library and the public health perspectives is librarians' lack of training or knowledge necessary to be a truly valuable resource to a patron seeking health information. As much as 60% of problems arising in health reference interviews can be attributed to the librarian's lack of training and knowledge.²⁹ Librarians need further awareness of their community's health needs.³⁰ A survey of 313 librarians associated with the Pennsylvania Library Association indicated that librarians report feeling confident answering questions relating to education and literacy but much less confident in answering health or social service-related questions.³¹ Another problem is being unsure about which services other community agencies can provide and under what circumstances.³² This barrier can be mitigated. A Health Information Fellowship created by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation took a multi-faceted approach, including creating library staff training modules. Participants of this training reported significant increases (up to almost 90% in some areas) in familiarity with available resources and preparedness in finding relevant and trustworthy consumer

health information.³³ Librarians at the East Brunswick Public Library received the Medical Library Association’s Consumer Health Information Specialization training as well as training in culturally and linguistically appropriate services through their partnership with local hospitals. This partnership and training led to an award from the New Jersey Hospital Association because of its “potential to touch more than 50,000 community members ... through direct questions, health information and education events....”³⁴

Secondary trauma stress or compassion fatigue results from hearing about another person’s trauma; it can be a common barrier that prevents library staff members from offering high quality health information reference services.³⁵ The librarian might be the only person showing the patron any concern or care and attempting to help them. It can be hard to have an in-depth conversation with someone, figure out what they’re really looking for, and figure out the best resources and paths for them while hearing how scared they really are to then put on a happy face and go on with the rest of the day. While many public librarians are committed to public service, the tendency of highly vulnerable groups to use their services at higher rates can leave them more at risk for compassion fatigue.³⁶ Equipping them with more knowledge and resources, providing more training, and recognizing the stressful front-line work that’s being done can help mitigate this risk.³⁷

Successes

The literature describes many examples of public libraries being effective community health partners. Most recently, public libraries have used their existing resources, such as classes and social media contacts, to assist with distributing information during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Skokie Public Library used its existing Civics Lab initiative to host “Civic Lab Coronavirus: Distinguishing Fears from Facts.”³⁸ The Hawaii State Public Library System held an event to educate residents about the pandemic in early March 2020. As the importance of social distancing and decreasing crowds was better understood, the library system reworked future events into a blog.³⁹ Another partnership example is public library makerspaces’ work in prototyping personal protective equipment early in the pandemic when supplies were practically non-existent. They worked with health care workers to evaluate and tweak designs of face shields and cloth masks.⁴⁰

The Farmville Public Library (FPL) in mid-eastern North Carolina serves a very rural area with limited access to health care services and information. Article authors Flaherty and Miller partnered with FPL to conduct a feasibility study on offering access to pedometers and a health assessment tool through public libraries. Pedometers were given out through a “Get Walking at Your Library” project. Participants were complimentary of the program and reported being encouraged to walk more because of the pedometer; some even reported personally purchasing high-quality pedometers with more options to better continue their progress. Patrons were also given access to the online Carolina Health Assessment Research Tool. Six months later, these patrons completed the assessment again. Most reported losing or maintaining weight and that the assessment tool encouraged them to pay more attention to their health.⁴¹

In “Public Libraries Participating in Community Health Initiatives,” Margot Malachowski, an outreach librarian with a medical center in Massachusetts, researched different health services that are often being offered through public libraries. Many libraries offer access to health screenings, such as blood pressure screenings. Some also act as a place for vaccine clinics. There are several examples of public libraries hosting health fairs and integrating health-related subjects into existing programming, like story time with topics such as handwashing, teeth hygiene, and

healthy food choices. Some public libraries have chosen to hire health professions to be on staff, such as public nurses and social workers. For example, the San Diego Public Library partnered with a mental health services agency to better serve its homeless patrons and connect them with health and social service assistance⁴²

The Free Library of Philadelphia decided to focus heavily on public health when they remodeled a branch library, the Community Health and Literacy Center (CHLC), a full-service library and co-located health care center and recreation center. The CHLC employs a community health librarian, who is a certified consumer health information specialist, and a Health Programs & Partnerships Project Manager, who has a background in public health and focuses on developing partnerships and programs related to health. In addition to providing access to information through the library's collection, online resources, and reference services, the CHLC has used various programs to educate and assist their patrons in their own health journeys. These programs include health fairs and tabling events, health-focused story times, nutrition programming for all ages, a health lending library (for items such as blood pressure monitors and food scales), and a diabetes prevention program. The author of this article emphasize the need to use local resources that have been vetted for trustworthiness and continue to evaluate partnerships and programs related to community needs.⁴³

In "Public Libraries: a Community-Level Resource to Advance Population Health," Philbin et al. analyze public library functions that enhance a community's social determinants of health. They identify that the United States has some of the largest health disparities in the world among citizens and that trusted public libraries can help reduce these neighborhood-level disparities.⁴⁴ These mitigation strategies include offering exercise classes, literacy activities, adult education classes, community building to reduce social exclusion, unemployment and job searching assistance, and many more.⁴⁵

Another successful library program is the Family Place Library™ model, which over 450 public libraries follow in the United States. This model focuses on providing library service to infants and young children and their families in a way that is supported by child development research.⁴⁶ Children's brains develop based on their experiences and their support. They need continuous interaction and activity to encourage proper "tuning and pruning" of neurons. Babies raised in socially impoverished settings develop smaller brains with fewer synapse connections.⁴⁷ The Family Place Library™ model trains librarians to provide services that enhance the desired brain-building biological functions through specific types of play. They also model behaviors for parents and caregivers to use with the children in their care and connect them with community resources. In the Parent Child Workshop, experts in child development, nutrition, early literacy, music and movement, and speech and hearing are made available to parents, who also benefit from building relationships with other parents in their community.⁴⁸

The literature review supports the concept that public libraries can be effective community health partners. Library professionals and health professionals agree that there are many opportunities, possible barriers, and existing successes. The ideas that are most frequently repeated are the need for effective partnerships (one entity cannot do it all) and that librarians will need more training and help to provide these health-related services.

Research

Methodology

To evaluate librarians' opinions regarding the importance of providing health resources, a short survey was developed and distributed through a listserv available to library directors whose institutions are members of the Central Texas Library System (CTLS), a nonprofit organization that supports libraries through training, assistance, and staff expertise, and by connecting member libraries to each other. While CTLS is now open to all libraries, it has a heavy concentration of Central Texas members due to its former state library system status. This survey was also sent to a fellow CPM student associated with the Austin Public Library, who was kind enough to distribute it to her contacts. The survey focused on measuring general opinions on providing health resources. It was designed to collect general opinions and collect quick responds, as it was determined that emphasis should be to gather more responses as opposed more in-depth responses. The survey was available from January 11 to January 22, 2021 and received 31 responses.

A focus for this article was to evaluate the subject from both a public library and public health point of view. As can be expected for the mid-pandemic, early vaccine rollout time in which this research was performed, public health professionals are extremely preoccupied with highly pressing issues. The interviewee for this article is a Master of Public Health candidate in her last semester of school; while she has not yet worked professionally in the field, she has good knowledge of public health priorities. She was provided with several starting questions, then asked her opinion of the major opportunities and barriers identified in the literature review.

Survey

While much of the information provided through these articles is useful for generalizing, a recurring theme is that these health programs and resources should be tightly connected to the needs of a community. Also, except for one paper cited, all the authors of the public library perspective papers are academic or health science librarians or professionals. As such, this research focuses on public librarians. Are general opinions regarding public libraries supporting community health needs in a geographic area favorable or otherwise?

A survey of library directors largely shows good support for providing community health services and resources in public libraries. Over 90% of respondents (28 of 31) answered that they either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that public libraries should be strong community health partners, with the remainder of the respondents answering that they neither agree nor disagree (see Table 1).

Table 1. Public libraries should be strong community health partners

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
16	12	3	0	0

Another question asked concerns what is preventing their library from offering further health services or information. The biggest barrier to offering community health information was

staff time which was selected by 19 of 31 survey participants. The other top barriers were funding and lack of knowledge or access to experts, each selected by 14 of 31 survey participants. These findings support the literature that identifies competing resources as barriers to libraries as community health partners. Only one librarian selected that it is not our responsibility (see Table 2). This leads to the conclusion that most respondents believe that this is work public libraries should be doing.

Table 2. What is preventing your library from offering further community health information?
(Please select all that apply.)

Funding	14
Lack of knowledge or access to experts	14
Community interest	11
Staff interest	6
Staff time	19
Not a high priority item	4
Not our responsibility	1
Nothing	3
Other – Local hospital hosts many classes	1
Other – Other departments are not willing	1

It was important to know if the librarians responding to the survey would believe that it was more important to provide access to resources (books and written materials, audiovisual items, and electronic resources) than to offer more hands-on services (reference services, children and/or teen programming, and adult programming). Books are generally the first option people think of accessing in a library, however the information collected in this survey did not strongly support this idea. The librarians strongly agreed or agreed (30 of 31) that electronic resources were important for their libraries to provide health information compared to books/physical written formats were fewer librarians strongly agreed or agreed (26 of 31) (see Table 3). In Table 3 all the ways for public libraries to provide health information has strong agreement. It is interesting to note that 26 of 31 respondents answered with agree or strongly agree that it is important for libraries to provide referrals to outside agencies/entities, with the remainder of the respondents answering that they neither agree nor disagree. This indicates that these public librarians would agree with the conclusion made through the literature review which states that libraries need effective partnerships for they cannot provide all these services themselves.

Only 29% (9 of 31) librarians strongly agreed or agree that they have enough training and knowledge to help patrons with their health information needs. The most common response with neither agree nor disagree at 45.2% (14 of 31) and 29% (9 of 31) either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement (see Table 4). And while, as previously shown, most of these librarians agree that it is important to provide referrals, these barriers identified indicate that they might not have enough information to make those referrals. These answers support the idea that librarians need more training and help to fulfill these community health needs, something identified repeatedly in the literature review.

Table 3. I think it is important for my public library to provide health information in the following ways:

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Books/physical written formats				
20	6	4	0	1
Audiovisual formats				
13	9	7	1	1
Electronic Resources				
21	9	0	0	1
Reference Services				
13	12	6	0	0
Programming for children and/or teens				
12	9	10	0	0
Programming for adults				
13	14	4	0	0
Referrals to outside agencies/entities				
15	11	5	0	0

Table 4. I have enough training and knowledge to help my patrons with their health information needs.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	8	14	7	2

And while, as previously shown, most of these librarians agree that it is important to provide referrals, these barriers identified indicate that they might not have enough information to make those referrals. These answers support the idea that librarians need more training and help to fulfill these community health needs, something identified repeatedly in the literature review.

It is important to note that there is no correlation between how comfortable someone feels with their knowledge level and how strongly they agree that libraries should be community health partners. There also is no correlation between either of these opinions and how strongly they agree that public libraries should offer the different resources. A person that strongly disagreed that libraries should provide books, audiovisual items, and electronic resources agreed that they had enough training and knowledge. The one person that strongly disagreed that they have enough training and knowledge strongly agreed with public libraries providing all resources and programs. It is difficult to say to what this counterintuitive result should be attributed.

Interview

For a public health perspective, Juli Barksdale was interviewed for this article. Ms. Barksdale is a long-time, active library user who is in her last semester of earning a Master of

Public Health degree from the University of Texas, focusing on epidemiology with a certificate in maternal health. She has great enthusiasm for public libraries' role in promoting community health measures. When asked why she believed public libraries would be a good partner, Ms. Barksdale answered that they're already a great part of the community with existing connections and established trust that is necessary for good public health partnerships. She mentioned the ubiquity, stability, and longevity of public libraries throughout the United States. Ms. Barksdale also identified that there is a large overlap in the skills needed for public health work with the skills of librarians. She listed many of the opportunities discussed in the literature as reasons why public health organizations should partner with libraries. When discussing the barriers that were identified in the literature, Ms. Barksdale acknowledged their validity but pointed out that many were challenges librarians already face, such as competing priorities, scarcity of resources, privacy versus sufficient questioning, and compassion fatigue. One barrier she does not believe is much of a problem is the librarians' lack of knowledge or training. Under ideal circumstances, she believes the librarian would be more of a facilitator for public health programs and initiatives, working alongside a health professional to meet patrons' needs. This would be a model situation for events and programs but fails to consider the day-to-day reference questions or collection management concerns. This interview with Ms. Barksdale confirmed many of the reasons for opportunities and barriers of libraries as community health partners and encouraged the idea that this could be a very valuable partnership for both entities and their communities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is still plenty of research to be done in this area. It would be valuable to be able to follow up with the individual librarians after receiving their initial survey responses and delve deeper into their opinions and experiences in offering community health resources. It would also be interesting to know if something about the library's patron base affected these opinions, such as community size, socioeconomic status, or average education levels. A surprising survey response was the perceived lack of community interest in libraries' health-related resources and programming. It would be interesting to administer the same survey to public library users to gauge their interest levels for health resources or to gauge awareness of their libraries' offerings. Another interesting study would be to measure a community's social determinants of health before and after a long-term partnership between the local public library and health agencies (departments of health, medical professionals, etc.) and compare it with other partnerships that health agencies might use.

Based on the information gathered and presented in this article, it is recommended that public libraries and health-related organizations work together to benefit their communities. No one has unlimited resources; pooling resources and expertise could create a better result than either would achieve individually. Additionally, it would be advantageous for public libraries to focus on providing health literacy and information evaluation training for its staff members. Not only would this allow library staff to be better partners with health organizations, but additional training would also give them the skills needed to deal with specific challenges in providing reliable health information to patrons. The Network of the National Library of Medicine has a myriad of free courses designed specifically for public library staff.⁴⁹ These classes can also be used to apply for a Consumer Health Information Specialization certificate through the Medical Library Association. WebJunction also has free webinars and resources for library staff, including "Health

Happens in Libraries” and “Partnership & Collaboration” sections that could better prepare staff members to be ready to help patrons with health information needs and in forming partnerships.⁵⁰

Public libraries can be great partners for community health agencies. While barriers exist, they can be mitigated with training and the prioritization of health initiatives and resources in public libraries. Their geographic ubiquity (in the United States), skilled staff, and community-based focus provide a great place for seeking health information and learning further health literacy skills. Public libraries can provide access to direct health information and affect many aspects of people’s social determinants of health. Public libraries can help public health agencies reach further into the community and offer more as trusted, established resources. This is supported by many papers discussed in the literature review, a survey of public librarians, and an interview with a public health student. It is also supported by the shared mission of public libraries and health organizations: to help the people in our communities achieve their best lives possible.⁵¹

Notes

¹ Susie McCarthy, “Introduction to Public Health,” YouTube Video, 52:05, June 1, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dmJSLNngjxo>.

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⁵ Eliza D. Whiteman et al., “Public Libraries as Partners for Health,” *Preventing Chronic Diseases* 15, no. 64 (2018): 1, <https://doi:10.5888/pcd15.170392>.

⁶ “Social Determinants of Health,” *HealthyPeople.gov*, accessed November 15, 2020, <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>.

⁷ Nancy D. Zions et al., “Promoting Consumer Health Literacy: Creation of a Health Information Librarian Fellowship,” *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (2010): 350, <https://doi:10.5860/rusq.49n4.350>.

⁸ Anna U. Morgan et al., “Beyond Books: Public Libraries as Partners for Population Health,” *Health Affairs* 35, no. 11 (2016): 2030, <https://doi:10.1377/hlthaff.2016.0724>.

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¹¹ John B. Horrigan, “Libraries 2016,” *Pew Research Center*, accessed November 14, 2020, 11, <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2016/09/09/libraries-2016/>.

¹² Mary Grace Flaherty and David Miller, “Rural Public Libraries as Community Change Agents: Opportunities for Health Promotion,” *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 57, no. 2 (2016) 144, <https://doi:10.12783/issn.2328-2967/57/2/6>.

¹³ Horrigan, “Libraries 2016,” 6.

¹⁴ Morgan et al., “Public Library Staff,” 361.

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- ¹⁷ Zions et al., "Promoting Consumer Health Literacy," 352.
- ¹⁸ Yi and You, "Understanding," 365.
- ¹⁹ Tracie D. Hall, "Front Lines and Fault Lines: Embarking on the next great era of library services," *American Libraries* 51, no. 6 (2020): 5, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lxh&AN=143591329&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
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- ²¹ C. Brandi Borman and Pamela J. McKenzie, "Trying to Help without Getting in Their Faces," *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (2005): 136, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lxh&AN=20290985&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
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- ²⁴ Borman and McKenzie, "Trying to Help," 133.
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- ³⁰ Bonnici and Ma, "Public Library Engagement," 163.
- ³¹ Whiteman et al., "Public Libraries as Partners," 3.
- ³² Borman and McKenzie, "Trying to Help," 133.
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- ³⁴ Zhang and Parry, "Health Sciences," 105.
- ³⁵ Whiteman et al., "Public Libraries as Partners," 4.
- ³⁶ Morgan et al., "Beyond Books," 2033.
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- ³⁸ Eliza Schoenberger, "Librarians Fight Misinformation on Coronavirus," *Library Journal* 145, no. 5 (2020): 11, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lxh&AN=142941940&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
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⁴² Margot Malachowski, “Public Libraries Participating in Community Health Initiatives,” *Journal of Hospital Librarianship* 14, no. 3 (2014): 297-99, <https://doi:10.1080/15323269.2014.924754>.

⁴³ Kathleen Daingerfield-Fries et al., “Free Library of Health: Consumer Health Information, Health Literacy, and Library Programming in Philadelphia,” *Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet* 22, no. 2 (2018): 91-99, <https://doi:10.1080/15398285.2018.1440859>.

⁴⁴ Morgan M. Philbin et al., “Public Libraries: A Community-Level Resource to Advance Population Health,” *Journal of Community Health* 44, no. 1 (2018): 192-99, <https://doi:10.1007/s10900-018-0547-4>.

⁴⁵ Philbin et al., “Public Libraries,” 194.

⁴⁶ “What is a Family Place Library?” *Family Place Libraries*, accessed January 13, 2021, <https://www.familyplacelibraries.org/what-family-place-library>.

⁴⁷ Lisa Feldman Barrett, *7 1/2 Lessons About the Brain* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2020), 47-60.

⁴⁸ “What is a Family Place Library?”

⁴⁹ Please see www.nlm.gov

⁵⁰ Please see www.webjunction.org

⁵¹ The author thanks Juli Barksdale, Emi Johnson, and Laurie Mahaffey for their generosity in assisting with the research performed for this paper.