International Federation of
Library Associations and Institutions

IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to People Experiencing Homelessness

Developed by the IFLA Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) Section

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Endorsed by the IFLA Professional Committee

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Preface

The IFLA Section for Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) focuses on those persons who, because of their living conditions and/or physical, mental, or cognitive disabilities, are unable to access current library services. Much in the same way, people experiencing homelessness face a series of barriers preventing them from obtaining equal access to library services due to their living conditions, poor mental and physical health, and prejudice. These guidelines have evolved from the work LSN has done to address these barriers. It should be noted that library services to refugees are included in these Guidelines. They face many of the same challenges as people experiencing homelessness.

Homelessness is a community challenge. An important prerequisite for efficient and sustainable services related to homelessness is building a network of multiple stakeholders to work with people experiencing homelessness. All types of libraries (school, public, academic, and special) can contribute to this network and should partner with community organizations, professionals, volunteers, and government agencies. The audience for these guidelines are librarians, library staff, and all who serve people experiencing homelessness.

Chronology of key steps in guidelines development

2012 LSN organized a satellite meeting in Tallinn, Estonia – The Homeless and the Libraries - The Right to Information and Knowledge For All (http://www.ifla.org/node/6939)

2013 At the mid-year meeting in Copenhagen 2013, LSN's mission statement proposed expanding its mission to include people experiencing homelessness. According to the decision of the Professional Committee during its Fall Meeting in October, the LSN Section was granted permission to add "homeless persons" to its Mission Statement.

2014 At the mid-year meeting in Cebu, Philippines 2014, a new project to develop guidelines for library services to people experiencing homelessness was proposed. This project was included in the new strategic guidelines for this section.

2015 At the mid-year meeting in Zagreb, Croatia, a workshop was held in order to share experiences from different countries and obtain suggestions on what should be included in the guidelines. Skype was used to share experiences and challenges in organizing library services to people experiencing homelessness in Croatia and USA (http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/lsn/projects/homeless/report-workshop-homeless-people-zagreb_2015.pdf). The first draft of the Guidelines' outline was prepared at the meeting.

At the World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa, a joint meeting of LSN and the Public Libraries Section was held under the title '*Do THEY have the right to information? Library Services to People Who are Homeless, Incarcerated, or with Mental Difficulties* (http://library.ifla.org/view/conferences/2015/2015-08-17/570.html). During the meeting of the LSN Section, a working group was formed and further steps for developing the Guidelines were determined.

In order to collect good practice examples and obtain a more complete picture of services provided to people who are experiencing homelessness worldwide, the working group designed a questionnaire that covered different aspects of service implementation. The questionnaire was available for download on LSN's website (http://www.ifla.org/node/9764), and could be

submitted from the beginning of November 2015 to the end of March 2016. It was available in English, Spanish, and Russian.

2016 In February, IFLA's Professional Committee gave a formal response to the Guidelines proposal, including recommendations for further development. During the LSN mid-year meeting in Berlin, in order to ensure the most comprehensive approach possible to the given issue, the working group was expanded to include experts that were not Section members, including people from other professions, i.e. a psychologist, social worker, and an attorney.

The first draft Guidelines were presented at WLIC 2016 in Columbus, USA at the LSN session *Guidelines for Library Service to People Experiencing Homelessness: Overview and Examples* (http://www.ifla.org/node/10698?og=50). IFLA Division III session included a lecture on libraries' contribution to a sustainable future supporting people experiencing homelessness and the presentation of the most representative best practice examples (http://library.ifla.org/1315/1/081-bunic-en.pdf).

An international working group that comprises librarians and other experts from fields related to homelessness has developed the Guidelines, working under the responsibility of LSN.

"People deserve dignity and compassion whatever their circumstances.
There is no 'us' and 'them,' there is 'all of us.'
Everyone is affected; everyone is involved."
Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition

Chapter 1 Introduction

Numerous discussions within the professional library community accompanied the development
of the Guidelines, with the question most often posed being: Do the main characteristics and
needs of people experiencing homelessness, as well as ways in which libraries meet those needs,
call for the development of specific guidelines?

Our answer is yes and this is appropriate for IFLA because the issue of homelessness is indeed
international and libraries have much to contribute.   Thus LSN feels it is necessary to develop
and publish IFLA *Guidelines for Library Services to People Experiencing Homelessness.* These goals
support the implementation of many of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development
Goals, particularly SDG 1, on poverty and hunger; SDG 3, access to health – physical and
mental health services; and, SDG 8, employment and social protection.

1.1 Development of Guidelines in an international context

In the last few years, several important events have occurred that show the international
community's awareness of the complex issue of homelessness, and the concrete steps taken
towards serving people experiencing homelessness.

The Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH) (http://www.ighomelessness.org/) was established
in 2014. IGH seeks to serve as a central hub to help support international efforts to address
homelessness, guided by policy and practice-focused research. One key aim of IGH is to build
the 'infrastructure' required for key stakeholders across the globe to communicate effectively
about the nature, causes and impacts of homelessness in their world regions and to share
promising approaches and interventions that may be transferable beyond their original sites
(Busch-Geertsemaa, Culhaneb, &Fitzpatrick, 2016).

Great importance must also be given to the report of the United Nations (UN) Special
Rapporteur on the right to housing, Leilani Farha, to the UN General Assembly's Third
Committee (UN, 2015). Farha recognized homelessness as a human rights crisis. She pointed to
the social stigma, discrimination, violence, and criminalization that are often associated with
homelessness. She put special emphasis on social groups at risk of homelessness: women,
children, families with children, people on the move, indigenous peoples and persons with
disabilities. The report offers an overview of the most important facts on the homeless
population worldwide, including recommendations on further steps needed in the resolution of
this growing social phenomenon. The Special Rapporteur stresses that the resolution of this
issue requires emergency international action, cooperation of government organizations and
NGOs in different sectors within society (health care, education, social care, culture, etc.).

On 25 September 2015, countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet and
ensure prosperity for all as part of the *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
Development* (UN, 2015). The obligation to implement Sustainable Development Goals (SDG),
assumed by political leaders worldwide, commenced on the first day of 2016. Although people
experiencing homelessness are not explicitly mentioned in SDG, they are indirectly in their focus

because homelessness is one of the least examined consequences of the poverty occurring on a global scale. Scientific literature regarding the relationship between climate, sustainability and poverty suggests the targets of SDG1, *End poverty in all its forms everywhere,* need to be at the centre of all other targets (ICSU, ISSC, 2015). SDG1 is a fundamental goal; the meeting of its targets is dependent on the meeting of most of the other SDGs. Revitalizing global partnership is fundamental in the process of meeting these goals.

Libraries hold a significant place in this global partnership, as evidenced by examples of best practices of library services to people who are experiencing homelessness worldwide.

1.2 Why are the Guidelines necessary?

1.2.1 Overcoming prejudices

Prejudices towards people experiencing homelessness stem from a lack of insight into the issue, as is the case with any other prejudice. Some common preconceptions about people experiencing homelessness are that they are lazy, mentally ill, dangerous, prone to addictions, unreliable, with an offensive body odour, and that homelessness was their personal choice. Research on homelessness shows that no arguments exist that would corroborate these generalizations of the general population (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2002). Chapter 3 lists key facts about homelessness in order to offer insights into the complexity of this topic and thus contribute to overcoming prejudice.

In order to overcome prejudice, the guidelines refrain from using the term 'homeless people' and rather opt for the term 'people experiencing homelessness' in order to emphasize these people currently homeless and that homelessness is not something that defines them. The term 'homeless people' is used only when paraphrasing or citing certain organizations or authors. Appendix D includes terms related to various kinds of housing, mental health, social services, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

1.2.2 Identifying barriers and how to overcome them

The mental and physical condition and social relations of people experiencing homelessness are greatly affected by the impossibility of meeting one's basic needs for security, food, and personal hygiene. A lack of financial resources and personal documents only increases the possibility of encountering barriers while using library services.

The American Library Association (2011) specified in *Outreach Resources for Services to Poor and Homeless People* the following possible barriers:
- Library card or access policies requiring a permanent address
- Prohibitive fines, fees, or other penalties or the perception that services incur fees
- Staff who are not trained in service to people who are poor or homeless or who are made uncomfortable by prejudices against people who are poor or experiencing homelessness
- Limited promotion at the community centres and organizations (food banks, shelters, after-school programs) which serve people experiencing poverty or homelessness
- Restricted access to the library building by either limited means of transportation or service hours
- Lack of programs or resources that address people's experiences or current situations

The Guidelines include examples and recommendations on how to overcome these barriers.

1.2.3 Worldwide library services to people experiencing homelessness

In order to collect good practice examples and obtain a more complete picture of services provided to people who are experiencing homelessness worldwide, the working group designed a questionnaire that covered different aspects of service implementation. The questionnaire is available for download on LSN's website (http://www.ifla.org/node/9764). Examples from more than fifty libraries worldwide were collected. After the collected data had been analysed, one additional question arose. How are these programs funded? All of the libraries that contributed examples were sent a short questionnaire on funding.

Based on experiences and lessons learned from these examples, the content of individual chapters and recommendations for planning, organising and evaluating library services to people experiencing homelessness have been prepared. Experiences and ideas may be transferable beyond their original sites. Appendix F contains a list of libraries that sent their examples.

1.2.4 Organizing targeted services for a targeted audience

A large number of libraries that received the questionnaire responded they do not organize special library services for people experiencing homelessness; this user group instead uses existing library services.

It is important to draw attention to the fact that people experiencing homelessness are a social group that includes people of different races, ethnicities, ages, and genders. The needs of one group may differ significantly from the needs of another group.   For example, in a time of world refugee crisis, libraries worldwide have recognized the specific needs of refugees, so they are devoting special attention to library services to refugees. Moreover, the growing presence of children, youth, and families within the population of people experiencing homelessness has made libraries aware of their own role in organizing services to this population. Depending on the particularities of the library's community, services for other people, e.g. indigenous people, are also organized. Targeted library services to people experiencing homelessness can be organized in a library or through outreach programs. Librarians visit shelters, centres that provide free meals, walk the streets – go anywhere where they can meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness. There are separate chapters dealing with the organization of these kinds of services. Appendix C offers two Action Planning tools for libraries as they move to make efforts to address the topic of homelessness in their libraries through the needs of these library users and library challenges.

1.2.5 Networking organizations and support from experts from different fields

An important prerequisite for efficient and sustainable services related to homelessness is building a network of different stakeholders in their care. An analysis of the best practice examples from around the world confirmed there is a correlation between the extent and strength of the network of connections and collaboration within the community aimed at solving this issue and the development and outreach of library services to people experiencing homelessness (Bunić, 2016).

Unfortunately, library staff in certain communities and countries do not have available a developed support network of organizations that work on meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness. Moreover, the majority of library staff have not had any training on

how to understand and effectively communicate with people experiencing homelessness. Consequently, appendices to the guidelines contain recommendations and insights of a psychologist (Appendix A) and a social worker (Appendix B).

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines includes:
- Provide an insight into the complex issue of homelessness and thus contribute to overcoming stereotypes, prejudice and barriers faced by people experiencing homelessness
- Based on good practice examples from around the world, propose ways and give recommendations for planning, organizing, delivering, advocating, funding and evaluating library services to people experiencing homelessness
- Encourage libraries to connect with stakeholders in the care of people experiencing homelessness in order to offer them as efficient and sustainable services as possible
- Support libraries as places where not a single person who is experiencing or has experienced homelessness will be left behind

"Libraries should be a safe haven and stable learning environment for all users, regardless of their social and living status…Within the libraries, library staff should be trained to assist homeless users to cope with any obstacles in using libraries. In short, inclusion, not exclusion is the only one win–win solution to the 'problem' of homelessness in libraries."
Yi Ling Wong

Chapter 2 Executive Summary

2.1 Introduction

The IFLA Section for Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) has created these international Guidelines for libraries that want to address the topic of homelessness in their communities. Worldwide, libraries are recognizing there are community members who are experiencing homelessness and in response, they are providing resources, creating public conduct policies and procedures related to being unstably housed, implementing staff trainings, engaging in outreach, providing in-house services, and partnering with local agencies. LSN is committed to providing relevant and practical Guidelines that will be useful to libraries as they address the many barriers encountered by those in their communities who are experiencing homelessness or who are unstably housed. LSN considers this topic a question of human rights, and these Guidelines reflect that approach. The goal of these Guidelines is to respond to frequently asked questions related to this topic, to provide examples of what libraries are doing, offer concrete suggestions, and provide useful resources for further information.

2.2 Why these Guidelines

Homelessness is a worldwide challenge for millions of people. As central locations for essential resources for all community members, it makes sense for libraries to be part of the caring community that seeks to address and even ameliorate the effects of homelessness and poverty. In addition, libraries can provide education to the housed community members regarding the lives of those who are experiencing homelessness. Stereotypes, prejudice and stigmatizing attitudes can create barriers between those who are housed and those who are not, and these negative attitudes can also affect library services, policies, and resources. It is hoped these Guidelines will help libraries meet the needs of their unstably housed library users, whether as a variation or expansion on their traditional services or as entirely new services.

2.3 Background

As an aid in creating these Guidelines, LSN sent a survey to libraries around the world. Fifty libraries responded and LSN has used their responses to inform the Guidelines. Their responses have been organized into sections. These sections represent what is being done in libraries, as well as support for this work. LSN members are heartened by the interest and creative responses of libraries to this enduring and critical challenge faced by millions of people every day.
Below are the questions posed in the survey. The questions were prefaced with this statement:
WE NEED YOUR HELP! *The IFLA Section on Library Service to People with Special Needs is writing guidelines for providing library services to people who are experiencing homelessness. Can you send us examples?*

The first goal of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. Homelessness is an extreme and complex form of poverty.

Although the number of people experiencing homelessness is rising worldwide, attitudes towards those who are without a permanent and safe place to live differ from country to country, and this reflects on the organization of quality services for them. Libraries are an important part of the network of organizations that can be allies and help provide equal access to information, skills, and knowledge.

Some libraries responded to all the questions, and others responded to selected ones. Although the responses came from many countries, for example, Australia, Japan, Croatia, Russia, Germany, the United States and Canada, there was consistency in many of the responses that offered insights into the shared challenges and accomplishments, as well as the range of possibilities and concerns shared by the international library community.

The questions on the survey included basic information about the library itself (name, geographical location, type of library, contact person), as well as these specific questions:

- *Description of your program*
- *What kind of services does your library organize for people in your community who are experiencing homelessness?*
- *Are your programs for specific populations among those experiencing homelessness (e.g., single adults, youth under 18, youth over 18, families with children?)   (Please describe):*
- *If your library organizes library services for refugees who are unstably housed, please describe what kind of services:*
- *What are the outcomes of your services and how people experiencing homelessness benefited from your services?*
- *Do librarians have the professional support of a social worker, psychologist, partner organizations, and the community? (Please describe):*
- *Does your library provide extra education or training for librarians who organize library services for those who are experiencing homelessness? (Please describe):*
- *Please share with us any policies you have, such as public conduct, sleeping in the library, odours, size and amount of belongings, use of public restrooms, fines or fees, identification to obtain a library card, or other policies:*
- *If these policies cause some challenges in providing library services for those who are experiencing homelessness, please share with us how your library solve them?*
- *What other kind of challenges have you faced in organizing services and how did you solve them?*
- *How are you working on communication and advocacy of your services for those who are experiencing homelessness?*

2.4 Sections of the Guidelines

The LSN Guidelines for people experiencing homelessness is divided into 22 sections.

PREFACE

This section provides a chronology of the creation of the Guidelines and lists those persons who have been active participants in their creation.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The introduction provides an overview of the evolution of the Guidelines, as well as the impetus for specific information included in the final document. Historical information related to the international library community's awareness of the complexity of homelessness is mentioned,

and a timeline and supporting citations and documents are also provided. The Introduction briefly describes such topics as:

- Why are the Guidelines necessary?
- Why libraries need them
- How libraries can use them
- Their purpose

CHAPTER 2: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As is common with long detailed documents, LSN has also provided an Executive Summary and concrete recommendations. This Executive Summary is excellent for libraries and individuals who want a brief but thorough explanation of the Guidelines, including specific suggestions for action steps related to this topic.

CHAPTER 3: HOMELESSNESS: AN OVERVIEW

This section of the Guidelines offers in-depth information about the topic of homelessness around the world. It begins with a discussion of the definition of homelessness and numerous examples of what constitutes homelessness are included. Categories of homelessness are divided into three broad categories:

- People without accommodation:
    o This category includes people sleeping on the streets or in other open spaces, like parks, under bridges, in forests, or in other places not meant for human habitation; people sleeping in cars, rickshaws, fishing boats, or other forms of transport.
- People living in temporary or crisis accommodation:
    o This category includes shelters of all kinds, from emergency to transitional, from hostels to camps. The key to this category is that these are temporary accommodations – they are not necessarily predictable, sustainable or reliable.
- People living in severely inadequate and/or insecure accommodation
    o This category includes people temporarily sharing with friends and relatives; people under threat of violence; people living in inexpensive hotels, motels, and similar; people staying in conventional housing without permission or that is unfit for human habitation; people living in tents or similar; people living in extremely overcrowded conditions; and, people living in non-conventional and temporary structures.

The Guidelines include all of these. The LSN emphasis is on people who have no safe, inhabitable, predictable, reliable, and/or consistent place to sleep each night. It is worth noting that having a place to be during the day – a place that is safe, healthy, out of any inclement weather, and private – is also necessary. A lack of privacy in particular is one of the outstanding characteristics of homelessness and one that affects all, no matter where they sleep at night. People who are experiencing homelessness are forced to live their private lives in public and this fact impacts them in their daily lives, causing trauma as well as contributing to a judgmental attitude toward them, which further stigmatizes their very existence.

This section also includes a description of the causes of homelessness. As noted in the Guidelines, these include structural failures, such lack of affordable housing or sufficient employment; systems failures, such as when care and support systems fail; and, individual and

relational factors, such as mental and physical health challenges, traumatic events, personal loss, and a lack of support for immigrants and refugees.

Consequences of homelessness are also included in this section and these comprise effects on health, social relations, and inequality in access to services and rights.

Finally, this section provides information on social groups at particular risk of homelessness. These include women, youth without parents or guardians, families with children, people on the move (in particular, immigrants and refugees), indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities.

CHAPTER 4: HUMAN RIGHTS AND HOMELESSNESS

This chapter highlights the human rights aspect of homelessness. The areas of emphasis in this section highlight equal and barrier-free access to information in all its forms and aspects. Whether the resources are related to social, economic, legal, political, educational, cultural, or personal information needs, they must be freely available for all. Libraries can help address the myriad obstacles encountered by those who are experiencing homelessness.

This chapter also offers an overview of human rights and the UN 2030 Agenda. This chapter ends with recommendations including:

- Using a human rights-based approach to serving library users experiencing homelessness
- Cooperation with local human rights, including dissemination of their reports and recommendations
- Advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Demonstrate the role of libraries in the core mission of the 2030 Agenda

CHAPTER 5: NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF SERVICES TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Since the causes of homelessness can differ from community to community, LSN Guidelines include this section on how to assess local needs, by using local data, by reaching out to local service agencies, by listening to library users who are experiencing homelessness, and by evaluating the library services that are being provided. This chapter highlights specific recommendations, such as:

- Connect with community agencies and NGOs to discuss the perceived needs of those community members who are experiencing homelessness
- Keep a record of positive anecdotes relating to the results of specific library services for this population
- Document assumptions and observations through interviews, surveys, and focus groups

CHAPTER 6: ATTITUDE

Attitudes matter. A negative or hostile attitude toward those experiencing homelessness can make it difficult for both the library staff and the library users. On the other hand, a welcoming and friendly approach can make library users feel included and seen. Personal connections as well as the awareness their presence is desired, their needs are important, and the library is committed to serving all of its library users well can all make a significant difference to those who are experiencing homelessness, as well as those who are stably housed.

This chapter offers examples of actions libraries are taking to create this welcoming and supportive environment, as well as some suggested Guidelines. Some ideas for library staff include:

- Consider who you are welcoming
- Assess your posted rules and policies
- Be all-inclusive
- Listen and learn

CHAPTER 7: LIBRARY SERVICES

This chapter provides an overview of the kinds of services being offered by libraries to those who are experiencing homelessness. The services described by survey respondents fall into five broad categories:

Basic access to library services

There can be multiple barriers to accessing library services for those who are experiencing homelessness. These barriers include policies and procedures (such as requiring a permanent address to be able to register for a library card); transportation to and from the library; attitude of library staff or housed library users; hunger, fatigue, trauma, physical and mental health challenges related to homelessness; and, lack of specific resources or programs related to the challenges and causes of homelessness.

Engagement in community life

Community members experiencing homelessness can feel disconnected from or stigmatized by those who are stably housed. Survey respondents addressed this providing opportunities for all library users to interact, such as the bi-monthly "Coffee and Conversation" at Dallas Public Library, in Texas, USA. They also offer programs and services that are provided directly to those experiencing homelessness, such as the Queens Public Library in New York, USA, which offers summer reading programs at family shelters. These two examples highlight the importance of providing spaces where all library users can interact as equals and the commitment to providing appropriate services wherever library users can be found.

Preparation and assistance in finding employment

Many (possibly most) libraries provide community members with access to employment resources, such as résumé writing and employment listings. Library users experiencing homelessness need the same resources and access. Libraries committed to serving their library users experiencing homelessness can examine the barriers these library users experience and help them address these as they look for meaningful and sufficient employment. Some examples of relevant library services include:
- Extending the time on Internet computers so applications can be completed and filed
- Assistance in creating and using an email account
- Career counselling
- Interview practice

The Guidelines include specific and excellent examples of services in this area.

Educational services and collection access

Educational services can be a key factor as library users experiencing homelessness work toward stable and predictable housing. As with employment resources, libraries are already providing these kinds of resources. However, there may be specific barriers related to homelessness that impede access to these resources, lack of library privileges due to having no permanent address, lack of computer expertise needed to discover and apply for educational opportunities, and lack of fluency in the local language, especially for those who are immigrants or refugees. By providing an awareness of these barriers and concrete suggestions on how libraries can address them, the Guidelines help libraries become active partners with their unstably housed library users who are seeking educational opportunities.

Meeting social needs

Libraries can help meet the social needs of their community members who are experiencing homelessness. These needs can be connected to social services, such as housing, food, legal, hygiene, and food resources, but they can also be related to the simple need to socialize and to expand social capital by creating social connections with housed community members as well as library staff.

This section offers specific examples of how libraries are meeting the social services and daily living needs of their library users experiencing homelessness.

This chapter also includes recommendations for library staff. These include:

- Assess the need in your community for services specifically related to homelessness and the staff attitudes in your library
- Identity potential community partners
- Form a staff committee to plan services for people experiencing homelessness
- Assess your current services. Could they be adapted or expanded to address the needs of those experiencing homelessness?

CHAPTER 8: SERVICES FOR REFUGEES

As many countries accept a vast number of refuges, libraries are at the forefront of the current refugee crisis. Libraries can play an active role in the lives of refugees, by providing access to relevant and necessary services and resources. This chapter defines refuges, compares them to people experiencing homelessness, gives examples of current good practices, and offers recommendations for libraries that want to address services to refugees in their communities. There is much overlap between those who are experiencing homelessness and those who are refuges, but refuges also have unique needs.

Some of the recommendations included in this chapter are to provide services such as:

- Basic local information related to meals, shelter, health
- Regional maps and information about transportation
- Connections to the original culture of the refugees
- Activities for refugees to learn about the culture of the host county
- Information about basic principles of European, International and National Law
- Resources available in multiple languages

- Help refugees recover and/or retain vital personal documents

CHAPTER 9: SERVICES FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITHOUT PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

Families with children and youth without parents or guardians have unique needs in addition to the needs of anyone experiencing homelessness. This chapter provides information about these two groups, as well as recommendations for libraries on how to serve them well. These recommendations include:

- Provide staff training related to identifying and communicating with families and individual youth experiencing homelessness
- Create partnerships with youth and family serving local agencies, by attending meetings, inviting them to attend library meetings, creating shared goals, and learning about each other's services
- Reach out, connect, and listen

CHAPTER 10: STAFF SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Many library staff members may feel ill equipped to handle the range of issues people experiencing homelessness can bring into the library, and staff discomfort and fears may impede their ability to serve these library users fully and equitably. This chapter provides examples of how these challenges are being met and includes concrete examples of what libraries are doing or could be doing. It is broken down into three sections, with specific examples included in each section: Staff support, training, and professional development; community partnerships; and, recommendations, including:

- Formally or informally survey library staff members regarding their attitudes or expertise in serving library users experiencing homelessness
- Provide ongoing and supportive training for library staff members on topics related to homelessness, health, and trauma
- Encourage staff to engage with local agencies, for example by volunteering, to create more understanding about the challenges of homelessness
- Educate local agencies and potential partners about the advantages of partnering with a library, since many service providers may not understand the potential for a two-way benefit to these relationships

CHAPTER 11: LIBRARY POLICIES AND THEIR EFFECTS

Barriers for library users who are experiencing homelessness include library policies, procedures, and codes of public conduct. This chapter addresses these barriers and provides examples of existing policies and procedures, as well as recommendations for creating new ones.
The chapter is divided into:

Policies and procedures

This section includes policies about procedures such as registering for a library card, using the library computers, and accessing the Internet. It also includes public conduct rules, including those governing odour, sleeping, baggage size, and use of the public restrooms for general hygiene purposes.

Examples of library policies related to this topic range from prohibitions and restrictions (e.g., no sleeping in library; no strong odours; limits on baggage size; no use of restrooms for bathing, shampooing, laundry, changing clothes) to flexibility related to these topics (e.g., using a "case by case" approach; providing storage).

Effect of the policies

This section of the chapter gives examples of the effects of these policies on library users who are experiencing homelessness. Examples of these effects include:
- Barriers to library use due to an inability to follow the public conduct rules, because of lack of access to safe and affordable shower facilities and/or free and secure storage facilities for baggage
- Barriers to use of materials due to the lack of a permanent address, thereby preventing these library users from checking out library materials or having access to the Internet computers

The chapter ends with recommendations, including:
- Have as few rules as possible
- Consider the impact of policies and rules on those experiencing homelessness and explore ways any barriers can be addressed
- Advocate for local and national funding that will address homelessness and poverty, so all community members can be safely housed or have their health or life needs met

CHAPTER 12: COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

Communication is an essential element of any library initiative or service. Because of stereotypes related to both homelessness (e.g., lazy, dangerous, smelly, homeless by choice) and libraries (e.g., quiet, static, mainly for books), libraries must make can effort to raise awareness about homelessness, advocate for excellent library services, have in-depth knowledge of local issues related to addressing homelessness, and create a strategy for library involvement in finding solutions. This chapter provides examples of these aspects of communication and advocacy and ends with recommendations, including:
- Use the library's position of trust in the community to raise awareness and advocate for community members experiencing homelessness
- Make the library's efforts SMART – Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented with Responsibilities stated and Timed
- Involve those who are experiencing homelessness in advocacy efforts

CHAPTER 13: FUNDING

Chapter 13 addresses the question of funding related to addressing homelessness. For some actions taken by libraries, the cost may be minimal. Other actions may require additional funds. This chapter offers suggestions for ways to support the need for these funds, inexpensive ways to address this topic, as well as ideas on how and where to acquire additional monies.
The need for additional monies may include resources to fund materials, services, programs, and sometimes staff. Recommendations for where to acquire this funding include:
- A special grant from a private foundation
- A special grant from a city, state, or national foundation
- The regular city budget
- Contributions from local community agencies or NGOs

- A special allocation from the library administration
- Financial support from a library support group
- Out of the library's existing funds

APPENDIX A: NON-PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

This appendix provides information and insights from a psychologist from Croatia. It provides an overview of some of the individual psychosocial factors that can contribute to and are associated with homelessness, as well as a discussion of trauma and the challenges trauma can pose to library users experiencing homelessness, as well as library staff. Some of these challenges include:
- Difficulty in establishing trusting relationships
- Difficulty in maintaining boundaries
- Dealing with resignation, passivity, and inertia
- Dealing with anger and impatience

To address the issues described in this chapter, recommendations are provided. Included in these recommendations are:
- Teamwork and joint vision
- Basic training and support
- Being informed
- Setting priorities
- Active listening skills
- Healthy empathy
- Consistency
- Maintaining personal and professional boundaries

APPENDIX B: SOCIAL WORK IN LIBRARIES

This appendix provides experiences and suggestions from a U.S. social worker who works in a library. It provides support for having social workers in libraries, including the following reasons:
- Social workers and librarians have a lot in common and their work is complementary
- Social workers can help decrease incidents, creating a safer space for all
- Social workers can provide training for library staff
- Social workers can help address policies, thereby decreasing stress on library users and staff
- Social workers can assist library users experiencing homelessness find services and resources
- Social workers in libraries can help fill the gap created by inadequate local funding for social services

This appendix also includes information for service providers on:
- Why libraries make good partners
- How to reach out
- How to identify and address possible barriers

APPENDIX C: ACTION PLANNING TOOLS

This appendix offers two Action Planning tools for libraries as they make efforts to address the topic of homelessness in their libraries: "Addressing Homelessness Through Your Library: Needs" and "Addressing Homelessness Through Your Library: Challenges."

It is hoped that by using these Action Planning Tools, library staff can incorporate information they have been provided by the Guidelines and any other sources and create positive and specific steps to address homelessness in their libraries and communities.

APPENDIX D: VOCABULARY

Having a basic grasp of the vocabulary related to homelessness can help librarians communicate with those who are experiencing homelessness, as well as with service providers, such as local social services agencies. This vocabulary appendix includes terms related to housing, mental health, social services, and sexual orientation and gender identity. It is important to use appropriate and respectful language when interacting with any library users, and particularly those who are frequently misrepresented or stigmatized. This vocabulary list also includes the acronyms used throughout the Guidelines.

APPENDIX E: BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SUGGESTED RESOURCES

This appendix offers specific suggested homelessness-related resources for libraries, divided by chapter. It also includes the references.

APPENDIX F: LIST OF LIBRARIES SENDING EXAMPLES

This appendix simply provides a list of the libraries that have provided examples of the resources, programs, and policies that relate to their library users who are experiencing homelessness.

APPENDIX G: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

For quick reference, this appendix includes a summary of the recommendations found in the Guidelines.

APPENDIX H: CHECKLIST

This appendix provides a Checklist of key actions that can be taken by library staff who want to address homelessness in their libraries.

"Stigma refers 'to an attribute that is deeply discrediting' and concerns the identity that people impute to a person or group on the basis of surface appearances. Stigma is based on stereotypes and prejudices, having the power to 'cement in one place' those stigmatized and prevent their progress because of its innate negative expectations."
Goffman, 1963

Chapter 3 Homelessness: An Overview

3.1. Introduction

The common view that most people have about people experiencing homelessness is often connected to negative stereotypes and prejudices that are partially caused by media portrayals of homelessness. The real picture of this issue is highly complex and invisible to the public. This chapter lists key facts about homelessness in order to offer insight into the complexity of this topic and thus contribute to overcoming prejudice.

3.2 Definition

There is no single definition of homelessness, as different countries have different definitions. Experts from the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH)(Busch-Geertsemaa, Culhane & Fitzpatrick, 2016) offer a conceptualization of homelessness at a global level. Proceeding from this conceptual model, they envisage a Global Homelessness Framework containing three broad categories of people who may be considered homeless and their subcategories.
Included in these three are:
- People without accommodation
  - People sleeping in the streets or in other open spaces (such as parks, railway embankments, under bridges, on pavement, on river banks, in forests, etc.)
  - People sleeping in public roofed spaces or buildings not intended for human habitation (such as bus and railway stations, taxi ranks, derelict buildings, public buildings, etc.)
  - People sleeping in their cars, rickshaws, open fishing boats, and other forms of transport
  - 'Pavement dwellers' – individuals or households who live on the street in a regular spot, usually with some form of makeshift cover
- People living in temporary or crisis accommodation
  - People staying in night shelters (where occupants have to renegotiate their accommodation nightly)
  - People living in homeless hostels and other types of temporary accommodation for people experiencing homelessness (where occupants have a designated bed or room)
  - Women and children living in a refuge or safe house for those fleeing domestic violence
  - People living in camps provided for 'internally displaced people' i.e. those who have fled their homes as a result of armed conflict, natural or human-made disasters, human rights violations, development projects, etc. but have not crossed international borders
  - People living in camps or reception centres/temporary accommodation for asylum seekers, refugees, and other immigrants
- People living in severely inadequate and/or insecure accommodation
  - People sharing with friends and relatives on a temporary basis
  - People living under threat of violence

- o People living in cheap hotels, bed and breakfasts, and similar temporary accommodations
- o People living in conventional housing without permission
- o People living in conventional housing that is unfit for human habitation
- o People living in trailers, caravans, cars, and tents
- o People living in extremely overcrowded conditions
- o People living in non-conventional buildings and temporary structures, including those living in slums/informal settlements

All three broad categories of people who may be considered to be experiencing homelessness were taken into consideration in these guidelines.

3.3 Metrics

In a part of her report to the UN General Assembly's Third Committee (UN, 2015), Special UN Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, Leilani Farha, focused on the metrics of homelessness. She stressed that states have an obligation to measure the extent of homelessness, disaggregated by gender, race, disability, and other relevant characteristics, and to establish effective means of monitoring progress. As the world has not agreed on a single definition of homelessness, measurement methods are not uniform, which prevents the comparison of data from different states and obtaining precise numbers on the number of people experiencing homelessness worldwide. A number of challenges exist with regards to measuring homelessness, including the risk of excluding so-called "marginalized" groups that are not "visibly" experiencing homelessness.

The challenges to measuring homelessness are the reasons why no data by country were provided or compared, as well as why the estimated numbers on the homeless population worldwide were not included. We refer here to: Online hubs of the Institute of Global Homelessness http://www.ighomelessness.org/#!online-hubs/bsrp6).   Online hubs contain links to the most important international and national organizations that address homelessness. Their sites are a great source of relevant numerical data for specific world regions.

3.4 Causes

Even though the definitions of homelessness differ, the causes of homelessness reflect an intricate interplay between structural factors, systems failures, and individual circumstances. Homelessness is usually the result of the cumulative impact of a number of factors, rather than a single cause (Gaetz, Donaldson, Richter & Gulliver, 2013).
- Structural factors are economic and societal issues that affect opportunities and social environments for individuals. Key factors can include: the lack of adequate income, access to affordable housing and health supports, and/or the experience of discrimination. Shifts in the economy both nationally and locally can create challenges for people to earn an adequate income, pay for food, and housing.
- Systems failures occur when other systems of care and support fail, requiring vulnerable people to turn to the homelessness sector, when other mainstream services could have prevented this need. Examples of systems failures include difficult transitions from child welfare, inadequate discharge planning for people leaving hospitals, incarceration, mental health and addiction facilities, and a lack of support for immigrants and refugees.
- Individual and relational factors apply to the personal circumstances of a person experiencing homelessness, and may include: traumatic events (e.g. house fire or job loss), personal crisis (e.g. family break-up or domestic violence), mental health and

addiction challenges (including brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD, fetal alcohol syndrome), which can be both a cause and a consequence of homelessness, and physical health challenges or disabilities. Relational problems can include family violence and abuse, addictions, mental health experiences of other family members, and extreme poverty.

3.5 Consequences

The consequences of homelessness are often connected to causes to the extent they amplify the causes leading to homelessness in the first place. This leaves a deep mark on an individual's health and social relations.

- Health: Living on the street or in crowded homeless shelters is personally stressful. People experiencing homelessness are exposed to multiple diseases, such as: depression, poor nutrition, poor dental health, substance abuse, infections, and mental health challenges. According to recent studies, people experiencing homelessness also experience significantly higher rates of death, disability and chronic illness than the general housed population.
- Social relations: Evidence suggests the longer someone experiences homelessness, the more difficult it can become to return to a more stable life. It is difficult to face reality, which can have an impact on the loss of self-esteem, isolation, loss of ability and will to care for oneself, increased danger of abuse and violence, increased chance of entering the criminal legal system, development of behavioural problems, and becoming institutionalized.
- Inequality in accessing services and rights: Research results for providers of various services in society suggest inequality in providing access to housing, employment, health care, education, exercise of civil rights, and basic needs like food and clothing.

3.6 Stigma

Stigma refers "to an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (Goffman, 1963, p.13) and concerns the identity that people impute to a person or group on the basis of surface appearances. Stigma is based on stereotypes and prejudice, having the power to "cement in one place" those who have been stigmatized and prevent their progress because of its innate negative expectations. It has a negative impact on self-esteem and hope in the possibility of change. Service providers refrain from adequately engaging with people experiencing homelessness because they perceive them as disinterested, unreliable, dangerous, and believe the position they are in is their personal choice.

3.7 Social Groups at Risk of Homelessness

In her report to the UN General Assembly's Third Committee (UN, 2015), Special UN Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, Leilani Farha, highlighted the social groups that are particularly exposed to the risk of homelessness.   In particular, she singled out the following groups:

- Women: When women are widowed, separated or divorced, need to leave violent households or flee situations of armed conflict or natural disasters, or are evicted from their homes, they face significant risks of becoming homeless. Once homeless, women's experiences are acute. They are exposed to high rates of violence, including rape.
- Children: Homelessness among children and young people has reached critical proportions. Factors that push children into leaving home include parents' unemployment and poverty; family disintegration and parental abuse; parental drug and

alcohol addictions; and being orphaned owing to HIV/AIDS, Ebola, armed conflict or natural disaster. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people are overrepresented in homeless populations in some countries and face additional stigmatization and social exclusion from their families and communities, and are more vulnerable to violence and more likely to be turned away from shelters.

- Families with children: Families are at an increasing risk of homelessness as parents are deprived of income necessary for housing, and supply of affordable housing is depleted. Those families risk losing their children to public authorities for failing to provide adequate housing.

- People on the move: International migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons, are also especially at a significant risk of homelessness. Those groups experience multiple discrimination and numerous obstacles in securing temporary or permanent housing. Migrants are consequently forced to settle in underdeveloped and extremely low-income areas, shacks, and derelict or unfinished buildings. Many refugees have little knowledge about and understanding of services available to them. They face social isolation caused by fragmentation of family units, language barriers, and lack of connections with the community and support networks.

- Indigenous peoples: Homelessness amongst indigenous peoples is caused by displacement from land and resources and the destruction of cultural identity. Contributing to Indigenous housing problems is the lack of culturally appropriate housing. Housing in Indigenous communities is often inadequate, as it does not cater to the cultural importance of communal and secure outdoor living and the significance of using public space for cultural activities. This denies Indigenous people the right to fully enjoy their culture and to take part in cultural life.

- Persons with disabilities: Many states do not ensure access to the community-based support that people with disabilities need, thus they are particularly vulnerable to homelessness. In all parts of the world, psychosocial disability can make it impossible for people to secure employment and earn a living to pay for housing.

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. ... Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere."
Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady of the United States, 1933-1945

Chapter 4 Human Rights and Homelessness

4.1 Introduction

When people experience homelessness, their human rights are consistently threatened and/or violated, including the rights to adequate housing, health, education, and work, which are enshrined in the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The same can be said with regard to civil and political rights, such as the rights to privacy, personal security, and protection of the family, which are enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Both covenants were adopted in 1966 as legally binding elaborations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and have since been ratified by a majority of UN member States (OHCHR, 2016).

Subsequent human rights treaties have further articulated the way these rights apply to specific populations, e.g. women (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), children (Convention on the Rights of the Child), migrant workers (Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers), and persons with disabilities (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities). By ratifying these treaties, States and their public institutions are obliged to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights in their respective countries (United Nations, 2014). Although there is no specific treaty that outlines the rights of those experiencing homelessness as a population, the rights enshrined in the abovementioned treaties also apply to them, as their number includes women, children, and persons with disabilities.

4.2 Examples of human rights relevant to libraries

The human rights that libraries are particularly responsible for upholding are the right to information and the right to participate in cultural life.

4.2.1 The right to information

An example from Zagreb City Libraries in Croatia illustrates this point: "[We] have been continuously providing various library services to the homeless under the 'A Book for a Roof' project. Its goal is to strengthen the homeless by providing them with knowledge and skills necessary for an active inclusion in social and cultural life and the labour market."

The ICCPR includes in Article 19 the "freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds" as part of the right to freedom of expression. It has subsequently been adopted in Article 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in Article 21 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Meanwhile, UN human rights bodies have stated that "the freedom of information" is "in fact a right to information" and thus "a right in itself" (Donders, 2015).

Access to information and knowledge is a key factor that affects inclusiveness, non-

discrimination, and participation. The interrelation between the right to information and civil and political inclusion is self-evident: without access to information, one cannot develop well-informed opinions, make one's voice heard in public debates, organize with like-minded people, or access justice. However, access to information is also indispensable for the exercise of economic, social, and cultural rights, including the rights to education, work, health, and adequate housing. Without access to information, people experiencing homelessness, for example, would have no opportunity to learn about educational programs, job offers, healthcare services, housing opportunities, etc.

4.2.2. The right to participate in cultural life

An example from Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, North Carolina, USA illustrates this point: "Above all, we welcome the homeless to the Library and invite them to use any or all library services. We treat them with respect and dignity, knowing that the Library is one of the few places where they can find dignity in the community."

The right of everyone to take part in cultural life is enshrined in Article 15 of the ICESCR. It implies the legal obligation of States and their public institutions to guarantee "access for all, without discrimination on grounds of financial or any other status, to museums, libraries, cinemas and theatres, and to cultural activities, services and events" (CESCR, 2009).

People experiencing homelessness often feel excluded and unable to use their power as a consequence of their living conditions. Raising awareness of their rights, particularly the right to take part in cultural life, can help them to once again become active members of society. Being treated as persons who are not merely tolerated but have a right to access public places and services can significantly contribute to their self-esteem, as well as serve as a first step towards greater social and economic inclusion.

4.3 Recommendations

Following a human rights-based approach, libraries can help strengthen the rights of people experiencing homelessness and improve their lives in concrete ways. Furthermore, such an approach can strengthen the public perception of libraries as important partners in the process of implementing universal human rights at home.

A human rights based approach demands that libraries
- Respect the human rights of everyone to information and cultural participation
- Take measures to ensure that library staff do not discriminate and that barriers to access to the library's services are lowered or removed
- Regard serving people experiencing homelessness not merely as a question of voluntary social engagement but rather as a duty that libraries, as public institutions, must fulfil
- Promote and support the rights of library users experiencing homelessness by providing them with equal access to information, ICT and other services
- Respect people experiencing homelessness as subjects with rights who are capable of acting on their own behalf, and work together with them to create appropriate services and effective programs for them

To enhance their role as partners in implementing human rights, we further recommend that libraries do the following:

- Cooperate with partners outside of the library profession, for example local human rights organizations or National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) that deal with the challenges of homelessness
- Raise awareness and promote distribution of reports and recommendations regarding homelessness published by UN human rights bodies such as the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) or the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing

4.4 Human Rights and the UN 2030 Agenda

4.4.1 Introduction

In September 2015, the UN Member States adopted the so-called 2030 Agenda to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The new Agenda covers a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The goals seek to integrate the three dimensions of sustainability: social, economic, and environmental. To this end, they include a number of major commitments to be achieved by 2030, including ending poverty, fighting inequality, tackling climate change, and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. They aim to secure freedom from fear and freedom from want for all, without discrimination. The SDGs are explicitly grounded in international human rights law and countries need to implement them in line with their existing human rights obligations. Like human rights, the 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda: all goals apply to all countries.

One of the main advancements of the SDGs is their commitment to "Leave No One Behind"; in other words, to target in particular those experiencing poverty and those in vulnerable situations, which in many countries will include people experiencing homelessness. In addition, SDG target 11.1 explicitly commits all UN Member States to "ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services" (United Nations, 2015).

IFLA was actively involved in the process of developing the SDGs by advocating for access to information, culture, and ICTs as prerequisites for development. The Lyon Declaration adopted at the 2014 World Library and Information Conference specifically refers to human rights: "Access to information supports development by empowering people, especially marginalised people and those living in poverty, to exercise their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights." As a result, access to information was explicitly included in SDG target 16.10. In addition, access to information is recognized as instrumental with regard to many other targets, e.g. those relating to education or health.

4.4.2 Examples of ways in which libraries can help implement the SDGs

In July 2016 IFLA published a booklet of examples and recommendations for policymakers demonstrating the contribution of libraries to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is one of the diverse examples described therein:
"In Slovenia, the Ljubljana City Library hosts an Employment Information Service (EIS) which helps around 1200 people a year, many of whom are homeless or receiving social benefits, to find a job. The library provides media and information literacy skills and helps them develop their résumés and apply for jobs. As many homeless patrons of the library suffer from drug abuse, the library works closely with the Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Addiction at the University Hospital of Psychiatry in Ljubljana to support rehabilitation, reintegration and social inclusion" (Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia).

4.5 Recommendations

As key stakeholders enabling access to information, knowledge, education and social participation, libraries should:

- Contribute to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in their countries by supporting and empowering people who live in extreme poverty as well as in vulnerable situations, including people experiencing homelessness
- Advocate for their vital role in the world-wide national implementation of the SDGs
- Claim a role for libraries in national plans and strategies concerning the 2030 Agenda
- Demonstrate that libraries are helping to make the core mission of the UN 2030 Agenda — "Leave No One Behind" — a reality

"If you think about the variety of issues that face the homeless, in many ways they're not connected to society…The library may be the only place where they can go to be connected. It can be a lifeline."
Jill Bourne, director of San José (Calif.) Public Library.

Chapter 5 Needs Assessment and Evaluation of Services to People Experiencing Homelessness

5.1 Introduction

The causes of homelessness can differ from community to community. Chapter 3, Homelessness: An Overview, described the various causes of homelessness. Any library that is planning services for people experiencing homelessness should study available data on the causes of homelessness, and, to the extent feasible, conduct a needs assessment of needed services and activities that might be met by the library. Needs assessments can be done in three ways:

- Observation of needs from interactions with people experiencing homelessness
- Information gained through contact with NGOs, government agencies, and shelters providing services to people experiencing homelessness
- Information gained by asking people who are experiencing homelessness

The partner to needs assessment is evaluation of services to people experiencing homelessness. Evaluation has five aspects:

- Anecdotal observations
- What the library offers
- Response to what the library offers
- Outcomes for users of the services
- Outcomes for the library

5.2 Needs assessment

Based on a review of the examples contributed by libraries around the world, it appears most libraries plan their services either by observing what people experiencing homelessness need or by learning of their needs through cooperation with NGOs, government agencies, and shelters. Some needs seem obvious. People experiencing homelessness have personal needs: a safe place to sleep, food, basic hygiene, safe and private access to toilets, and a safe place for their belongings. Some are also looking for jobs, information, and entertainment. A library is a logical place to visit to meet these needs. Libraries can respond by helping people meet their needs or, conversely, by discouraging people experiencing homelessness from coming into the library. Many libraries realize they cannot help people experiencing homelessness on their own and can be most helpful by partnering with shelters, NGOs, or government agencies. Working together, programs like those described in the Section on Services are developed and delivered.

Only four libraries specifically mentioned a needs assessment that involved interaction with those experiencing homelessness:

- "I once organized a focus group with women who had been homeless (car sleeping) and rep(resentative) from refugees. Some library staff attended, learnt about the signs of a

woman escaping domestic violence, what their perception of the library is, how PTSD and low self-esteem makes them not want to approach staff or ask for assistance. This knowledge has been shared with other staff but we haven't developed a specific awareness program yet. " (Newcastle Regional Library, Australia)

- Vancouver Public Library encourages its library staff to visit places where people experiencing homelessness gather, such as homeless shelters and food banks. The survey respondent goes on to say: "Often, librarians visit just to hang out and build relationships with people who are using the services, with the ultimate goal of finding out how the library can best serve the people we interact with and the homeless in general." She also says "librarians often find that people who are homeless are unaware of library services." (Vancouver Public Library, Canada)

- The Dallas Public Library staff, together with staff from a city initiative, "established relationships with customers experiencing homelessness through conversation and one-on-one assistance and a homeless engagement survey to help staff gauge library usage and program interests of the homeless population." The library based its services partially on the outcome of these needs assessment efforts. On an ongoing basis, the library engages people experiencing homelessness in conversation. (Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA)

- The Multnomah County Library visits social service agencies regularly, delivering resource materials. As they report, they "survey the interests of those served in order to ensure that we are keeping up with changing demographics and needs." (The Multnomah County Library, Washington, USA)

5.3 Evaluation of Services

5.3.1 Anecdotal information

From the examples received, we can conclude the most common way of assessing the services to people experiencing homelessness is by observation and anecdotes. Here are some examples:

- "Anecdotally hear success stories from people who used the service (shelter placement, health care assistance and substance abuse assistance)." (Queens library, Jamaica, NY, USA)

- "The programs for children and parents encourage reading and literacy and also make a positive and personal connection to the library that many of the families have not had before." (Columbus Metropolitan Library, Ohio, USA)

- "We have observed that most of these people perceive the library as a safe and comfortable environment of low demand. Where they are sheltered from inclement weather and possible conflicts street." (Biblioteques de Barcelona, Spain)

5.3.2 Response to services

A second method of evaluation that is used prominently is to list the services the library offers and the response to those services. For examples, libraries will count the number of books circulated at shelters or handed out at a program. If there is staff dedicated to serving people who are experiencing homelessness, the staff counts the number of people they see. Reports such as:

- "Our annual Homeless Connect Day attracted 900 guests who accessed the 'one-stop-shop' of services and support." (Newcastle Region Library, Australia)

- "Don't know the actual results, but about 500 booklets have been taken out from our library in the past two and a half years." (Hibiya Library and Museum, Tokyo, Japan)

5.3.3 Impact

Some libraries do try and evaluate the impact of the library's services on the clientele they serve:

- The Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia tracks many aspects of their service: the number and sex of people experiencing homelessness; number who obtained jobs; those who solved their economic problems; and, those that received stable housing.
- The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, North Carolina, USA gathered additional detail on, not only how many people received jobs as a result of library assistance, but also how many retained their jobs, resigned, were terminated, or whose job was temporary. They also counted the number of job counselling sessions conducted, how many résumés were written, and how many referrals made to job resources.
- The Fresno Public Library, California, USA prepared a film on homelessness and conducted a survey after the film to determine the number of people who indicated they received a "greater understanding of issues related to homelessness." Ninety-six percent of the respondents indicated they would "more likely to make contact…and improved their desire and willingness to assist in ending homelessness."

5.3.4 Outcomes for the Library

Libraries begin services for people who are experiencing homelessness for several reasons: recognizing the need, trying to solve the "problem" of dealing with people in the library who are experiencing homelessness; because their local government has a priority on services to people experiencing homelessness; or a combination of all of the above. What are the benefits for the library in providing these services?

- These can vary. After hiring two social workers, interacting with clientele that are experiencing homelessness, and training staff, the Denver Public Library reports a decrease in the number of times they felt emergency police services needed to be called. Other libraries report they have worked with their library users who are experiencing homelessness and are frequent users of the library to help provide support and advice about appropriate library use and available services to their peers who are new to the library. (Denver Public Library, Colorado, USA)
- The Newcastle Regional Library reports that networking with other agencies "allows us to raise awareness of our role, emphasizing that public libraries are often a hub for people experiencing homelessness, that we are an excellent place to distribute information and staff are keen to tailor programs to assist people to build capacity." (Newcastle Region Library, Australia)
- Another outcome is the positive response from local government and community agencies to the libraries' participation in efforts to address homelessness in their communities.
- Staff at the Richland Public Library says their work on homelessness has helped them establish connections with social services agencies and other resource providers in the community. The Director comments: "We are now 'plugged in' and Richland Library is seen as part of the network." (Richland Public Library, Columbia, South Carolina, USA)

One result of gathering information on the use and impact of services provided to people experiencing homelessness is that the library can:

- Evaluate the success of its own programs in deciding whether to continue, eliminate, or revise services
- Use the data collected to gain additional support or funding for the library's program

- Bring positive attention to the library as an equal contributor to community goals

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Needs assessment

In conducting a needs assessment, a library should:
- Use any available data to evaluate the extent and nature of homelessness in a community
- Determine if local government has goals related to serving people experiencing homelessness
- Contact community agencies and NGOs that provide services to people experiencing homelessness to discuss needs they see and how the library might respond to these needs
- To the extent possible, interact with people experiencing homelessness to determine a role the library might plan in meeting their needs

5.4.2 Evaluation

In evaluating a program and activities serving people experiencing homelessness, a library should
- Keep a record of positive anecdotes relating the result of library services
- Create a method of documenting the use of library services
- Document assumptions and observations through interviews, surveys, and focus groups
- Cooperate with community agencies, government agencies, shelters, and NGOs to whom the library makes referrals, to document the impact of library services on people experiencing homelessness

"Through collaboration with multiple departments across [our library] and many community based and municipal agencies, we work to provide inclusive and targeted library services for people experiencing homelessness."
Queens Library, New York, USA

Chapter 6 Attitude

6.1 Introduction

Attitudes matter. A negative or hostile attitude toward those experiencing homelessness can make it difficult for both the library staff and the library users. On the other hand, a welcoming and friendly approach can make library users feel included and seen. A library that is committed to serving all of its library users well can make a significant difference for those experiencing homelessness by showing their presence is wanted and their needs are important.

6.2 Examples

Of the libraries surveyed, some examples of positive and all-inclusive attitudes include:
- Accessibility and equity are two of the core values of librarianship. "Staff demonstrate these values by emphasizing the welcoming nature of public libraries and by raising awareness of free services that support capacity building." (Newcastle Region Library, Australia)
- "All yours – an inclusive and welcoming place where everyone can connect with ideas and creatively engage with each other. We respect the diversity of people in our community." (State Library of Queensland, South Brisbane, Australia)
- This is a public building, "so all are welcome." (Bibliotheek Kennemerwaard, Alkmaar, The Netherlands)
- "Library Administration is committed to advocacy for this group and their rights to use the public library." (Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, NC, USA)
- The library should be "an open, warm and welcoming place to all." (Boulder Public Library, Colorado, USA)
- "Above all, we welcome the homeless to the Library and invite them to use any or all library services. We treat them with respect and dignity, knowing that the Library is one of the few places where they can find dignity in the community." (Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, North Carolina, USA)
- "Through collaboration with multiple departments across [our library] and many community based and municipal agencies, we work to provide inclusive and targeted library services for people experiencing homelessness." (Queens Library, New York, USA)
- "[Our library] is committed to our community...Serving our homeless and vulnerable customers is a vital part of ensuring that we are advancing our community." (Richland Library, Columbia, SC, USA)

6.3 Recommendations

To create a welcoming and supportive attitude toward those who are experiencing homelessness:

6.3.1 Consider whom the library is welcoming
- Assess the library from the viewpoint of someone who is experiencing homelessness

- Use the library layout, the posters, displays, programs, art, resources and collection to welcome all library users

6.3.2 Assess the library's posted rules and policies
- If rules and policies are posted, use positive language. For example, rather than listing all the behaviours that are **not** allowed, provide a simple and short list of what **is** allowed. Post a single copy instead of multiple copies.
- Assess who is impacted by the rules and policies. If they disproportionately affect those who are experiencing homelessness, consider alternatives. For example, if the library doesn't allow sleeping, consider changing that rule to sleeping allowed as long as it doesn't disturb other library users.
- Consider making changes that could make the library a welcoming environment for all. For example, flexibility regarding getting a library card, having an "honour" book shelf, or providing safe storage for larger items. All of these can help create a public space that says "yes" to everyone.

6.3.3 Work with library staff
- Staff attitudes can vary greatly
- Point out each person who uses the library deserves to be treated with respect and interest
- Have a no-tolerance policy toward negative and hostile comments about library users who are experiencing homelessness. Challenge stereotypes.
- Discuss and address any staff concerns
- Provide information and training. Training can help staff feel comfortable providing resources and interacting with library users who are unstably housed. (More extensive information about training can be found in the Training section). Denver Public Library, Colorado, USA "provides training and support to staff in the areas of Trauma Informed Services, Mental Health, Homelessness and Self Care." These kinds of training can help create welcoming and supportive attitudes. Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA provides ongoing sensitivity training.
- Get to know the names of frequent library users and welcome them to the library. This positive approach can lessen tensions, clear up misunderstandings, and create a supportive environment for all.
- Offer your own name. Telling a library user experiencing homelessness your name helps create a respectful and equal relationship that can add to a positive and welcoming library environment.

6.3.4 Be all-inclusive
- When adding to the library's collection, creating programs, designing displays, providing resources – consider the needs of the library users experiencing homelessness and include them. Not sure, ask – your library users, local service agencies.
- Listen and learn: Go into the community and listen to those who are experiencing homelessness, as well as those who provide services
- Invite speakers from the homelessness community to be part of staff trainings related to homelessness and poverty
- Learn from community partners – attend their meetings, invite them to library meetings, ask them to provide staff trainings

"At the Fair we held in our library, we raised awareness of free services, including Internet and Wi-Fi computers, daily newspapers, early literacy programs, reference assistance, online services and recreational reading – all in a safe, inclusive, and harmonious environment."
Newcastle Region Library, Australia

Chapter 7 Library Services

7.1 Introduction

The examples we received from around the world conveyed a variety of services offered for people experiencing homelessness and the commitment of libraries to serving this particular population. The services offered fell into five broad categories:
- Basic access to library services
- Engagement in community life
- Preparation and assistance in finding employment
- Educational services and access to library resources
- Meeting social needs

Before discussing services, this chapter will discuss two introductory topics: Target audience and partnerships.

7.2 Target audience

Around the world, libraries offer services specifically for those experiencing homelessness or who are unstably housed. Target audiences for these services can vary greatly, depending on the library. Being cognizant of the needs of local library users experiencing homelessness can help libraries target their services so they contribute to the overall well-being of their communities. The libraries that were surveyed provided a range of target audiences for their programs. The first survey question posed was:

> *Are your programs for specific populations among those experiencing homelessness (e.g., single adults, youth under 18, youth over 18, families with children?) Please describe.*

The answers showed the wide range of recipients of library services for people experiencing homelessness.

In general in the U.S, libraries that do not target a specific group report that adult males are the most predominant group. The second predominant group are youth by themselves and families with children. The Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia, describes these families as the "hidden homeless."
Depending on the situation in a specific community, some libraries have developed programs for specific populations such as refugees or veterans from military service.

7.2.1 Examples of target audiences
- "People engaged with daily labour or casual labour and living on pavements in Mumbai are the target population" (Mumbai Public Library, India)
- "Young and old AIDS pandemic survivors" (Buwenda Public School, Uganda)
- Veterans (Fresno Public Library, California, USA)
- "We serve a great diversity of situations, from indigenous people experiencing

homelessness as a crisis or migrant workers who have lost work, young people with some kind of addiction or psychiatric illness, in precarious health care situation, etc. Could point out that adult men predominate, although a growing number of young people in this situation, many immigrants without work." (Biblioteques de Barcelona, Spain)

7.3 Partnerships

Before describing the services, it is important to consider the role of partnerships in providing services to people experiencing homelessness.   Libraries can deliver services to people experiencing homelessness on their own or in cooperation with other groups also providing services. Many of the libraries describing their services worked cooperatively and gave one of two or both reasons for partnerships:

- Needs of people experiencing homelessness are better addressed when community groups work together
- Raising the awareness of local government and community agencies about the value and ability of the public library

Libraries partnered with a multitude of groups including government agencies, NGOs, community agencies, employment agencies, local schools serving children experiencing homelessness, and individual experts such as doctors and nurses, dentists, lawyers, and business leaders.   However, adult, youth, and family shelters for those experiencing homelessness were the agencies with which libraries most often cooperated.   One library included a tour of shelters as part of their staff training and the Richland Public Library, Columbia, South Carolina, USA allows staff to work one hour a week in a local shelter, paid for by the library. Partnering with these groups also raises the awareness of library staff that they are not alone in serving people who are experiencing homelessness.

7.4 Services

Although the services described below are organized into five categories, there is substantial overlap among the categories. Many libraries provide services in more than one category if not all five.

7.4.1 Basic access to library services

The most basic service that libraries provide is access to the library, its collection, and services equal to the access provided to all other eligible community members.   At least eight of the libraries that submitted examples provide a free library card to people experiencing homelessness.   In the United States, where library services are provided without charge, this means adopting a policy that people experiencing homelessness do not need to provide proof of a stable address.   In some cases, the library is willing to use the address of a local shelter in place of a stable address for the individual.   In countries where there is a charge for library service, the library waives the charge and again adopts a policy not requiring a stable address.

A part of basic access is a welcoming attitude and acceptance, engaging the individual experiencing homelessness in conversation, and offering library services, either specifically designed for people experiencing homelessness or for all library users.

7.4.2 Engagement in community life

Many of the services described were designed to engage people experiencing homelessness in a more stable lifestyle.   For example, the Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia, describes its goals encouraging people experiencing homelessness to "pursue lifelong learning, personal development, and improving the options in their lives."   The Zagreb City Library in Croatia echoes this with the goal to "strengthen homeless by providing knowledge and skills necessary for an active inclusion in the social and cultural life and the labour market."   The goals also include cooperation with community groups and changing "stereotypes and prejudice about homeless people."

Libraries focusing on engagement that submitted examples provided the following services:
- Book, music, movie, game clubs, often specifically for people experiencing homelessness
- Discussion groups often tied to books, music, or movie programs
- Opportunities for creativity through crafts, creative writing, and poetry
- A community garden with participants sharing in the produce grown
- Storytelling for children and adults
- Book giveaways
- Engaging people experiencing homelessness as library volunteers

Some examples of engagement in community life are:
- The Dallas Public Library is a good example of a comprehensive engagement program. "Engagement programs include bi-monthly Coffee and Conversation, Street View Podcast, Community forum on homelessness as well a weekly game days and music classes.   In Coffee and Conversation, staff and customers engage in conversation and discover what they share in common while enjoying cookies and coffee.   Street View Podcast: Podcast recorded by library staff and hosted by a formerly homeless library patron…The podcast features homeless guests and social service providers and aims to increase community awareness of issues related to homelessness in Dallas." (Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA)
- The Queens Library offers its engagement programs in conjunction with local shelters. "[We] offer summer reading programs and book collections at family shelters.   Shelter programs include: a weekly story time for toddlers and preschoolers at one shelter; a parent book club at another shelter; library card registration drives for back to school and summer reading; summer reading arts and crafts programs at three shelters each summer, along with book collections purchased for those sites." (Queens Library, Jamaica, New York, USA,)
- "Our Main Library provides a weekly book club exclusively for the homeless, those in transition and the housed, where participants can get a cup of coffee, snack, free book and the opportunity to share their view on the latest work being discussed.   The Turning Pages Book Club has a solid group of participants that come every week and fellowship with others in the group." (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, North Carolina, USA)

7.4.3 Preparation and assistance in finding employment

Many libraries offer services designed to help people experiencing homelessness to find jobs. Finding a job is a complex activity that includes gaining skills, finding out about jobs, applying for them, and preparing for interviews.   Some libraries already have services in the library that aid in job hunting.   People experiencing homelessness can take advantage of existing services or the library can create job-finding services specifically for this population.   Services in this area include:

- Access to computers and training in their use
- Extended time on computers to file application forms
- Assistance in preparing a résumé or job application form
- Assistance in obtaining an email account and training in how to use it
- Career counselling
- Interview practice

Examples of assistance in finding employment include:
- The Ljubljana City Library offers a comprehensive service in this area: "The Ljubljana City Library Employment Information Service (EIS) offers workshops, coaching, motivation meetings, lectures, basic computer skills training, and support for application and CV writing, computer access and document printing free of charge and information brochure.   It is a place with four working computers and also a place for searching for job announcements on the Internet, writing applications, etc.   We help with filling out forms for solidarity housing, social monetary aid and for registering at the Employment Service.   Yearly, EIS has 1200 users, organizes 100 learning activities and cooperates with numerous partners." (Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia)
- Access to information and services (Business and Job Centre) is of particular interest to homeless customers.   It offers basic and intermediate computer skills classes; allows customers to book appointments with a learning coach for an hour-long one-on-one session for learning computer skills; connects employers with jobs seekers and job seekers with organizations which provide training and certification; offers résumé help and interview practice with certified career coaches; provides networking and support for job seekers; regularly hosts programs on financial literacy; and hosted a Career Closet [of clothes] to match up job seekers in need with interview appropriate attire. (Richland Library, Columbia, South Carolina, USA)

7.4.4 Education services and access to the library's resources

Another area of service is educational opportunities. Training in computer use is common in most libraries because it is also a service provided to any library user. Other services offered are:
- International language classes teaching the local language to immigrants or refugees
- Basic literacy in the native language of the individual. For example, the Kirklees Library, Huddersfield/Dewsbury, U.K. offers a six-week adult literacy program.
- Digital literacy, including both how to use a computer and how to evaluate the information that is discovered
- Secondary education leading toward a secondary degree

Some libraries provide a collection of materials specifically for those experiencing homelessness. Often this is a revolving collection that is housed in a shelter.   Libraries in Greece have designed "pop-up libraries" that can travel from place to place, "pop-up," deliver books, and then pack up to move on.   In Greece, the target audience is primarily refugees.

The Riga Central Library in Latvia works with a local Day Centre. The Day Centre operates a three-story building. The library writes: "The Library occupies most of the third floor.   It is a lending point of Riga Central Library.   [People] can read books and magazines on site. Readers with ID documents (passports) can check out books. TV and computers available, including Office and Internet."

7.4.5 Meeting Social Needs

Services designed specifically for people experiencing homelessness are often focused on social needs.   Some examples include:

- Helping people experiencing homelessness connect to social services such as housing, medical, drug abuse treatment, and mental health services.   In these situations, library staff serves as an intermediary between people in need and the service agencies that provide those services.
- Assistance in completing application forms.   Many applications for public services require the forms be submitted online. Many people experiencing homelessness may not have the computer skills to fill out the applications efficiently.   Librarians assist in this effort.
- Soliciting food, toiletries, and supplies for people experiencing homelessness
- Special days of services designed especially for people experiencing homelessness
- Brochures, posters, and handouts that describe the services available both within the library and in the community
- Offering time to discuss with experts such as lawyers, social workers, career consultants
- Engaging people experiencing homelessness as volunteers in the library

7.4.6 Supplies

The Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA collects and distributes backpacks.   The Newcastle Region Library, Australia, publicizes the community's food bank for free food.   The Toulouse Public Library, France formed a partnership with a local restaurant. The library brings in books, games, and newspapers monthly and people experiencing homelessness can eat for free.

The Buwenda Public School and St. Marks SSS, Uganda goal is to "keep low income, subsistence farmers, and families from starvation…A feeding program is underway where milk is added to the daily porridge and soon, hard boiled eggs will be available to some of the students who do not have enough to eat."

7.4.7 Brochures

Many libraries provide brochures and handouts to assist people experiencing homelessness in finding the resources they need.   The Hibiya Library and Museum, Tokyo, Japan makes available a "Guidebook to way out of life on the street" providing "information necessary for the people who have recently become homeless, including where to go to find a job or how to apply for welfare benefits." These guidebooks are placed mainly in the library public toilets, which can be expected to be visited by people experiencing homelessness, and where relative privacy can be found.

King Library, San Jose, California, USA, publishes a pamphlet on emergency services in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.   The New York Public Library, New York, USA, publishes "street sheets" – information on "free services such as showers, laundries, soup kitchens and food pantries, free legal and health services."

7.4.8 Experts
- The King Library provides a lawyer once a week for a free 20-minute consultation. They also provide access to social workers on a regular basis for conversation and consultation. King County Library, San Jose, California, USA
- The Dallas Public Library also provides a criminal lawyer to advise people in need. Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA

7.4.9 Volunteers

The Zagreb Public Library, Croatia engages people who are experiencing homelessness as volunteers in the library.

7.4.10 Fairs

Libraries organize or participate in daylong fairs that provide a multitude of services and entertainment specifically targeted to people experiencing homelessness:
- The Newcastle Region Library participates in the annual Hunter Homeless Connect Day. Homeless Connect organizations can be found throughout Australia and coordinate community response to homelessness. During the event in Newcastle, 900 "guests" "accessed one-stop-shop services, support, and advice about housing, financial, and legal issues." They also received information about podiatry and dental services. Attendees received free food, entertainment, clothing, haircuts, toiletries, massages, and pet services. The library reports they: "Raised awareness of free services, including Internet and Wi-Fi computers, daily newspapers, early literacy programs, reference assistance, online services and recreational reading – all in a safe, inclusive, and harmonious environment. In 2015, the library distributed over 500 books. Staff also assisted guests with fee and fine enquiries, letter writing, and printing photos of loved ones from Facebook. Networking with other agencies on the day allowed us to raise awareness of our role, emphasizing that public libraries are often a hub for people experiencing homelessness, that we are an excellent place to distribute information and staff are keen to tailor programs to assist people to build capacity." Newcastle Region Library, Australia
- The Vancouver Public Library has hosted the Annual Alley Health Fair for the last eight years. The Fair "brings together over 35 heath agencies that serve the poor. The fair feeds 1500 people and offers resources directly on the street, tests for AIDS, Hep C, offers haircuts, etc. It is coordinated with community partners." Vancouver Public Library, Canada.

7.5 Recommendations

As the examples show, there is a wide range of services offered to people experiencing homelessness. Services, offered around the world, vary in size, complexity, intensity, and partnerships. Here are some suggestions for getting started on providing a program that serves people who are experiencing homelessness in your community.
- Explore the need for services to people experiencing homelessness. If you are sure your library is serving people experiencing homelessness, are they perceived as causing problems for the library? If the number is low, they are not perceived as causing problems and they easily use existing library services, the library may not need to offer any services particularly relevant to their lives. However, keep in mind they may not directly ask for these services, so getting to know each person will help ascertain whether or not your library is meeting their information needs.
- Assuming that homelessness is present in your community, begin by identifying other agencies already providing services to people experiencing homelessness. Attend their meetings and offer the library as a partner in their efforts to address the homelessness in the community.
- Form a staff committee to plan services for people experiencing homelessness. This committee should be composed of staff sympathetic to and willing to develop services

for unstably housed community members.   The Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA formed the Homeless Engagement and Leadership Development Program (HELP). The Denver Public Library, Colorado, USA created the Homeless Service Action Committee to investigate homelessness in the community and what the library could do to address it.   In both cases, the committee became the primary liaison with other agencies and the government in the community.

- Create an environment that is welcoming to those experiencing homelessness so they are comfortable discussing their needs. Unstably housed youth in particular can be reluctant to disclose their housing status and an environment that is supportive can help them be comfortable enough to interact with the library staff and discuss their particular needs.

- Begin planning library services for people experiencing homeless by looking at current library services that would engage or be useful to people experiencing homelessness. Are there services that people experiencing homelessness are now using? Are their minimal changes or approaches that could be made to make the services more applicable to the homeless population?   For example, recruit people experiencing homelessness specifically for computer classes.   If your library has a service to help people find jobs, consider tailoring this service to the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness. If the library already has a book club, consider starting a book club that includes people experiencing homelessness and encourage them to choose the books.   Invite stably housed people to discuss the same book.

- Reach out to other agencies to bring their services into the library. These could include consultations with lawyers, social workers, nurses, and shelter staff to provide personal services to people experiencing homelessness.

- Become a leader in the community's efforts to address homelessness.   Join community agency boards and share information about the library's services.

- Apply for grants or funding from local government to support services that would be difficult to provide for free or low cost.   If the library is part of a government coalition, funding may be available for staff dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness. (Read article by Elissa Hardy, Denver Public Library, Colorado, USA for benefit of a full-time social worker.)

- Review the services above and throughout these guidelines to see which are applicable for your library.   Develop a plan of service.   Include staff training as a necessary component in the plan.

- Choose services that are realistic for the library, that bring in community partners, and that meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

"Protecting the refugees is not something irrelevant, but rather an important issue to reflect upon individually. In this context, libraries should embrace their institutional position and assist everybody who seeks to escape the devastation of war. Furthermore, libraries have the power to advocate for the refugees' rights of access to education and information but even more than that."
Despina Gerasimidou

Chapter 8 Services for Refugees

8.1 Introduction

As many countries accept a vast refugee stream, libraries are at the forefront of the current refugee crisis. Libraries demonstrate a long tradition of attracting and including people regardless of their countries of origin and they respond effectively to humanitarian crises in multiple and direct ways.

8.1.1 Importance

Addressing the needs of the times, libraries undertake an active role and try to develop various services and activities. Libraries' roles can be catalytic in finding practical solutions to this significant social issue. By taking action, libraries could also reach the 4th Sustainable Development Goal, which is to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (United Nations, 2015). Protecting the refugees is not something irrelevant, but rather an important issue to reflect upon individually. In this context, libraries should embrace their institutional position and assist everybody who seeks to escape the devastation of war. Furthermore, libraries have the power to advocate for the refugees' rights of access to education and information but even more than that.

As the German Library Association states:
"Free access to education and training, to information, and culture is a fundamental right of all people" (German Library Association, 2015)

8.1.2 Definition of refugee

According to the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is:
"A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (Refugee Council, 2016).

8.1.3 Comparison between persons experiencing homelessness & refugees

Refugees and persons experiencing homelessness have much in common, with a few distinct differences.
- Both groups don't have a permanent address. They commonly live in temporary shelters, unpredictable and frequently unhealthy refugees camps, or on the streets. At some libraries, this temporary and fluid housing situation can make it difficult to obtain a library card, which in turn can create barriers to accessing critical resources, such as the Internet.

- Health is a challenge for both groups. In the case of persons experiencing homelessness, untreated or undiagnosed mental health challenges can lead to homelessness. For both groups, the trauma of being unstably housed or in challenging living situations can exacerbate or trigger mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- In general, persons experiencing homelessness are native to the country where they live, while refugees may have to overcome cultural barriers and adjust to a new culture (such as religion, language, customs).
- Both groups tend to be unemployed or underemployed. For people experiencing homelessness, this is primarily an outcome of their living situation, their health, their skills or their education. For refugees, it is frequently due to their legal status, as well as other barriers, such as language, health and skills.
- Refugees ordinarily have been violently separated from their families, an important psychosocial aspect. People experiencing homelessness may or may not be with their families and separation is often either through poverty or discord within the family (e.g., abuse; rejection).
- The rights of refugees may be different, depending on the country. There is a legal framework and definition for the protection of refugees. This is not true for people experiencing homelessness. In fact, in many cities there are laws that criminalize homelessness (e.g., sit/lie laws), although of course these laws apply to anyone, native born or refugee.
- While some people experiencing homelessness are unaware of the resources and refuge offered by libraries, most understand the concept of a public library in their own countries. For refugees, this concept may be new to them, depending on their country of origin.
- Both groups need access to local health services and educational opportunities, and both need access to supportive social networking. Both confront prejudice and stigma on a daily basis and both must have the same human rights as any other persons.

8.2 Examples

IFLA put out a call, asking for library examples regarding services for refugees. The outcome of this was the paper: "Responding! Public Libraries and Refugees" (IFLA, 2015). At the same time, EBLIDA (the European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations) (2015) also responded to the crisis, collecting similar examples. In addition, the organization "Future Library" (Greece), wanting to respond to the refugee crisis, began to map the library services for refugees in Greece. They organized the training workshop "Libraries helping refugees," with facilitators from Libraries Without Borders, Google, and Future Library. The workshop took place at the Future Library Unconference 2015 and there were 60 participants, from six different countries. They came from a range of multi-disciplinary backgrounds, including: librarians, municipal officers, social workers, representatives from NGOs and private foundations, individuals who run refugee supporting initiatives, and photographers (Future Library, 2015).

8.2.1 Examples from the IFLA LSN survey

One of the LSN survey questions particularly related to refugees:

> *If your library organizes library services for refugees who are unstably housed, please describe what kind of services.*

Answers to this question included a range of examples of the kind of work libraries around the world are doing to help refugees, particularly non-USA libraries. Some examples show that libraries around the world provide:

- Support
- Information
- Assistance in filling out forms for money
- Registration at the Employment Service or for temporary residence
- Services regarding housing issues (e.g. referrals)
- Online applications for schools and other benefits in general
- Personal care items
- Computer use

In many cases the above library services, which are very similar to those offered for anyone experiencing homelessness, can be offered only due to partnerships with local agencies.

Specific examples placed an emphasis on language acquisition, partnerships, outreach and cultural events. Examples of answers included:

- Language related activities & support
  - Social contact and language issues through "Talk English Conversation Cafes" pre-ESOL class. Also included were book challenge programs with ESOL teachers. "Any increase in English competency helps people to access housing and benefits and employment." (Kirklees Libraries, Huddersfield Dewsbury, UK)
  - Work with Haitian immigrants – offer Spanish classes at the library and French materials as "healing tool and companion." (Public Library Pablo Neruda, Santiago, Chile)
  - Pop-up libraries, language cafes where refugees can practice Dutch. Refugees can also use technology resources such as computers for Skype/email. (Bibliotheek Kennemerwaard, Alkmar, Netherlands)
  - Mobile computer classes, library card registration and guided library tours. Offer online resources in five languages at Pathwayfornewamericans.org. (Nashville Public Library, Tennessee, U.S.)
  - The Cologne Public Library, Germany (IFLA 2015), responding to the needs of the region, opened the Language Room, which is run by volunteers in partnership with the library and it offers:
    - A separate room for refugees that can be used for group work as well as for individuals
    - Diverse event programs (e.g. library introductions, initial information, a variety of consultation services, homework support, and multilingual readings for refugee children)
    - A reading lounge, a collection of media for German language acquisition, alpha studio, computers, a projector and audio stations
    - Information events for volunteers and welcome initiatives, information material for volunteers for German language support, media boxes, and multilingual readings for refugee children
    - A program for integration courses, including library tours for the attendees and a free library card for three months
- Partnerships – Outreach:
  - The organization **"Libraries Without Borders"** (2016) among other services, recently designed and developed the concept of the Ideas Box, which is a

portable media centre in a toolkit that fits on two pallets and can be set up in less than 20 minutes to create a cultural and connected space of 300 sq. ft. The Ideas Box offers to refugees:

- Internet connection
- Computer and tablets
- Educational resources
- Books
- A movie theatre

("Libraries Without Borders, San Francisco, California, USA)

o A Mobile Library that visits the temporary refugees' camp, close to the city of Veria, Greece. The library also offers for the refugees inside the library:

- Free Wi-Fi connection for Internet access through 17 computers
- Space to charge mobile devices and portable computers
- Space for Skype communication
- Access to the largest newsstand of the world, the press-reader in which newspaper and magazines from 100 different countries (approximately 60 languages are included)
- Several books in English
- Children's picture, drawing or colouring books along with other books in English
- Board games in English and games without words, alongside educational DVDs

(Veria Central Public Library, Greece)

o The Asylothek project, Germany (2015) is also really worth mentioning. The main concept of this outreach program is to operate "libraries" in asylum centres and homes in Germany. It is a volunteer initiative, based on donations. The first one opened in 2012 in Nuremberg. Today there are more than 30 established in all parts of Germany. Volunteers provide German language courses aiming at empowering the refugees for everyday life.

o Provide tours and services to recent migrants through a migrant resource centre, a community centre and language schools (Balmain Library, Australia)

o Currently in conversation with local organization that provides support services to refugees and forced migrants, to develop pathways and links to library services. (State Library of Queensland, South Brisbane, Australia)

o Participates in More4Refugees program (part of MORE Project initiated by Austrian University Conference (UNIKO)). Aims to provide access to academic education for granted asylum and asylum seekers. Also includes free access to and use of all available media and guided tours and support at all of their library locations. (University of Salzburg, Austria)

o Collaborated on solidarity campaign to provide personal care items to people on the street who lunch daily at local branch of national organization. Included cultural event at the library. (Municipal Library Javiera Carrera, Angol, Chile)

o The Riga City Library (RCL) homepage has information in 50 languages. They are preparing for larger numbers of refugees, so buying materials, especially publications in English and Italian. RCL has established partnership with Riga City Council Department of Education, Culture and Sports as well as the NGO (nongovernmental organizations) House founded by RCC in order to implement the Riga City Society Integration Program for 2011-2017. In 2016, RCL hosted an international seminar on library services for refugees. Several RCL libraries have established partnership with minority culture associations, schools and centres. (Riga Central Library, Latvia)

- Cultural – Educational – Entertainment events
  - Since 2013, the Dugave Library organises various activities whose goal is to introduce asylum seekers and refugees to the local community and the Croatian society as well as to introduce the local community to their countries and cultures. These include: Lectures, presentations and book donations; a documentary film; creative workshops, exhibitions, the reading of stories and picture books; a bicycling event; a literary forum that included asylum seekers and their literary works and life experiences. (City Library of Zagreb, Croatia)
- For migrants, the rural population comes to the big city for employment. Creating geographical groups, cross-border interactions, and increase of awareness regarding basic rights are some of the activities. (Alternative Realities – Mumbai, India)

8.2.2 Another example

"Libraries Serve Refugees: resources by librarians – for everyone" is a WordPress website sponsored by Urban Librarians Unite (ULU) (http://urbanlibrariansunite.org/), which is a "group of urban library professionals and advocates united to build community centered 21st century libraries." This dynamic resource provides information and resources to support libraries in serving refugees. Created by USA librarians, it is mainly USA-centric but libraries from other countries may find the resources and the concept useful and an excellent example of the potential for libraries to actively address the lives of refugees.

8.3 Recommendations

8.3.1 Services

The aforementioned case studies and survey responses illustrate the power of libraries to play a role in refugees' lives and help them effectively adapt to new conditions. Depending on the needs (psychosocial, capacity building, and information related), libraries can offer the following services:
- Free phone charger
- Free computer and Internet access (video conferencing with relatives, email, social media, how to search online in case of family separation)
- Educational and entertaining activities for children and adults
  - Survival language courses (e.g., Survival English, Farsi/Persian, Greek, other languages of the countries that the refugees will travel through)
  - Vocational training (professional language, job search)
  - Activities to serve as links with the original cultures of the refugees
  - Activities in order for the refugees to learn about the culture of the host country
- Lending of books (e.g.. self-help books), newspapers and board games
- Access to informational material, curated by the library staff specifically for the refugees. The content could include the following topics:
  - First aid information
  - "How to deal with stress" helpful information
  - Basic principles of European, International and National Law regarding: Labour law, human rights, women's rights (rights of pregnant women), children's rights (education rights), migration and asylum law (family reunification)
  - News (about where they are going, what is happening in the world, etc.)
  - Basic local information (where to sleep, where to eat, where to get currency, how to get health assistance and find pharmacies, hospitals, medical centres)

- Regional maps, tips and advice on how to travel to other places within the host country (e.g., Greece), the region nearby (e.g. Balkan area) and Europe and how to protect themselves from smugglers
- If possible, information/resources available in the languages of the refugees. For example, in the recent refugee crisis caused by the Arab Spring, the languages could be Arabic, Farsi/ Persian and English. The services may be offered as well in the language of the host country, so the library services are also a means of social inclusion.
- Offered inside the library and through outreach programs, such as mobile libraries, which can visit the refugee camps. In the cases where the mobile library is hard to implement, then library staff should let refugees know about the services they offer, through a) printed brochures (written preferably in the refugees' languages) that they can leave at the refugee camps and b) a map, instructions and the opening hours, regarding how refugees can come to the library.
- The best communication channel is personal referrals – the "grapevine"

Furthermore, libraries could help refugees by:
- Developing actions for community awareness
- Running fundraising and charity campaigns to gather food, clothes, medicine and money, and transferring the resources to the refugee centres or active NGOs that help refugees.
- Helping refugees recover and/or retain vital personal documents
- Providing volunteer interpreters
- Partnerships with local as well as national organisations that work with refugees can play a critical role in addressing the needs of refugees. Sharing relevant information, working together on projects, jointly applying for funding and keeping each other informed are all ways these kinds of partnerships can benefit everyone involved: libraries, the organisations and the refugees themselves.

8.3.2 Library attitudes, library rules, and policies

In order to achieve positive outcomes from the recommended library services, the library's staff and volunteers should:
- Be consistently and actively involved in partnerships with various local, national and international partners inside and outside the library field, in order to develop or participate in small or big scale projects
- Be provided training on how to deal with vulnerable people who have had traumatic experiences
- Be provided training on mental health
- Be provided training on how to deal possible tensions between different communities and cultures

A major problem some libraries may face is the negative attitude in some countries against serving refugees. For a more complete overview on solutions to this problem refer to the relevant Chapter 5 "Attitudes" of the Guidelines, where many similarities to the attitudes regarding refugees can be found. As a start find below some recommended solutions:
- Libraries need to create a welcoming and friendly environment for all people, including refugees. As libraries are public buildings and they are considered to be a safe, democratic and all-inclusive place, everyone is welcome to the library. Find ways to demonstrate and communicate this positive attitude. Find ways to challenge stereotypes.

Learn from examples that other libraries have followed or from methods that refugee relevant organizations have used (e.g., awareness campaigns run by UNICEF, UNHCR).

- Don't let the library give a message of "no, no, no" but rather offer one of a warm environment for all.
- Conduct and adopt specific rules and policies regarding services for refugees and make sure all library staff members will follow them. For a more complete overview on rules and policies regarding services for people who experience homelessness, refer to the relevant Chapter 11 "Library Policies and Their Effects" of the Guidelines, where many similarities to rules and policies regarding services for refugees can be found.
- Be sure library staff members follow in a gentle way the rules and policies regarding the library services for refugees. Bear in mind the library is serving people who are already traumatized and who need respectful and informed treatment, while at the same time they do not want to feel different and excluded from the general housed public. Think if, how, and where the library will communicate any specific rules inside the library. Having many rules or "shouting" by posting the rules everywhere to show there are specific rules and services for refugees is not the most all-inclusive and engaging method.
- Train library staff on the desired attitude they should demonstrate when they serve a refugee and on the library policies they have to enforce.

"Children who are experiencing homelessness tend to miss much more school than their stably housed peers, experience more illnesses, and score lower on standardized performance measures, even when compared to other low-income children.   In the United States, many states report that less than 50% of homeless high school students graduate."
American Institutes for Research

Chapter 9 Services for Families, Children and Youth without Parents or Guardians

9.1 Introduction

Families with children and youth without parents or guardians have unique needs in addition to the needs of anyone experiencing homelessness. This chapter provides information about these two groups, as well as recommendations for libraries on how to serve them well.

9.2 Families

Families experiencing homelessness are often a sizeable but largely invisible segment of the homeless population.   In New York City in the United States, some estimates are that 70% of the homeless population is families with children (Women in Need) but they are rarely what most people think of when they picture "the homeless."   In many cases, being invisible is in the best interests of families to avoid attention from other social service or governmental agencies that might lead to negative outcomes including removal of children from parents.   The definition of homelessness as it relates to children can also be confusing.   In the United States, for example, the section of federal education law that covers the educational rights of children experiencing homelessness (the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) includes a much broader definition than other laws and agencies.   Under McKinney-Vento, children living with other families ("doubled-up") because of economic hardship, those living in "substandard housing," those awaiting foster care placement, and migrant children who are living in conditions described within the definition of the law would all be considered homeless, although they may not qualify under other laws or definitions.

Causes of family homelessness are similar to those for other types of homelessness including poverty, domestic violence, lack of affordable housing, low wages, war and conflict, natural disasters, and other humanitarian crises.   Mental health challenges and substance abuse can be connected to both causes and effects of homelessness.   The trauma of homelessness can have many adverse physical, psychological and educational impacts on children.   This trauma may cause changes in brain development in young children and is linked to developmental delays, especially around speech and language.   Children who are experiencing homelessness tend to miss much more school than their stably housed peers, experience more illnesses, and score lower on standardized performance measures, even when compared to other low-income children.   In the United States, many states report that less than 50% of homeless high school students graduate (American Institutes for Research).

Around the world, globalization, poverty, disease, and conflict may lead to family homelessness, and often, to homeless children without parents or caregivers.   Australia estimates 12% of its homeless population is under the age of 12; at least 30,000 children in France are considered homeless; at least 1 million children in Russia are homeless; almost 2.5 million children in America are homeless.   In addition, researchers and aid agencies have identified street children

almost everywhere, with the United Nations putting the global number of children living on the street at over 150 million children (UNESCO).   These children include: hundreds of thousands of street children in Kenya; smaller numbers in Bamako, Mali and Accra, Ghana; over 11 million street children in India; 1.2 million street children in the Philippines; 8 to 12% of the total population of Honduras's children live on the streets (Homeless World Cup).   There is also a common practice around the world for children to be removed from their families and placed in institutions (so-called "orphanages") because they are poor, have a disability, or are members of a minority ethnicity.   Worldwide, 8 million children are in institutions, 90% of whom are not orphans; these children frequently suffer developmental and physical effects due to lack of care and/or blatant abuse, and have much higher than average rates of adverse life events after they leave the institutions (Lumos Foundation).

These statistics do not include the most recent forced migrations, refugee crises, natural disasters, and conflicts, which will likely only increase the numbers of children and families that are unstably housed.

9.2.1 Using the library

Families experiencing homelessness use libraries in ways similar to housed families and other homeless populations.   They may use the library for books and other materials, to attend programs and events, for homework assistance and free computer access, as well as for more specialized services around adult learning and literacy, job readiness, and e-government (applying for benefits, completing online forms).   In addition, families experiencing homelessness may use libraries as safe physical spaces that are cool in the summer and warm in the winter, have public restrooms, and in some cases, offer cafés or coffee shops serving food and beverages. Library use by families experiencing homelessness is likely lower outside of central cities or areas easily accessible by foot or by public transportation.   For families living in rural or suburban areas, especially, transportation can be a barrier to library use, along with limited or inconvenient hours of service.   Other barriers include families' lack of identification or proof of address needed to obtain a library card and fees/fines on existing cards.   Policies around parental permission for membership/borrowing, excessive baggage and belongings, sleeping in the library, hygiene, among others, can also act as barriers for families and children experiencing homelessness.

9.2.2 Information and library needs

The information and library needs of children and families experiencing homelessness are similar to those of more stably housed youth and families.   These include: recreational reading; help with assignments and homework for school; information about community events and resources.   Families experiencing homelessness may have additional needs around housing, job-seeking, government benefits, charity organizations, legal rights, food sources, and other survival needs.

9.2.3 Examples

Many libraries provide outreach to family shelters, food pantries/soup kitchens, and other community sites where families that are experiencing homelessness spend time.   In addition, library outreach to schools may also reach homeless children, although based on the rates of their chronic absenteeism within this population, this may not be successful in reaching children who are homeless.   Although these examples are primarily from public libraries in the United States, the under-researched nature of family homelessness in general, and library services in

particular, has likely overlooked many promising practices from around the world.

- Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library, and Queens Library are partners with the NYC Department of Homeless Services on a Shelter Library Pilot that was honoured as a Best Practices program in 2016 by the Library of Congress.   This program brings books and library programming, along with volunteers, into family shelters to support reading and literacy with young people and families. (New York Public Library, New York City, USA)

- Youth service librarians at the Akron-Summit County Public Library have been partnering with Project Rise, an educational enrichment program of the local school district since 2005, bringing programs and services into area family shelters. (Akron-Summit County Public Library, Akron, Ohio, USA)

- The Columbus Metropolitan Library's Ready to Reads Corps regularly visits family shelters with their Bookmobile and provides programming and resources. (Columbus Metropolitan Library, Ohio, USA)

- The Multnomah County Library has provided books to the 40 poorest schools in the area, and has used volunteer "book talkers" to make a consistent, natural connection with children and families, with visits to parks, apartment complexes, and places where families are living in vans and cars. (Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon, USA)

- Youth services librarians from the Mercer County Library provide weekly programs at a large, multi-service family shelter in their community. (Mercer County Library, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, USA)

- The Mobile Library Programme in Pondicherry provided recreational activities and informal education to 313 street, working, and at-risk children in 2011.   Visiting seven areas with high concentrations of street and working children the Mobile Library was equipped with educational materials and games, arts materials, and sports equipment. (Romain Rolland Library, Pondicherry, India)

- In Kolkata, partnerships between public and private organizations, and individual citizens have developed literacy outcomes and educational opportunities for the street children and distressed children there. (Chakraborty, Susmita, 2014)

- In Zambia, Lubuto Library Partners have created three full-service libraries (with two more planned by 2018) to serve young people, particularly street children, orphans, and children who are not attending school.   Each library collection begins with 4,000-volume core collections that are curated by library professionals in the U.S. with expertise in literature for young people and an Africa-focused perspective.   Zambian language books and other locally acquired materials are added to the core collection once it arrives in Zambia. (Lubuto Library Partners, n.d.)

- In Buwenda, Uganda the school literacy collections are for students, as well as the community. Programs include "Movie Night, topical research, keyboarding and shop…" The BNICE program addresses the unstable housing of marginalized students who have been impacted by the AIDs pandemic. Their goal is provide resources for families and children, so the children will remain in the community. (Buwenda p/s and St. Marks SSS, Buwenda, Uganda)

- From time-to-time, the Vancouver Public Library provides storytimes for children at local food banks. They also give out books there and issue library cards. (Vancouver Public Library, British Columbia, Canada)

- The Train Reading Program in Ecuador provides storytelling to children ages five to 14 in the marginal sectors of the canton Durán in the province of Guayas. This program teaches values and encourages reading. (Municipal Library Gad, Guayaquil, Ecuador)

9.3 Recommendations

Recommendations on services to families include:

- Since government, NGO, and other responses to family homelessness vary so much from country to country and, within nations, from municipality to municipality, the most important first step in serving families experiencing homelessness is to learn about the issue in your own community. Call people, ask questions, figure out who is responsible for what, so that you can have a broad understanding of the specific issues your families are facing.
- Examine existing library policies to determine if they are discriminating against families who are homeless and change them whenever possible.   If they cannot be changed, determine how and where exceptions can be made.
- Offer training and support for staff working with families; they may not be aware that some families are experiencing homelessness and may need more information on the issues and resources.
- Consider staff training in trauma and mental health; these issues are closely connected to homelessness and most library staff members are not educated in managing difficult behaviours or understanding how trauma manifests, especially in children.
- Collaborate with other agencies and providers to reach children and families who may not be using the library already.
- Consider outreach and community events to reach the most underserved children and families; for example, read-aloud story programs in outdoor spaces where street children congregate, or at a site that serves free meals.
- Donate books that are weeded or removed from your collection to agencies serving homeless and refugee families (be sure they are in good condition and are culturally appropriate).

9.4 Youth without parents or guardians

The category of youth without parents or guardians includes young people who have left home due to abuse, neglect, poverty, parental substance abuse and/or the inability for their families to accept who they are, frequently related to their gender identity or sexual orientation. In addition, it also includes youth who have been ejected from their homes, due to discord with parents or guardians, again frequently related to their gender identity or sexual orientation. In the United States, this category also includes youth who have either aged out of the foster system or who have left foster care due to neglect, violence or intolerance for who they are.

While it is extremely difficult to perform an accurate count of these youth, estimates are that each year in the United States, approximately 1.6 million youth, ages 12 to 24, experience homelessness each year ("True Colors Fund"). "Ending Youth Homelessness, A Human Rights Guide," reports that in Canada this number is approximately 35,000 and in the UK it is at least 83,000. Homelessness for many of these youth includes moving from one housing situation to another – for example, staying on someone's couch one night, at an emergency shelter the next night, on the streets the next night and so on. In general, global statistics for unaccompanied youth homelessness are difficult to find. It is difficult to count these young people, since they are frequently not in contact with any kind of official agencies. Also it appears that there has not been a particular emphasis on counting them and therefore statistics are either scanty or dated. However, it can be stated that all countries that report homelessness have unaccompanied youth who are also experiencing homelessness or are unstably housed.

The topic of libraries and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness is a complex one. In many ways, these young people have the same life challenges as adults who are experiencing homelessness: lack of food or proper nutrition; no access to mental and physical health resources; lack of transportation; poverty; legal citations, tickets and fines based on behaviour related to experiencing homelessness; the need for educational and employment information; the need for a predictable, safe and reliable place to sleep at night; the need for social connections. However, there are some distinct differences between these two groups.

First, in the United States up to 40% of these young people identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) ("True Colors Fund"). They are no longer living at home due to abuse or rejection based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. So they are doubly at risk on the streets, since their very identity as human beings is frequently stigmatized. This can make them wary of institutions, like libraries, and resistant to outreach that is not sensitive to their situations.

Second, this is a formative time for young people – physically, cognitively and emotionally. Unlike their housed peers, they must reach adulthood without the social and emotional support of caring adults who can guide and protect them as they mature. The trauma of being ejected from their homes and of living on the streets can have a lifelong effect on their emotional and intellectual development, since their brains are still developing. Young women who have gone through puberty can get pregnant and they are less likely to have access to birth control and medical support. Those under 18 are at risk for common paediatric diseases, in addition to those health challenges experienced by adults. It can be difficult for youth experiencing homelessness to find supportive and reliable health care, or it may be that accessing health care is a low priority compared to food and housing. Another challenge is the lack of a past or current adult role model to help them navigate the health care system.

In addition, the stereotype of what it means to be experiencing homelessness has a powerful effect on these young people. This stereotype not only stigmatizes people experiencing homelessness, it can also contribute to a lack of understanding about the range of ways a person can be unstably housed. So they frequently do not identify with the term "homeless," preferring instead to define their housing status in less stigmatized ways. Since many of these young people can blend in with youth who are stably housed, this can make it challenging to identify them.

They also may not respond to lists of resources or even well meaning conversations about their housing status if the word "homeless" is used. Although many of them are teenagers, they also do not identify as such, so terms like "teens" are not recognized as relating to them.

They may not be old enough to find legal employment, to sign legal documents or even to register for library cards without parental permission, so their very age can act as a barrier to much-needed services and resources.

However, these young people are responsive to respectful and sincere efforts by adults, such as library staff. With persistence and a willingness to engage slowly and carefully, libraries can serve these youth well.

9.4.1 How these youth are using the library

Many of these youth rely on peers for support and advice but also, like other library users, they would like to take advantage of resources available at a public library. These include books, CDs,

DVDs, places to plug in their mobile devices or laptop computers, and – especially critical – the Internet on the library computers. In addition, like other library users who are experiencing homelessness, they welcome a safe, dry, comfortable place to simply relax. Life on the streets can be dangerous and traumatic for anyone but for these youth it can be particularly dangerous because of their age and vulnerability. Being able to simply sit in a library and feel safe can make a huge difference to them.

9.4.2 Information and library needs

The information needs of these young people are similar to those of single adults who are experiencing homelessness and include:
- Employment:
  o Where to look
  o How to prepare and apply
  o How to obtain the necessary documents
- Education:
  o What they need to know
  o How to apply
  o How to pay for it
  o Access to required books
  o A quiet place to study
  o How to obtain necessary documents
- Housing:
  o Where to look
  o How to apply
  o How to pay for it
  o How to cope with isolation
- Health:
  o Where to find supportive and affordable health care services
  o Reliable health resources
  o Substance use information and resources
  o Mental health information and resources
- Legal needs:
  o Legal resources
  o Access to free or low-cost legal help
  o Help receiving official identification cards
- Library programs, such as:
  o Discussion groups
  o Workshops
  o Movies
  o Tutoring help
  o Volunteer opportunities

Libraries can also help these young people create connections to other library users, to library staff, to local community organizations, such as social services agencies, to volunteer agencies, to faith communities, to schools, and to local police departments. Connections like these can add to their social capital, which may be low due to their living situations

9.4.3 Examples

How are libraries addressing the needs of their youth library users who are experiencing homelessness? Few U.S. libraries have created specific programs or resources for these young people. However, there are some that have and they include:

- The Seattle Public Library (Washington, USA):
  - Staff training on LGBTQ+ youth homelessness
  - Weekly youth drop-in to connect youth with services
  - Queeraoke/Open Mic parties at two branches
  - Safe Space Program: Runaway youth connected to services
- Community forums on youth homelessness (Richland Library, Columbia, South Carolina, USA)
- Partnered with local shelter for transition aged youth (TAY) who are experiencing homelessness (Nashville Public Library, Tennessee, USA)
- Partnered with TAY serving agency (Hennepin County, Minnesota, USA
- Work with local agency to help teens find temporary shelter so can have more stable environment for attending school (Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, North Carolina, USA)

9.5 Recommendations

Creating a welcoming, supportive and personal connection with these young people is key to helping them help themselves. Recommendations include:

- Reach out and learn their names
- Tell them your name
- Use their personal pronouns – and ask if you're not sure. Post a list of gender-neutral pronouns for staff and provide training on language related to LGBTQ+ lives
- Create book displays that reflect their lives: As LGBTQ+ youth; as youth who are experiencing homelessness
- Include their lives in programs, posters, collection development
- Offer them employment or volunteer opportunities
- Examine your policies, procedures and rules – could they be creating barriers for these young people?
- Reach out to local agencies so you can all work together to address the challenges in their lives
- Offer to display their writings or art work
- Provide all-genders toilets

IF YOU'RE IN A PUBLIC BATHROOM AND YOU THINK A STRANGER'S GENDER DOES NOT MATCH THE SIGN ON THE DOOR, FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

1. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, THEY KNOW BETTER THAN YOU.

University of Bristol
LGBT+ Society   #transawarebristol

"Our expert-librarians share their knowledge with their colleagues who want to start or help with programs. We visit national conferences on the subject and attend regional exchange programs with other libraries."
Bibliotheek Kennemerwaard, Alkmaar, The Netherlands

Chapter 10 Staff Support and Partnerships

10.1 Introduction

For many library workers, interactions with people experiencing homelessness in their libraries may be the first time they are directly involved with someone in this situation. Many staff members feel ill equipped to handle the range of issues people who are homeless may bring to the library and their discomfort and fears may impede their ability to serve people experiencing homelessness as fully and equitably as they could. At the same time, it is obvious that libraries alone cannot meet all of the needs of any library users, including those who are homeless, and that libraries do not exist within a vacuum. This chapter will explore suggestions for supporting and developing staff capacity and confidence, as the cultivation of community partnerships. In combination, these recommendations will increase libraries' ability to serve people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

10.2 Staff support, training, and professional development

Many of the libraries surveyed had provided their workers with some type of training around homelessness and related issues. A number of these libraries were focusing on mental health awareness, managing conflict, and working with difficult library users. Others also focused on increased awareness of community options and referral resources. Some examples of staff support and training included:

- "All library staff were trained in mental health awareness and de-escalation in 2013. This training company was chosen after being recommended by staff at a local shelter and because of their existing clients including police and ambulance. A smaller group of staff were selected to be 'champions' of the training and undertook a further session that provided an extension of the first course, and gained skills in supporting their colleagues. This included work on boundary setting with library patrons. A refresher in this training is scheduled for 2016." (Waverley Library, Bondi Junction, Australia)
- "Frontline staff members have been provided training through the New York City Department of Homeless Services Street Homeless Outreach teams and are being provided with training to learn de-escalation and communication skills." (New York Public Library, New York, NY, USA)
- "Homeless engagement staff and AmeriCorps members are trained through a partner organization that provides the AmeriCorps members. The library also works with partner organizations to provide special staff training based on requests by staff, including mental health first-aid, conflict de-escalation, and empathy/sensitivity training." (Dallas Public Library, Dallas, TX, USA)
- "Our expert-librarians share their knowledge with their colleagues who want to start or help with programs. We visit national conferences on the subject and attend regional exchange programs with other libraries." (Bibliotheek Kennemerwaard, Alkmaar, The Netherlands)
- "We are regularly asked to speak about our experience during conferences or training days." (Bibliothèques Municipales de Grenoble- Bibliothèques des Relais Lecture, Grenoble, France)

- "Through involvement with Hunter Homeless Connect as a librarian, I was invited to become a Board member.   I am now Chairperson of Hunter Homeless Connect Inc. As such, I have many contacts in the homelessness sector.   I am also called upon for advice or contacts by other staff." (Newcastle Region Library, Newcastle, Australia)

10.3 Community partnerships and cooperation

Libraries almost universally described working with municipal, community-based, non-governmental, and/or other organizations to provide services for people experiencing homelessness.   These partnerships allowed libraries to reach people who were experiencing homelessness, strengthen the network of resources to which library staff could refer library users, and often involved the libraries' participation on area coalitions/committees/task forces working on issues of and/or around homelessness and housing instability.   For example,

- "We have a partnership with the School of Social Work at the University of South Carolina (established Richland Library as a field placement for MSW interns). Partnership with End Child Hunger SC yielded many relationships and connections for staff and social service agencies and practitioners.   Volunteering and partnership at an emergency homeless shelter and transitional housing facility." (Richland Library, Columbia, SC, USA)
- "The Lending Point of Riga Central Library at the Day Centre for Homeless and Underprivileged Inhabitants of Riga is situated in a three-story building constructed and equipped for this purpose. Abraham Maslow's principle of necessity pyramid was taken as the basis for the building's structure: on the first floor of the building clients can take a shower, have their clothing cleaned, put on clean donated clothes, have hot food from the soup kitchen, and receive consultations with doctors, psychologists and social workers; premises for relaxation and studies are situated on the second floor; the Library occupies most of the third floor. All premises are wheelchair accessible. This Centre is the result of cooperation of the following Riga City Council structural units: Social Committee, Management of Latgale Suburb, and Welfare Department." (Riga Central Library, Riga, Latvia)
- "The Ljubljana City Library Employment Information Service (EIS) works with the Centres for the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Addiction at the University Hospital of Psychiatry in Ljubljana, the Association of Street Kings (Kralji ulice), an independent non-governmental humanitarian organization that brings together experts, professionals, and people experiencing homelessness.   EIS also works with the Employment Service, with Social Work Centres and the Institute Cene Štupar." (Ljubljana City Library, Ljubljana, Slovenija)
- "For the last eight years the Carnegie has hosted the 'Annual Alley Health Fair,' which brings together over 35 health agencies that serve the poor. We feed 1500 people and offer resources directly on the street, as well as testing for AIDS and Hepatitis C, hair-cuts, etc. It is a highly anticipated event which the Branch Head co-ordinates with community partners." (Vancouver Public Library, Carnegie Branch, Vancouver, BC, Canada)

10.4 Recommendations

Based on the descriptions of practices from libraries in the survey, there are several suggestions for developing staff support/professional development, as well as partnerships and cooperation. These ideas can help libraries provide quality services while also building their internal capacity to serve populations that may have differing needs.

- Formally or informally survey library staff members to see where they identify gaps in their ability to effectively serve people experiencing homelessness. Use this information to identity the type of training that would be of most use to the staff.
- Speak to other service providers in the community to help identify reputable providers of training and education on the topics you have identified. Consider partnering with other libraries or service providers to share any training costs and so that a wider network of staff can enjoy the benefits. Take advantage of free or low-cost resources such as webinars, online toolkits, or local expertise to balance training offerings.
- Work with your library's partners to share each other's expertise and barter training; for example, a shelter provider can present information on homelessness in the area to library staff and a library staff member can present information on library resources and services to staff at the shelter.
- Since every community approaches services for people who are experiencing homelessness differently, it may take some research and networking to understand the landscape of your community. Do not be afraid to call or email people whose information you find or have been given; start a list of questions you ask every new contact to learn more about what they do but also how they fit into the larger network of services. Share what you have learned and what you are unclear about with others.
- Include people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability in conversations about programs, needs, and partnerships. Many service providers (including library staff) may think it is easier to plan for, rather than with, the clients they serve, so be mindful of this and insist those you are serving have a voice in the planning process.
- Good partnerships are mutually beneficial; each side should get something from the relationship, so be clear about what you and your library have to offer other organizations as well as people who are experiencing homelessness. The library is often not a resource social service providers think of for their clients, so you may have to prove your worth to be taken seriously. Be realistic about what you can provide but also be willing to try something you may not have thought of as a possible need if it's suggested (for example, the Kirklees Libraries, Huddersfield/Dewsbury, UK, has allowed a patron who is experiencing housing instability to have his pay checks mailed to the library so they do not get lost in the post).

"We encourage library staff and security to provide options to library users and increase their understanding of library policies and the reasoning behind them. It is important that our library users experiencing homelessness do not feel targeted or unwanted in the library."
Dallas Public Library, TX, USA

Chapter 11 Library Policies and Their Effects

11.1 Introduction

Barriers for library users who are experiencing homelessness include library policies, procedures, and codes of conduct. Some of these, such as fines, fees, and policies regarding obtaining a library card and using the public Internet access computers are not directly related to serving unstably housed library users, although they affect these library users. On the other hand, some of the policies in many libraries appear to have been created specifically as a reaction to the presence of library users who are exhausted, in need of showers or baths, have no place to safely store their personal belongings, and depend on the company of pets to offset the daily stress and trauma of living on the streets or in unpredictable and sometimes unsafe shelters.

The two specific questions related to policies and guidelines in the survey of libraries were:
- *Please share with us any policies you have, such as public conduct, sleeping in the library, odours, size and amount of belongings, use of public restrooms, fines or fees, identification to obtain a library card, or other policies*
- *If these policies cause some challenges in providing library services for those who are experiencing homelessness, please share with us how your library solves them?*

The responses to number one can be broken down into two categories. Below are the categories and representative answers from the survey responses.

11.2 Examples of Policies and Procedures

11.2.1 Library cards

That libraries have created address-specific policies related to computer use and library cards highlights the fact libraries are aware they are serving unstably housed library users and are addressing this situation in a range of ways. While many of the libraries surveyed required a permanent address to obtain a library card, there are some that strive to accommodate these library users within the parameters of their library and community support, including being flexible in obtaining a library card/computer use.
Examples:
- Must have proof of I.D. but without membership can still access collections onsite and use computers for 40 minutes. Can't check out items, use e-resources or book meeting room (South Brisbane State Library of Queensland, Australia)
- Library users can get library card with shelter address; if they participate in library programs, they can get a free card for 3 months (Bibliotheek Kennemerwaard, Alkmaar, The Netherlands)
- All library users who have certificate of unemployment or other evidence have subscription free for 1 year (Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia)

- Library has a "Computer Card" for people experiencing homelessness that allows access to public computers and checkout of 2 books at a time without ID or permanent address (Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, NC, USA)
- Library card registration drives at family shelters eliminates barriers to getting card (Queens Library, Jamaica, NY, USA)

11.2.2 Public conduct policies

The libraries surveyed had a range of public conduct policies. Many of them were related to behaviour, odour and baggage/large bags of personal possessions. The following are examples of these public conduct policies.

Sleeping

Of the libraries that responded to this question, more than 50% had policies specifically related to sleeping in their libraries. In fact, this was the number one prohibited behaviour. Since the safety and comfort of a library can be particularly appealing because homelessness can be exhausting and dangerous, a no-sleeping policy can act as a barrier to library use. So flexibility in this policy can help to lower this barrier.

Examples:
- Sleeping individuals are judged case by case with no specific policy (Waverley Library, Bondi Junction, Australia)
- Sleeping allowed but no lying down (Forbes Library, Northampton, MA, USA)

Odour

Odour is another public conduct issue in the libraries that were surveyed. Library users experiencing homelessness may not have safe, affordable or conveniently located places to wash themselves and their clothes and in some cases this can result in strong odours. Again, a flexible approach can make it easier for those experiencing homelessness to use the library.

Examples:
- Case by case for odour – no specific policy (Waverley Library, Bondi Junction, Australia)
- Odours can't be overpowering (King Library, San José Public Library, CA, USA)

It's interesting to note that fewer libraries had odour policies than sleeping policies. Of the almost 50 survey responses received, 10 listed policies related to odour.

Personal Belongings

Another public conduct policy that is commonly listed by libraries and that appeared in the survey responses is related to the size, quantity and type of personal items – both bringing them into the library and staying with their belongings. As noted, a specific policy prohibiting large baggage can act as a barrier to access for those experiencing homelessness. Libraries can, instead, work with library users so they are able to use the library and its resources.

Example:
- They provide cloakroom for safe place to store belongings (State Library of Queensland, South Brisbane, Australia)

Food and drink

While bringing food and drink into the library is obviously an issue that applies to all library users, the effect of these rules can be greater for those who are experiencing homelessness, since they may need to eat in a safe place, away from inclement weather. Again, flexibility makes a difference.

Example:
- Food and drink allowed (Forbes Library, Northampton, MA, USA)

Restroom use

"Misuse" of the public restrooms is of particular concern to several of the libraries we surveyed. Using a public sink for washing clothes or oneself was the most common complaint and some libraries had rules related to this behaviour. It's difficult not to connect this with the offensive odour policies. If library users experiencing homelessness were able to wash themselves and their clothes, they would be able to access the library, both as a comfortable space and for the critical resources available there. This is a good example of a rule that makes sense to the housed library users but can be a barrier for those who are experiencing homelessness. Again, flexibility is key.

Example:
- Case by case for bathroom use (Waverley Library, Bondi Junction, Australia)

General Policies

Some of the libraries surveyed had general policies rather than specific ones. The tone of these policies was to assure library users experiencing homelessness that the library welcomed and supported their presence. These policies can act as guidance when creating library policies related to public conduct and use of the library materials.

Examples:
- "Everybody is welcome in the library as long as they act respectfully towards other people. Any incidents are dealt with individually." (Hillerød Bibliotek, Denmark)
- "Try to facilitate getting library card. No policies about sleeping or bathrooms" (Bibliothèque de Toulouse, France)
- "There are no rules on the use of public restrooms, fines or fees" (Chiyoda City's Hibiya Library and Museum, Tokyo, Japan)
- "Policies are based on the inclusion of the homeless with equal rights to services and resources of the city" (Biblioteques de Barcelona, Spain)

11.3 Effects of policies

When asked about the effects of the policies, eighteen of the libraries responded. Some expanded on the information already supplied, others offered comments about their frustrations or ways they've adapted their policies. Their responses can help guide libraries in creating their own policies.

Examples:
- "Staff use their discretion for everyone" (Newcastle Region Library, Australia)

- "Staff does outreach at 'soup kitchens' [free or low cost prepared food, served on site] and recovery centres; offers to waive fees, discuss suitable plans with library users" (Vancouver Public Library, Carnegie Branch, Canada)
- "Library Administration and the Peer Support Specialist will meet individually with anyone having challenges. Library staff has received training in how to effectively enforce each library rule in a non-confrontational way" (Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, NC, USA)
- "Bends or enforces rules as needed. Above all, they try to be respectful of all individuals and exercise good judgment in working with our homeless library users and policies" (Richland Library, Columbia, SC, USA)
- "Code of Conduct policy not publicly posted in the library nor is it strictly enforced. Library staff and security encouraged to use discretion and have conversations with library users whose odour, bags, behaviour or sleeping is being disruptive to others in the library. We encourage library staff and security to provide options to library users and increase their understanding of library policies and the reasoning behind them. It is important that our library users experiencing homelessness do not feel targeted or unwanted in the library" (Dallas Public Library, TX, USA)

11.4 Recommendations

The question could be asked: Does a library need specific policies or library procedure for each behaviour or can these policies be general and adapted to individual situations? For some libraries this may work, especially if it's a small library. This kind of approach is excellent when possible because it takes into account each individual's needs. However, many libraries list all possible infractions and procedures so, when deemed necessary, they can be referred to. For example, if a library patron exhibits lewd behaviour, library staff can point to a public conduct policy that prohibits this kind of behaviour. Many libraries use this approach and then are "flexible" when it comes time to actually enforce a policy or procedure. For example, a library may have a policy against bringing in large baggage, but make an exception for someone who is able to make a good case for needing their baggage with them. The disadvantage to this approach is that in order to ask for exceptions to a rule a person has to be self-confident, have social capital, and be comfortable in libraries or bureaucracies in general. In addition, this library patron would also have to be willing to draw attention to themselves, which many youth experiencing homelessness in particular are unwilling to do.

11.4.1 Rules and policies: Recommendations
- Have as few rules as possible
- Instead of posting rules everywhere in the library, have them posted one place or have copies of the rules available when asked for or needed. A library that seems to be shouting "no, no, no" to its library users can feel intimidating and unwelcoming to everyone, but can particularly impact those who have become accustomed to being ejected from public spaces.
- Consider a rule such as "be respectful of the space and others" so no one feels targeted. Then consider what is meant by "respectful" and how that may relate to how people experiencing homelessness may view that word. Be willing to reconsider the library's definition so it can be as all-inclusive as possible.
- Consider the impact of the library's rules and policies on the library users who are experiencing homelessness. If they act as barriers to using the library, how could that be addressed? For example, if sleeping isn't allowed, why isn't it allowed? Does it interfere

with the use of the library by others? Is there a way the library could allow sleeping? If not, how could the library help the exhausted patron be able to use the library?

11.4.2 Creating a welcoming environment: Recommendations

Keep in mind that people experiencing homelessness are coping with hostile environments every day. Many U.S. cities, for example, have strict laws about sitting, sleeping, asking for money or food, using public restrooms, and even simply being in public spaces. The outcomes of these laws are expensive tickets and citations and even, in some cases, imprisonment. General public attitudes toward homelessness are negative, judgmental and sometimes violent. To be experiencing homelessness is to have a stigmatized identity. So when these library users enter your library, they are already traumatized.

Here are some suggestions on ways in which libraries can help offset some of this trauma, by visibly and creatively creating a library environment that feels welcoming and supportive.

- Create policies and provide resources that are specifically designed to create a welcoming environment for your library users who are experiencing homelessness
- Create charging stations for mobile devices, such as phones and computers
- Allow library users without a permanent address to use the Internet computers and to check out library materials
- Create an "honour" shelf, with high interest and relevant books. Ask library users experiencing homelessness for suggestions for these shelves
- Have Internet stations designed for longer periods of time, so those who need to fill out forms online, apply for jobs, housing or educational opportunities will have time to complete their applications
- Offer free printing and scanning
- Create a safe place to rest or eat
- Provide free or low cost access to shower and laundry facilities, possibly through a partnership with a local organization that already has those services. For example, a local group in Albany, California, USA has brought together local churches, community groups, volunteers, businesses, laundries and the local public swimming pool to provide twice a week shower opportunities for those experiencing homelessness. Clean towels, laundry service, transportation and a light meal are included. This service means that odour policies in the local library and other public spaces will not impact people experiencing homelessness.
- Provide a current, always up-to-date and researched list of local social services. Be in close contact with these agencies, so library staff can personally recommend them.
- Consider the needs of unstably housed library users as important as those of stably housed library users, so the library is serving all library users equally well. Ask them what they need and actively address these needs. Like housed library users, library users experiencing homelessness are there to use the library resources, so they can apply for employment, services, housing, and educational opportunities. They are there to use recreational materials and to participate in relevant programs, stay in touch with friends and family and simply relax. However, unlike housed library users, they are disproportionately affected by some policies and procedures, which can act as barriers to access.
- When enforcing policies, be sure to enforce them equally. For example, if there is a no sleeping policy, does the library enforce that rule for all library users, of all ages, even babies in strollers? If strong odours are banned, does that apply to all library users, for

example, housed library users who are wearing strong perfume? Or a sleeping baby who needs a diaper change? If there is a limit on the size of belongings, does this apply to baby carriages or student backpacks?

11.4.3 Advocacy
- Advocate for local and national funding that will address homelessness and poverty. In the long run, the library – and the community - will benefit.

11.5 Examples of policies

Here are two links to examples of library policies that emphasize working with library users experiencing homelessness.
- Baggage policy (South Brisbane State Library of Queensland, Australia)
  - http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate/policies/bag-policy
- Responsible conduct policy (South Brisbane State Library of Queensland, Australia)
  - http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate/policies/responsible-conduct-policy

"The goals of advocacy can be diverse: raising awareness among the public and wider community of the needs of people experiencing homelessness; fulfilling certain needs; expanding the network of partner organisations; and, raising funds for new services or improving existing ones. In order to achieve these goals, elaborate well thought out advocacy action plan is needed."
Sanja Bunić, Zagreb City Libraries

Chapter 12 Communication and Advocacy

12.1 Introduction

Communication is an essential element of any initiative or service, and in particular library services to people experiencing homelessness. The main reasons for this are the ever-present stereotypes and prejudices in libraries about people experiencing homelessness. People experiencing homelessness are viewed by the wider public as being lazy, disinterested, dangerous and living in such a situation due to their own wrongdoing, while libraries are viewed as quiet and static places mainly for borrowing books. In order to overcome these prejudices and to shine a light on the important role that libraries have in resolving the issue of homelessness, considerable efforts need to be put into developing the communication of both of these groups with the public, potential stakeholders and between each other. This chapter defines communication, awareness raising and advocacy. It also presents examples of good practices from around the world and gives recommendations for an efficient communication strategy.

12.2 Definitions

- Raising awareness - aims to make a specific issue known to the wider public, addressing existing attitudes, social relationships, and power relations in order to initiate social change.
- Advocacy - is speaking up, drawing a community's attention to an important issue, and directing decision-makers towards a solution. Advocacy is working with other people and organizations to make a difference. (Handicap international, 2011).
- Communication - is an overarching term meaning the process that people use to exchange information about some issue. All communication activities make use of some form of media or channel of communication, e.g. mass media, community media, and interpersonal communication. (ASCM Subgroup at Country Level, 2007).

12.3 Raising awareness

Libraries are using different communication channels to take on the role of raising awareness within the community about the complexity of homelessness and the specific needs of people experiencing homelessness. These efforts have yielded significant results.
- The documentary "Our Lives: Surviving the Streets of Fresno" (http://survivingfresno.blogspot.hr/) shares both the unique story and the varied opinions of ten individuals directly affected by the homeless policy in Fresno. This film was a collaboration between Fresno County Public Library and Community Media Access Collaborative (CMAC). A follow-up survey of film participants and the audience showed that 96% of the audience at public screenings agreed the program gave them a greater understanding of issues related to homelessness. Moreover, it helped community members see those experiencing homelessness as people first and improved their desire and willingness to assist in ending homelessness. One of the participants in the movie is

now a great advocate on a national level of the rights of people experiencing homelessness. (Fresno County Public Library, California, USA)

- Street View Podcast (https://streetviewpodcast.com/) is a joint effort between the Dallas Public Library and Rashad Dickerson. This podcast is part of the Dallas Public Library's ongoing Homeless Engagement Initiative aimed at increasing community awareness of topics related to homelessness, providing opportunities for open dialogue between housed and homeless communities, and promoting the public library as a place of social inclusion and diversity. Since the podcast debuted in March 2014, it has been downloaded and played more than 13,000 times in more than 62 USA cities and 18 countries around the world (data refer to the beginning of 2016 when they were submitted). (Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA)

12.4 Advocacy

In the questionnaire prepared to collect examples of good practices of library services to people experiencing homelessness, one of the questions posed was the following:

How are you working on communication and advocacy of your services for those who are experiencing homelessness?

It is important to note that almost one quarter of the total number of responding libraries failed to mention any actions being taken in that regard. Rare were libraries whose answers to this and other related questions revealed a thought-out advocacy strategy.

These are the reasons why basic steps for implementing an advocacy action plan are presented alongside good practice examples that relate to specific forms and ways of communication.

12.4.1 Know the issues

During the advocacy planning process, the problem has been identified, the situation analysed, the stakeholders and target audiences identified, and the campaign objectives or intended outcomes set. To achieve all of this, what is needed is a good knowledge of the issue of homelessness, needs of the community, organizations providing services, and user needs in addition to conducting additional research.

The Waverley Library, Bondi Junction and Newcastle Region Library, Newcastle from Australia conducted research resulting in the document entitled "Libraries are for everyone: Providing quality services to people who are homeless." (https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/12286%20Library%20for%20Homeles s_V4FINAL.pdf) The document can be a good advocacy instrument for people who make decisions about funding, library leadership, and librarians and partner organizations.

12.4.2 Communication goal and objectives

In some campaigns for behaviour change, communication goals and objectives may be identical to the overall campaign goals and objectives (e.g. to "break the prejudice towards those experiencing homelessness"). More commonly, communication goals vary according to different target audiences.

Examples include:
- The Municipal Library Javiera Carrera in 2015, along with other networks, organized a

solidarity campaign to collect personal care products for people on the street who lunch daily in the "Hogar de Cristo" (institution with national presence that welcomes people experiencing homelessness). The campaign was successful and the delivery of the donation took place at a cultural event on the premises of the library. Libraries all over the world have sent similar examples of bringing together a community at joint events of numerous government organizations and NGOs, volunteers, individuals, and libraries, where different needs of people experiencing homelessness are met. (The Municipal Library Javiera Carrera, Angol, Chile)

- Zagreb City Libraries recorded a video entitled "What do users say about library services for people experiencing homelessness" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFUqQ-q2kEw). The video was recorded as a means of advocating for library services for people experiencing homelessness within the professional community. It was shown at the World Library and Information Congress 2016 in Columbus, USA at the LSN session devoted to the presentation of the first guidelines draft. The video can also be used for advocacy within the wider public as well as for requesting funds from potential donors. EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries), one of the former donors for these services, published a case study on the impact of these services on its website: http://www.eifl.net/system/files/resources/201408/zagreb_city_libraries_croatia_hires_1.pdf. The case study was used as a way of advocating for these services within the professional community, wider public, among potential partners and for requesting funds from donators. (Zagreb City Libraries, Croatia)

12.4.3 Target groups

Potential target groups: policy/decision-makers; political leadership; government heads of departments; business leaders - people who make decisions about funding, library leadership and library staff, including associations and other library professional groups and library users; the people who need and use library services; those who will benefit from service, government organizations and NGOs that deal with homelessness; and the, wider public.

12.4.4 Communication strategies

Five fundamental questions need to be answered when preparing a strategy:
What? (the obstacles)—What will get in the way of reaching the objective?
Where? Where is the most appropriate place to communicate with the target audience?
When? When is the most appropriate and convenient time for the target group to hear from library?
Who? (is going to do it?) Who is the best presenter? Who has the most credibility? Who is the best "match"?
How? (the message) The message, in order for it to be remembered, must be short and simple.

The best advocates of library services are people who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness, including library users, volunteers or peer support specialist.
In Forsyth County Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA, a Peer Support Specialist, full-time position, works one-on-one with people experiencing homelessness and plans library programs targeting this population. One of their librarians stated: "The Peer Support Specialist is our 'boots-on-the-ground' first point of contact in communicating our services and advocating for this group".

12.4.5 Communication tools

Effective communication channels, techniques and tools need to be identified. These can include interpersonal channels (one-on-one contact), community-oriented channels that use existing social networks, and media channels (including modern mass media such as radio and TV, "new media" such as the Internet, YouTube, social networks, web pages, SMS, apps, and "folk media", e.g. storytelling and traditional cultural performances).

Good practice examples have shown that libraries use all of the above-mentioned media, which is already partially covered in sub-section 12.3 Raising Awareness. In addition to the above channels, libraries communicate with library users through flyers, brochures, posters and the popularly known "street sheets" that contain important information on service providers for people experiencing homelessness.

12.4.6 Evaluation

When defining an advocacy plan, it is important to decide the "who" and "how" of measuring whether objectives have been achieved and, if so, to what extent.
Some of the possible evaluation methods include questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, and coverage in different types of media (number of references/posts/articles).

A good example of evaluation is the follow-up survey conducted after the screening of the documentary described in sub-section 12.3:   Raising Awareness, *Our Lives: Surviving the Streets of Fresno*. The results of the survey of film participants and the audience showed the film made a significant impact on people participating in the movie who were experiencing homelessness. Their skills, knowledge and general condition improved. Some positive changes also happened in the audience's attitude towards homelessness. An audience member said: "An eye opener!!! Wow, makes me want to make a difference and be more responsible towards my community."

12.5 Recommendations

Recommendations on communication and advocacy include:
- Given their role in the community and the public trust they enjoy, libraries are presented with numerous possibilities for raising awareness and advocacy. They should use their position to raise awareness and advocate for people experiencing homelessness.
- The goals of advocacy can be diverse: raising awareness among the public and wider community of the needs of people experiencing homelessness; fulfilling certain needs; expanding the network of partner organisations; and, raising funds for new services or improving existing ones. In order to achieve these goals, a well thought out advocacy action plan is needed.
- The first step is to become familiar with the topic of homelessness in the community and with people experiencing homelessness, as well as organisations providing services to them.
- Successful communication requires a precise determination of the target audience and the message you want to convey.
- When preparing a strategy, five basic questions need to be answered: *What?* (the obstacles), *Where?* , *When?*, *Who?* (is going to do it?), *How?* (the message)
- People experiencing homelessness are the most successful advocates. Highlighting their voices, experiences and expertise leads to a successful outcome, as well as a recognition of their contributions
- Given the target public and available resources, communication channels that will make the greatest impact must be determined: interpersonal, community-oriented channels that

use existing social networks, modern media channels or "folk media".
- Evaluation is critical. At the very beginning of the advocacy planning process, it is important to determine the methods for evaluating established outcomes.

"To be successful, a library needs to help form or be a part of a coalition, gather in-kind and volunteer support, and assemble a package of funding that will support the library's services to people experiencing homelessness."
Nancy Bolt, President, Nancy Bolt & Associates, Denver, Colorado, USA

Chapter 13 Funding

13.1 Introduction and definitions

In order for libraries to serve people experiencing homelessness, they require resources to fund materials, services, programs, and sometimes staff.   These resources may available from various resources.   As part of the research in how libraries are serving people experiencing homelessness, we asked libraries to report how their programs were funded.   We received responses from 12 libraries with details about their funding.

In conducting this research, we proposed several possibilities.   These are defined below with the number of libraries that responded they were funded using this method.   Some of the libraries are funded by more than one source.

A special grant from a private foundation.   This could be a local, regional, or national private foundation that is concerned about homelessness or addressing the causes of homelessness. (Two survey respondents used this source of funding.)

A special grant from a city, state, or national government agency.   This might be a government agency that is concerned about homelessness or addressing the causes of homelessness.   It could be an allocation from the city or town the library serves or a larger entity.   For example, in the United States, state library agencies receive federal funding for libraries and often make this available to local libraries to conduct projects to meet local needs or to serve as models for other libraries that might replicate the service. The European Union often does the same.   These typically are one-time or demonstration projects that expect the library to continue funding from other sources. (Three survey respondents used this source of funding.)

The regular city budget.   This funding typically occurs when the local government (village, town, city, county, etc.) identifies homelessness as an issue and seeks the library as a partner (either as a lone partner or as part of a coalition.)   In this case, the library is a partner in addressing homelessness and often the causes of homelessness.   Funding in this situation can be for a longer period of time, as it is not viewed as a demonstration project, but rather as a solution to a community problem.   The initiation of the funding request can come directly from the governmental entity; from the work of a coalition seeking to deal with area homelessness; or from the library offering to help the city address a problem that is impacting the library. (Seven survey respondents used this source of funding.)

Contributions from local community agencies or NGOs.   This is similar to the situation above; however, the funding typically comes from donations to a community agency rather than from the government.   For example, in many cities in the USA, there is an organization called the United Way that provides funding to local agencies and non-profits to help address various community problems.   The library might be part of a coalition of NGOs that raise money or apply to an NGO for funding to address homelessness. (Two survey respondents used this source of funding.)

A special allocation from library administration.   In some cases, the library administration will see addressing the issue of homelessness as worthy of a special allocation to provide services and programs and staff. (Three survey respondents used this source of funding.)

Financial support from a library support group.   Many libraries have library support groups that raise money independently from the library and then contribute to the library for special projects. The library could request funding from this type of group for library services to people experiencing homelessness. (Three survey respondents used this source of funding.)

Out of the library's existing fund – no additional funding. In this situation, the library does not ask for a special allocation to provide services to people experiencing homelessness from any outside source but instead ask for funding from the library administration. Services are integrated into the library's regular budget. (Five survey respondents used this source of funding.)

13.2 Analysis and examples

The analysis of the surveys returned showed:
- Five libraries received funding from only one source
- Three libraries received funding from two sources

The most common source of funding, overall, was the city or municipality's regular budget.   In two libraries it was the only source of funding and in four libraries it was one of multiple funding sources.   For example, the Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, USA sought to assist people experiencing homelessness in Denver and found this corresponded with the city of Denver's interest in helping people experiencing homelessness.   The city first provided a social worker to work in the library on a temporary basis and, based on the positive results of the library's efforts, made this position permanent and added a second social worker as well.

Two of the libraries funded by only one funding source were funded out of the library's regular budget. The State Library of Queensland indicated that it is "legislated to provide services to all Queenslanders regardless of their socio-economic status. As such, our services to people experiencing homelessness are considered 'business as usual' and are provided by our existing budget."

The last library funded by only one source was funded by revenue generated by renting space in the library. This source of funding was used to hire staff to provide services.

The Carnegie Library of the Vancouver Public Library in Vancouver, Canada is funded by the city of Vancouver because it is located in a section of the city occupied mainly by people who are "predominantly homeless, in shelters, in transition homes, or 'Single Room Occupancy.'"   The library is open 365 days a year, from10 am – 10 pm, and receives special city funding to service this population.   The Library also received funding from a private foundation to fund a "Tech Café" in a local park to provide Wi-Fi access and tech support for people experiencing homelessness.

The Zagreb City Library is funded partially by the municipality and partly by library's budget.   For one year (2011 to 2012), the project received a grant from the international non-profit organization EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries).   During the grant, the library allowed a staff member to work exclusively on the project, returning to her regular job after the grant ended. The library reports that the EIFL grant was particularly important "not just because of the financial situation but also because EIFL organized education for grantees in the field of

promotion implementation, and measuring impact of the project."

Three libraries were funded by multiple funding sources, one library from four sources and two libraries from five sources.

- The Ljubljana City Library receives funding from three funding sources. The library runs an Employment Information Service (EIS) funded by the city. EIS provides "an information officer available to advise, support, help, facilitate, and motivate its users… It encourages members to pursue lifelong learning, personal development, and especially to become more active at improving their position in society." The library also funds services and staff at EIS. The library reports they also get funding from social work centres and partner organizations such as drug addiction assistance, a hospital of psychiatry, and employment services. (Ljubljana City Library, Slovenia)
- The Nashville Public Library has basic funding from the existing library's fund with additions from social service agencies that place staff in the library on a regular basis, as well as providing guidebooks to local resources paid for by the library foundation. (Nashville Public Library, Tennessee, USA)
- The Bergen Public Library has funding from five different sources. The library focuses on literacy with a special emphasis on teaching people who are experiencing homelessness. Basic funding comes from the library; however, the library has a grant writer who raises funds from as many sources as possible, including local non-profits, a "friends of the library" program, and special government grants. (Bergen Public Library, Netherlands)

13.3 Recommendations
- Collect information about the need for assistance to people experiencing homelessness and document this population is using the library
- Seek commitment from the library and the primary funding body of the library to provide basic support of staff and programming
- Seek in-kind support from community agencies and participate in partnership relationships with community and government agencies
- Seek grants from foundations, national and international agencies, and other support groups for special projects
- Create partnerships with local and national organisations to share resources and jointly apply for relevant funds

13.4 Conclusion

The libraries that replied to the survey relied most on their own budgets and the city's support of library services. No detailed descriptions of the funding options were listed on the survey. Thus as libraries described their programs, it became clear many libraries provide funding for staff and specific programs, but also receive significant support from community agencies in the form of in-kind services, volunteers, and trainings provided at no cost to the library.
To be successful, a library needs to help form or be a part of a coalition, gather in-kind and volunteer support, and assemble a package of funding that will support the library's services to people experiencing homelessness.

Appendix A Non-Professional Psychosocial Support

A.1 Introduction to psychosocial factors associated with homelessness

Homelessness is a social and individual challenge that can result from the complex interaction of objective socio-economic factors, interpersonal factors and difficulties, as well as mental health challenges. Those who are experiencing homelessness are a heterogeneous group - every person with this experience has their own unique path of entering homelessness. Although some people experiencing homelessness have encountered a sudden crisis, like job loss, divorce or illness, many move from one insecure living situation to another, and others have never been able to establish a permanent home. Therefore we can only discuss psychosocial factors that can – jointly with other economic, social and personal circumstances – increase risk of homelessness, and psychological characteristics that can be associated with homelessness.

Economic and societal factors causing insecure circumstances and homelessness must not be underestimated. Such factors include: an unstable job market; inadequate social security systems to provide support and an essential minimum to vulnerable individuals particularly in times economic and social crisis; lack of inclusive and accessible education, as well as support to members of vulnerable groups in completing education; and, experience of foster care and institutionalization.

Each of these individually or in complex interactions can lead to extreme poverty. That being said, there are individual psychological factors that may increase the risk of becoming homeless, for non-refugees in particular. Mental health challenges alone are not the causes of homelessness. However, persons with serious mental health diagnoses may have more difficulties in maintaining stable supportive relationships and finding and maintaining employment. These, in combination with economic and other social factors, such are progressive deterioration of welfare systems, represent serious risks for becoming homeless. On the other hand, the experience of homelessness is a serious risk factor for occurrence of mental health challenges. Homelessness is a complex and chronic traumatic experience that is almost bound to leave a mark on mental and physical health.

One of the most prominent mental health challenges associated with homelessness is complex trauma. Complex trauma refers to the "psychological problems and linked patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours which tend to result from prolonged exposure to traumatic experience. It is associated with repeated situations in which the individual loses control or is disempowered and from which there is no apparent escape" (Maguire, Nick, et al., 2010). Persons who have experienced complex trauma, particularly in early life, have difficulties in establishing stable interpersonal relations such as those with friends, partners, and colleagues. This can negatively impact the formation of a stable and supportive social network. Many of the difficulties and challenges unstably housed persons experience in relations with service and support providers can be linked to the consequences of complex trauma. Also, there is much evidence that other mental health challenges, such as substance abuse, may be related to complex trauma.

A.2 Challenges for non-professionals providing psychosocial support

Challenges in communication and support to library users experiencing homelessness are often related to mental health challenges associated with homelessness. The syndrome of complex

trauma accounts for many of such difficulties:

- *Difficulty in establishing trusting relationships.* Persons experiencing homelessness frequently have a history of abuse, mistreatment, abandonment, broken promises and unfulfilled expectations. Establishing trusting relationships between a service provider and persons experiencing homelessness can be a long, difficult, and uncertain process with the risk of disappointment on both sides.

- *Difficulty in maintaining boundaries.* This can influence the capacity for self-regulation of emotions and behaviour, as well as expectations about the meaning of interpersonal relationships of persons living in stressful conditions. Therefore it is advisable to be constantly aware and maintain healthy physical and emotional boundaries.

- *Dealing with resignation, passivity, and inertia.* The psychological syndrome called "learned helplessness" occurs. The main feature of this syndrome is the perception that what happens in our life is uncontrollable and out of our power to change or influence. This is learned through numerous previous failed attempts by the person to actively help themself. If a person repeatedly fails in an activity they will tend to stay passive, to save energy because it feels like their efforts are in vain anyway. In a psychosocial support program this presents as a lack of motivation and resignation.

- *Dealing with anger and impatience.* Anger is a common response to trauma, events that seem unfair, or in which the person has been made to feel like a victim - as often happens with persons experiencing homelessness. The person easily becomes angry, is impatient or impulsive, and may make rash decisions, be involved in risky behaviour, and give up suggested or recommended activities easily.

- *Severe mental health disorders and substance* abuse. These are serious challenges to non-professional support providers. They can cause unpredictable behaviour and make it difficult for library staff or service providers to feel safe.

- *Maintaining structure and discipline.* Living in homelessness and insecure living conditions is marked with uncertainty and a lack of structure. This may contribute to a disinclination for structure for persons who are at risk of becoming homeless, as well as those experiencing homelessness.

A.3 Recommendations

Recommendations on psychosocial support include:

- *Teamwork and joint vision.* Support to library users with complex obstacles is best provided within a defined, structured program that is acknowledged and supported both by management and staff in the library. The program does not need to be elaborate in the beginning. A basic outline of who does what and when will offer library staff who are providing services to people experiencing homelessness with structure and regularity. Support, acceptance, and structure secured within an organization provide holistic service, better access, and continuity of services; a structured programme implemented by a team contributes to the prevention of emotional fatigue and burnout by staff.

- *Basic training and support.* It is preferable that non-professionals providing psychosocial support to people experiencing homelessness have at least basic training in communication skills and dealing with challenging clients. This would contribute not only to the quality of service but also to self-confidence, a feeling of safety, and burnout prevention for library staff providing support to people experiencing homelessness. Continuous support to non-professional helpers in the form of debriefing and peer or professional supervision is recommended

- *Being informed.* There is a body of literature that will help library staff gain a better understanding of homelessness. Become acquainted with other library services, as

models of good practice and that might be potentially replicable. Most importantly, create and keep an up-to-date database on locally available legal, health, housing, and other services in all sectors: public, private, and civic.

- *Individual approach.* No two persons experiencing homelessness are alike, even though they may have some life experiences in common. Therefore, it is preferable not to generalize and instead to approach each person independently.

- *Setting priorities.* Health and safety first. Make sure priorities are set collaboratively with the library user; instead of setting goals for a person experiencing homelessness, it is better if you work with them to agree on a goal.

- *Realistic expectations on both sides.* At the start, provide short and simple information to library users as to what the library service to people experiencing homelessness will consist of and what is to be expected. Nevertheless, persons experiencing homelessness may form unrealistic expectations and show disappointment with the services provided. It is important not to take this personally.

- *Active listening skills.* Active listening means setting aside your own personal assumptions, experiences, and viewpoints. Focus instead on what the library user is saying and how they feel while saying it. Staff should ask additional questions for clarification.

- *Healthy empathy.* Empathy helps library staff understand others and make perceptive responses to their stated and unstated emotions, needs, and circumstances. It is a necessary "tool" to help and support library staff. However, being overwhelmed with another person's emotions and grave circumstances to the extent of personally feeling their emotions and hardships is not helpful. It is a sign to seek support from colleagues/supervisors.

- *Positive attitude.* It is helpful and important to act from and maintain positive and hopeful attitudes as long as it does not foster unrealistic and false expectations and minimize problems and gravity of situation.

- *Consistency.* It is best if people experiencing homelessness do not receive different service at different times or with different library staff. All staff should implement library policies consistently. Consistent behaviour of library staff supports a sense of predictability and fairness that is too often lacking in the lives of persons experiencing homelessness.

- *Appropriate emotional responsibility.* Emotions, perceptions, and beliefs, whether self-defeating or self-helping, are created by an event or interaction. Therefore, each library staff member is responsible for their own feelings. As library service providers, library staff should not be caught in a trap of taking responsibility for a library user's anger, depression, self-pity, or other dysfunctional feeling. On the other side, staff's own self-defeating feelings about persons experiencing homelessness and the work with them are an individual staff's responsibility. If library staff feel depressed or angry, or if it hampers library staff from enjoying work and life, it is important to address this.

- *Maintaining personal and professional boundaries.* Explain the role of library staff as a service provider, the limits of availability, and be consistent in delivering service. Staff should be cautious in self-disclosure. It is preferable to avoid double roles: it is helpful to act friendly with a library user but becoming friends outside the library may cause confusion. Avoid lending or borrowing money, or receiving or giving valuable gifts. Foster independence by avoiding carrying out duties or tasks for the library user.

Appendix B Social Work in Libraries

This appendix briefly introduces the concept of incorporating social work into libraries. The idea of providing professional social services within the walls of libraries is new. However, it has become not only a creative approach but also a necessity in appropriately addressing societal issues. Libraries are often community centres, and their library users are a sample of the community as a whole. More research continues to be done on the effects of childhood trauma, mental health and substance use challenges, and homelessness. As public servants, libraries have a responsibility to understand these issues and provide the best form of resources, referrals, and support to community members.

B.1 Libraries as safe places

Many people experiencing homelessness have been exposed to varying degrees of violence. The library may be a different experience for them. Libraries are open, free, and accessible public spaces with usually kind staff, and sometimes security staff to ensure all library users are welcome and safe. In addition to providing Internet access, books, and other resources, the library can provide a quiet and safe space. It can be a place to connect with friends, family, and community. Humans need relationships to survive, let alone thrive. Experiencing homelessness is often an isolating experience. Having a public space where one can get away from the noise of the city streets, know people will help if something happens, and have a secure place to build healthy relationships is important when one does not have a home.

Many individuals who experience homelessness have also experienced trauma, including complex trauma. Being in the library allows people to "let their guard down". Constantly being hypervigilant simply to survive is exhausting, and the ability to let that go (for the most part) for a few hours a day is priceless. Library users experiencing homelessness want the place to be safe for themselves as well as everyone else, so the library regulars often become the eyes and ears of the library.

One question that is frequently asked is why do people experiencing homelessness use the library? As mentioned above, libraries strive to serve all members of a community and in doing so they also create a place for people to be when there is no other option. Living in parks is often dangerous and people also need a way to get out of inclement weather. Day shelters and other service providers attempt to fill this gap when they can, depending in part of their funding. However, they usually are not able to provide resources for education and entertainment. Libraries, on the other hand, provide access to a range of useful and relevant resources. In addition, when a person experiencing homelessness goes into a library, they can simply be another library user.

Another aspect of serving library users who are experiencing homelessness is the stereotype of violence and behavioural challenges related to housing status. Violence and behaviour issues can be frustrating and frightening for staff, no matter the housing status of the library user. A possible reason for these behaviours within a library by those experiencing homelessness is that people know they can access and receive help if needed. Social workers are trained to view "behaviour issues" as a call for help. Sometimes people don't know the words to ask for help, or even know what help it is they need. In domestic violence situations, a survivor can initiate abuse in a library, because they know help is available, which may not happen in another setting. It is important to keep in mind that violating a policy or creating a volatile and possibly dangerous situation can be a person's way of asking for help, no matter their housing status.

B.2 Social workers and librarians

Social workers and librarians can complement each other. It is common for both librarians and social workers to enter these professions because they want to help people and their communities. Both professions use research and education to learn the best approaches to do this. Librarians are trained to view library services and how they are impacting the community. A social worker however, has a much different lens in which to view things. Social workers are trained to view systems on a three-tiered system: micro, mezzo and macro. This is a beneficial way to view how a library is impacting the community. The micro system includes the library users and individual library staff; the mezzo includes the library programs, systems, procedures, and policies. Macro includes the outside agencies and entities the library collaborates with, the social service systems in the community, and governmental entities. Social workers are trained to evaluate relationships within all of these systems and how they interact with one another, identify gaps or relationships that need work, and then remedy these situations.

When representatives of each of these two professions, library staff and social workers, walk through a library, they are observing the same services, resources, and environment. However, while library staff may be assessing access and availability, social workers are assessing the people. Providing the skills and training of both the library and social work fields in one place is a great benefit to our communities.

B.3 De-escalation

B.3.1 Neutral parties

Social workers are neutral parties in volatile situations. They are trained in de-escalation skills that can be beneficial in a library setting. Social workers are often the professionals who go in to neighbourhoods and homes where safety isn't always guaranteed. Learning how to be safe while doing this work is a critical aspect of being a social worker. Learning these skills and being able to effectively execute them also benefits the library. If a situation has escalated or is about to, a social worker can step in and help resolve it. Security officers are also often taught these skills; however, many officers wear a uniform or at least a badge. The sight of a uniform and badge may trigger some library users (due to previous negative and oftentimes traumatic experiences) and this may escalate the situation even more. Social workers can be neutral parties who can help diffuse a volatile situation. The presence and expertise of a social worker can contribute to fewer incidents, fewer calls to the police, fewer people being banned because of behaviour, less stress on staff/library users/security, and the overall creation of a safer space for everyone. Having a social worker on site can also help staff feel less anxious, because they know that if a situation arises, the social worker is there to support and help resolve it as quickly and as peacefully as possible.

B.3.2 Training library staff

Social workers can train library staff in helpful skills. They can provide role modeling and training on trauma-informed services, self-care, and de-escalation, as these are crucial pieces of social work curriculum. Trauma Informed Services is based on the Trauma Informed Care (TIC) model. The mental health field (and in some cases the medical field) have adopted the TIC model. The bottom line of TIC is that most, if not all, people seeking mental health services have experienced trauma in their lives. Trauma Informed Services incorporates this into the public sector world. Social workers understand they don't know what someone's life experience

has been, so they operate with the awareness that anyone may have experienced trauma. Using a TIC model helps library staff understand the impact of trauma on both brain development and how the brain interprets a stressful situation. Knowing that someone may react with a fight or flight response to a situation someone else may ignore helps library staff not take negative library user interactions personally and to remain calm to resolve the situation in the best way possible. Social workers don't provide care in libraries, but rather services, therefore integrating trauma informed services can help libraries and communities. Learning how to take care of oneself while interacting with the public is also important and social workers can provide an excellent model for this, since it is part of their training.

Learning these concepts can decrease stress on staff, which may in turn impact a situation with a library user. If library staff is practicing good self-care and feels grounded in their knowledge of TIS, then they are less afraid to approach an emotional situation and can intervene more quickly as well as de-escalate a situation before it advances. All of this creates a safer environment for everyone.

Applying these concepts to libraries can help library users, the community, and staff as well as the library system as a whole. Providing skills to decrease job stress and vicarious trauma allow staff to stay in their jobs longer, thereby decreasing turnover and loss of institutional knowledge. It can also decrease the cost of healthcare as stress can create adverse health outcomes.

B.4 Addressing policies and procedures

Social workers can work with library staff to understand the impact of library policies and procedures. Social workers are trained to recognize inequalities and issues that may contribute to marginalization and/or discrimination related to various groups of people. This coupled with viewing systems through a trauma-informed lens allows social workers to support libraries in reviewing policies and procedures, and help to decrease re-traumatization and marginalization. For example, some libraries require library users to have a permanent address to obtain a library card. Since obtaining a state-issued identification card can be difficult when a person is unstably housed, being flexible with library card policies can increase access for those who do not have a permanent address. Allowing for other forms of identification to be used to gain access to library services can help open doors for those who benefit from this kind of flexibility.

Signage is also important. Many people who experience homelessness are pushed to the edges of the dominant society by those who do not understand their lives. Signage can play a big role in this. For example, a sign in a bathroom that says "Absolutely no grooming!" means the only public bathroom the person has access to doesn't allow them to even brush their teeth. Having personal property policies that don't allow people to bring in more than one bag can leave those who have to carry all of their possessions with them at all times (which is often the case in homelessness) unable to use the library. Social workers can help library staff become aware of how policies can affect all groups of people.

B.5 Assisting library users in finding key resources

B.5.1 Knowledge and connections

Social workers can play a key role in connecting library users to services they need. It isn't surprising to know some community members may need additional support in their lives. The non-traditional role of social workers in libraries allows people to access services without the stigma of using specific services related to such topics as mental health, substance use, and

homelessness. Since people are already in the library, it is a perfect place to reach out to different populations and offer services. Sometimes people aren't sure what services are available or they're not sure how to access them, and some aren't even aware that connection to a service might increase their quality of life. Social workers can network with the social service agencies in a community to connect library users directly to them. While some people may not follow through when given telephone numbers to call for services, they may be willing to sit with a social worker while they make the call together, thereby creating a connection between the library user and the service provider. It is also beneficial for library staff to arrange for agencies to come to the library to meet with library users. Since the library is a safe place, it is much less intimidating to meet with someone who can offer services within the library.

B.5.2 A conversation without an agenda

Sometimes a conversation without an agenda is what a person needs. Library social work allows people to have conversations about their lives without an agenda. Many times a simple conversation is all that is needed to help someone begin the process of accessing the right services. The library has always offered resources, but without a safe, knowledgeable and non-judgmental interaction, it can be challenging to find the necessary ones. Social workers can create safe relationships that facilitate this access.

B.6 Bridging gaps in service

The collaboration of libraries and social service agencies is inspiring, innovative and effective. For social service agencies, managed care and lack of funding can create gaps in services. Libraries assess neighbourhood needs and when financially possible, may create new programming to meet those needs.
Social workers can help libraries expand outreach to social services and by working together, libraries and social workers can help to bridge any gaps in service and offer library services to those most in need.

B.7 Recommendations for service providers: reaching out to libraries

This section offers support for community service providers on reaching out to their local public libraries and some suggestions for how to do so. Please feel free to adapt it for your particular library and community.

B.7.1 Why reach out to your public library?
- Many of your clients are likely to be spending time there
  - They may be not interacting directly with library staff
  - They may or may not feel welcome there
  - Public libraries can act as sanctuaries, out of the elements and away from the constant pressure of being in public and feeling judged
  - Public libraries can serve as safe spaces
- Public libraries have resources
  - Internet access: Which is critical for staying in touch with family and friends, as well as accessing the many services and programs that could provide support in their lives
  - Legal information: How to find out about their legal rights, how to obtain legal documents
  - Computers: For word processing, résumés, writing and so on
  - Lists: Such as low cost or free doctors or clinics, LGBTQ+-friendly housing

- Education: GED, FAFSA, colleges, local programs, lists of schools
- Housing: Fact sheets, websites
- Employment: Websites; fliers; other resources
- Literacy resources, classes
- Public libraries have services
  - Reference staff who can answer questions
  - Bathrooms – and possibly even all-genders bathrooms, which would mean a safe facility for transgender people
  - Photocopying/scanning: A good example of scanning would be scanning important documents and saving them to an email account as attachments. Some libraries may be able to help with this.
- Public libraries have programs
  - They can showcase the work of your clients: Photos, writings, artwork
  - Workshops/book groups/speaker series: On parenting; on job and interview skills; on applying to colleges or for financial aid; on staying healthy on the streets
  - You, as a service provider, could offer to host or co-host programs at the library
  - Volunteer opportunities, for adults as well as youth
- Public libraries may have meetings rooms
  - For interviewing
  - For small groups
- Public libraries are committed to equal access to information
  - This is a priority for libraries
  - Information is what your clients need
  - Library staff are non-judgmental and there to help
- Public librarians can be allies
  - For service providers
  - For all who are experiencing homelessness in their communities: Youth, families, individuals experiencing homelessness
  - They are caring adults who can provide human connections

B.7.2 How to reach out to your local public library
- In person
  - Ask any **staff person** who you should talk to
- By telephone
  - Start by calling the **reference desk** or **reference line**
  - For a small library, look for the telephone number of the **Library Director**
- By email
  - Look on the library's website for an email address for reference questions. This may be an online form to be filled out and submitted.
  - For a small library, look for the email address of the **Library Director**
- Attend a **library trustee** or **library board** meeting.
  - The schedule for these should be on the library's website

B.7.3 Talking points
- You are interested in working **with** the library on serving your clients
- You'd like to meet
  - To talk about ways you can partner
  - To talk about your clients and what they need
  - To exchange information about each other
  - To find out what they are already doing
- You'd like to invite a library representative to your meetings

- If possible, you'd like to attend their meetings
- You'd like to send them fliers
- You'd like to post their fliers

B.7.4 Possible barriers and solutions
- Public librarians may not understand the needs of your clients
  - They may have little information about those who are experiencing homelessness
  - They are interested in knowing more
- Your clients may be confused or discouraged by the library's rules, policies, procedures, such as:
  - I.D. requirements
  - Confusion about the rules and when they are flexible
  - Permanent address requirements
  - Baggage limitations
  - No sleeping policies
  - Other public conduct policies
  - Confusion about how to use catalogue and other library resources

By working with the library staff, you can help them create policies, rules and instructions that will facilitate creating a safe and supportive space for all.
- Stereotypes
  - Stereotypes of all of us get in the way and dispelling these stereotypes is one of the challenges in providing relevant services to your clients
  - These include stereotypes of library staff, people experiencing homelessness and social workers
  - Creating relationships with the library staff can help break down these stereotypes
- Library staff are too busy
  - They are busy but they are also willing to listen
- You are too busy
  - Librarians make good allies
- You or your clients have had negative experiences with the library
  - Library staff may need more information about the work you do
- Library staff are not aware of unstably housed LGBTQ+ youth in their libraries
  - They need specific information about these young people and how to create a welcoming environment
- Library staff may not see the connection between their work and yours
  - A conversation with them may help
  - Their work directly overlaps with yours: Their resources and services are needed by all library users
- Library staff may be intimidated by people experiencing homelessness, especially those they don't know
  - Meetings, conversations and information can all help

B.7.5 Examples of what libraries have done
- Took a laptop to a shelter and helped shelter residents get library cards
- Provided library tour to youth and staff at a shelter
- Took books to a youth shelter and talked about books with the youth
- Invited youth to join library's Teen Advisory Board
- Hired social workers

- Hired public health nurses
- Created opportunities for ongoing conversations at the library between housed and unhoused library users

Appendix C Action Planning Tools

This appendix offers two Action Planning tools for libraries as they address the topic of homelessness in their libraries: "Action Planning Tool 1: Addressing Homelessness through Your Library: Needs" and "Action Planning Tool 2: Addressing Homelessness Through Your Library: Challenges."

It is hoped that by using these Action Planning Tools, library staff can incorporate information they have been provided by the Guidelines and any other sources and create positive and specific steps to address homelessness in their libraries and communities.

C.1 Action Planning Tool 1

Addressing Homelessness Through Your Library: Needs

This tool is intended to help you create action steps to support your efforts as library staff to address the topic of homelessness.

In the first column, there are three boxes in which you can list 3 different needs unique to this population.   The 2nd column gives you space to articulate how your library can help meet these needs.   The following four columns help break down your plan into action steps.   First, think of three steps your library could take.   Decide if each step is a short term or long term actions. Then, identify potential barriers that could arise as your library begins to take these steps, and finally, you can list strategies you will use for addressing those barriers.

Needs of library users experiencing homelessness (e.g., education, safe spaces, housing, health services, etc.):	How can my library help fulfil need? (e.g., provide list of free/low cost clinics)	Steps needed to address this need: (e.g., explore local clinic options)	Is this a short term or long term action? (e.g.,short term for clinics)	Potential barriers: (e.g., no staff time)	Strategies for addressing barriers: (e.g., ask local service providers)
		1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.
		1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.
		1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.

C.2 Action Planning Tool 2

Addressing Homelessness Through Your Library: Challenges

This tool is intended to help you create action steps to support your efforts as library staff to address the topic of homelessness.

In the first column, there are three boxes in which you can list three different library-related challenges unique to this population.   The 2nd column gives you space to articulate how your library can help meet these challenges.   The following four columns help break down your plan into action steps.   First, think of three steps your library could take (don't forget about partnerships!). Decide if these are short term or long-term actions. Then, identify potential barriers that could arise as your library begins to take these steps, and finally, you can list strategies you will use for addressing those barriers.

Challenges your library faces (e.g., staff frustration)	How can my library address this challenge? (e.g., provide staff training)	Specific steps needed to address this need: (e.g., find potential trainers)	Is this a short term or long term action? (e.g., long term)	Potential barriers: (e.g., resistance from library funders)	Strategies for addressing barriers: (e.g., partner with social service agencies)
		1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.
		1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.
		1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.

Appendix D Vocabulary

D.1 Introduction

Having a basic grasp of the vocabulary related to homelessness can help librarians communicate with those who are experiencing homelessness, as well as with service providers, such as local social services agencies. This vocabulary appendix includes terms related to housing, mental health, social services, and sexual orientation and gender identity. It is important to use appropriate and respectful language when interacting with any library users, and particularly those who are frequently misrepresented or stigmatized.

This vocabulary also defines acronyms that are used in the Guidelines.

D.2 General terms related to homelessness

Experiencing homelessness
According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), homelessness can be divided into four categories:
- People who are living in a place not designed for human habitation, or who are in emergency or transitional housing
- People who are about to lose their primary night-time residence
- Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed
- People who are fleeing or are attempting to flee domestic violence

Chronic Homelessness
- A homeless individual who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more
- An individual who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years

Invisible Homelessness
- No accurate count
- Includes couch surfing, sleeping outside or in vehicles
- Nighttime shelter can be more fluid for young people than for adults – couch surfing one day, shelter the next, a friend's floor the next, the streets the next

D.2.1 Homelessness and youth

RHY
- Runaway and Homeless Youth

Youth experiencing homelessness (or homeless youth)
- Ages 12 to 24
- Youth who are not with family or guardians
- They may be or may have been part of the juvenile legal system
- Youth are homeless for many reasons, including:
  - Family poverty or homelessness
  - Family conflict
  - Parental or sibling alcohol and/or drug abuse
  - Physical and/or sexual abuse at home

    o Leaving the foster system

LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning) Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Same bullet points as homeless youth
- There may be conflicts over sexual orientation or gender identity

Throwaway youth
- Youth who
  - Are abandoned/deserted
  - Are told to leave home by a parent or other adult in the household
  - Leave and are prevented from returning home
  - Run away and whose parents/caretakers make no effort to recover them/do not care if they return

Runaway youth
- Minors age 14 years or younger who have left home for one or more nights without parental permission
- Age 15 and older who have left home for two or more nights

System Youth
- Youth who have been involved in foster care, mental health and/or juvenile legal system

Street Youth
- Youth who spend a significant amount of time on the street and in other areas (such as abandoned buildings) that increase their risk for sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and drug use

TAY (Transitional Age Youth)
- Usually defined as youth ages 18 to 24, although sometimes includes age 16 to 24
- Transitioning out of state care, foster care – "aging out"
- A vulnerable time when many youth end up unstably housed

D.3 Terms related to housing

Emergency housing/shelter
- Temporary
- Emergency basis
- Limited time
- Can be first step in housing

Transitional housing
- More stable
- Specific period - can be 1 to 2 years
- Next step after emergency housing

Supportive housing
- Can be transitional or permanent
- Tied to supportive services, like having a case worker

Permanent housing
- No limit on stay
- Own or abide by lease

SRO
- Single resident occupancy
- Can get rental assistance
- Permanent housing within Continuum of Care

Housing First
- Different from past traditional approaches to homelessness
- Centres on providing people experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible – and then providing services as needed

Rapid Re-Housing
- Intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing
- Three components: Housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and rapid re-housing case management and services

Low threshold housing
- Low threshold occupancy requirements, including sobriety and background checks
- Related to harm reduction approach
- Applies to all kinds of housing

D.4 Terms related to social services

Caseworker/social worker
- Helps a client locate and coordinate needed services, such as mental health, housing, educational resources
- Relationships are key: One of most important relationships a person experiencing homelessness can have is between themselves and their caseworker

Case management
- Arranges for provision of an array of services; addresses unique identified needs
- Creates opportunities to be involved in the larger community

Continuum of Care
- Continuum of Care (CoC) is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals
- CoCs represent communities of all kinds, including major cities, suburbs and rural areas

Harm reduction
- Non-judgmental philosophy
- Allows the person to have input into their own treatment plan
- Begins with person - they set the pace
- Needle exchange is an excellent example of harm reduction

- Needle exchange involves doctors or other social agents giving free clean needles to patients to help prevent the spreading of disease like HIV

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)
- An organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma
    - A traumatic event can involve physical, emotional or sexual abuse, war, community violence, neglect, maltreatment, loss, natural disasters, terrorism, witnessing violence or experiencing violence vicariously, or chronic adversity
- Trauma interferes with one's ability to cope
- People respond to trauma in multiple ways – it's helpful to be familiar with possibilities for how a library user and library staff may react

Wrap-around services
- "Intensive individualized care planning and management process"
- With wraparound services, all aspects of a person's life are considered and coordinated: Housing, education, health, etc.

D.5 Mental health-related terminology

Mental health and homelessness
- In the general population about 1 in 5 people have mental health life experiences
- In the homeless population that number increases to almost half
- Recovery is always a goal

People-first language
- An objective way of acknowledging, communicating and reporting on disabilities
- Puts the person before the disability
- Eliminates stereotypes and misrepresentations
- Example: A person who has depression (not "who is depressed") or a person living with bipolar disorder (not "a bipolar person") or a person with mental health life experiences (not "the mentally ill")

Offensive or negative language
- Words or phrases that imply something is wrong or abnormal with the individual
- Negative words that imply tragedy, such as afflicted with, suffers, victim, struggles
- Do not use special to mean segregated
- Avoid euphemisms such as physically challenged, inconvenienced and differently abled

Stigma
- The result of false ideas that people have when they describe someone they see as "different"
- Separates the individual from the rest of their community
- People First Language helps a person feel respected rather than labelled as "abnormal" or "dysfunctional," eliminating the stigma of a mental health diagnosis
- Stigmatized words include:
    - Mentally ill, emotionally disturbed, insane, crazy, odd, abnormal, psycho, maniac, lunatic, loony, wacko, cuckoo, mental, deranged,

mad, loopy, out of it, slow, nuts, disturbed, demented, screw loose, brain dead, delusional, issues, schizophrenic

D.5.1 Common diagnoses
Knowing the correct terminology does not mean we know anything about an individual's experience. Each person is unique, with unique circumstances.

General anxiety disorder
- A disorder in which it is extremely difficult or impossible for an individual to control their worry over a possible bad outcome

Complex trauma
- Complex trauma refers to the "psychological problems and linked patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours which tend to result from prolonged exposure to traumatic experience. It is associated with repeated situations in which the individual loses control or is disempowered and from which there is no apparent escape (Maguire, Nick, et al., 2010)

Learned helplessness
- The perception that what happens in our life is uncontrollable and out of our power to change or influence. This is learned through numerous previous failed attempts by the person to actively help themself.

Major depressive disorder
- The presence of sad, empty, or irritable mood, with accompanying physical changes
- Frequently makes day to day tasks, such as getting out of bed, a struggle

Manic-depressive disorder
- Unusually intense emotional states that swing from high to low and back called "mood episodes."
- Each mood episode is a drastic change from a person's usual mood and behaviour

Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Can occur when an individual
  - Directly experiences the traumatic event
  - Witnesses the traumatic event in person
  - Learns that the traumatic event occurred to a close family member or close friend
  - Experiences first-hand repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event
- The event causes significant distress or impairment in the individual's social interactions, capacity to work or even day to day functioning

Psychosis
- A disconnection from reality
- May occur in illnesses on the schizophrenia spectrum, in manic or depressive episodes, and in other serious mental illnesses

Schizophrenia
- Individual may experience delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech and behaviour, and other symptoms that cause social or occupational dysfunction

- A spectrum, so the illness may be severe, or an incident may occur rarely

D.6 LGBTQ+ related terms
We are grateful to GLAAD and Heartland Trans Wellness Group for many of the following definitions.*

Lesbian
- Term used to describe females attracted romantically and/or sexually to other females

Gay
- Often used to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic or sexual nature
- Can be used as an umbrella term for men and women

Bisexual
- A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to males/men and females/women

Transgender
- An umbrella term that describes people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from expectations associated with the sex assigned to them at birth
- People who are transgender may or may not have gender affirming surgery or other surgeries and may or may not use hormone therapy
- Transgender people may be heterosexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian or asexual. In other words, knowing a person is transgender doesn't tell you anything about that person's sexual orientation

Queer
- Generally used to recognize someone on the LGBTQIAA spectrum
- Use cautiously! This term has different meanings to different people. Some still find it offensive, while others reclaim it to encompass a broader range of identities, politics, and histories

Questioning
- Questioning sexual orientation
- Experimenting
- Questioning gender

Gender expression
- External manifestations of gender, expressed through one's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behaviour, voice, or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine and feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to make their gender expression align with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth.

PGP
- "Personal Gender Pronoun"
- Sometimes called "preferred gender pronoun"- but this definition is becoming less popular, as people object to the idea to the idea of their pronoun being "preferred"
- Allows a person to state what pronoun they use and would like to be used when being referred to

Gender identity
- One's psychological sense of self; one's identity; who someone is intrinsically
- One's internal, deeply held sense of one's gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices. Unlike gender expression, gender identity is not visible to others.

Cisgender
- A gender identity that society considers to match the sex assigned at birth
- The prefix cis- means on this side or not across from
- A term used to call attention to the privilege of people who are not transgender or gender non-conforming

Transgender woman
- A person who was assigned male at birth but it wasn't consistent with her sense of self
- May describe themselves as a trans woman or simply a woman

Transgender man
- A person who was assigned female at birth but it wasn't consistent with his sense of self
- May describe themselves as a trans man or simply a man

Sexual orientation
- A pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to men, women, both genders, neither gender, or another gender

Coming out
- "The process of first recognizing and then acknowledging non-heterosexual orientation in oneself, and then disclosing it to others" (Mallon, 2010)
- Often in stages
- Nonlinear
- A time when supportive information is critical

Ally
- Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own. Reaching across differences to achieve mutual goals.

LGBTQ+ ally
- Someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual and gender-straight privilege in themselves and others

D.7 Other related terms

Social capital
- "Social capital theory assumes that people acquire at birth and accumulate through their lives unequal shares of capital that incrementally alter and determine their life chances" (Rosenberg, 1975, p. 228)

Cultural humility
Cultural humility helps us create a professional sense of self that may be different from our personal sense of self.
- Includes:
  - Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection
  - Recognizing and challenging power imbalances
  - Institutional accountability
- No endpoint – there is no point at which we are "competent"
- For library staff and LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness, there are four cultures involved:
  - Library culture
  - Youth culture
  - Culture of homelessness
  - LGBTQ+ culture

Raising awareness
- Aims to make a specific issue known to the wider public, addressing existing attitudes, social relationships, and power relations in order to initiate social change.

Advocacy
- Is speaking up, drawing a community's attention to an important issue, and directing decision-makers towards a solution. Advocacy is working with other people and organizations to make a difference. (Handicap international, 2011).

Communication
- Is an overarching term meaning the process that people use to exchange information about some issue. All communication activities make use of some form of media or channel of communication, e.g. mass media, community media, and interpersonal communication. (ASCM Subgroup at Country Level, 2007).

D.8 Acronyms

IFLA: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
LSN: Library Services to People with Special Needs (IFLA)
WLIC: World Library and Information Congress
IGH: The Institute of Global Homelessness
UN: United Nations
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
NGO: Non-governmental organization
SDG: Sustainable Development Goal (UN)
ICSU: International Council for Science
ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN)
ISSC: International Social Science Council
CESCR: Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN)
National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)
MDG: Millennium Development Goal (UN)
OHCHR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
EBLIDA: European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations

EIS: Employment Information Service
HELP: Homeless Engagement and Leadership Development Program (Dallas Public Library, Texas, USA)
RCL: Riga Central Library
ALA: American Library Association
ULU: Urban Librarians Unite

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Appendix A Non-Professional Psychosocial Support

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Appendix F List of Libraries Sending Examples

NORTH AMERICA

Name of institution	Type of library	Country and town
Vancouver Public Library	Public Library	Canada, Vancouver, British Columbia
Boulder Public Library	Public Library	USA, Boulder, Colorado
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library	Public Library	USA, Charlotte, North Carolina
Columbus Metropolitan Library	Public Library	USA, Columbus, Ohio
Dallas Public Library	Public Library	USA, Dallas, Texas
Denver Public Library	Public Library	USA, Denver, Colorado,
Forbes Library	Public Library	USA, Northampton, Massachusetts
Forsyth County Public Library	Public Library	USA, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Fresno County Public Library	Public Library	USA, Fresno, California
Hennepin County Library	Public Library	USA, Minneapolis, Minnesota
King Library	Public Library	USA, San José, CA
Multnomah County Library	Public Library	USA, Multnomah County (cities of Fairview, Gresham, Maywood Park, Portland, Troutdale and Wood Village), Oregon
Nashville Public Library	Public Library	USA, Nashville, Tennessee
The New York Public Library	Public library	USA, New York, New York
Providence Community Library - Knight Memorial Library	Public library	USA, Providence, Rhode Island
Richland Library	Public Library	USA, Columbia, South Carolina

Sacramento Public Library	Public Library	USA, Sacramento, California
Seattle Public Library	Public Library	USA, Seattle, Washington
Queens Library	Public Library	USA, Jamaica (New York City), New York

SOUTH AMERICA

Name of institution	Type of library	Country and town
Municipal library Javiera Carrera	Municipal Library	Chile, Angol
Public Library Pablo Neruda	Public Library	Chile, Santiago
Municipal Library Guayaqil GAD	Municipal Library	Ecuador, Guayaquil

EUROPE

Name of institution	Type of library	Country and town
Library of University of Salzburg	University Library	Austria, Salzburg
Zagreb City Libraries	Public Library	Croatia, Zagreb
Hillerød Bibliotek	Public Library	Denmark, Hillerød
Bibliothèques Municipales de Grenoble – Bibliothèque des Relais Lecture	Public Library	France, Grenoble
Bibliothèque de Toulouse	Public Library	France, Toulouse
Future Library	Organisation	Greece, Athens
Municipal Library of Leros island	Municipal Library	Greece, Leros
Municipal Library "Odysseas Elytis" of Lipsi Island	Municipal Library	Greece, Lipsi Island
Municipal Library of Thermi	Municipal Library	Greece, Thermi
Papacharampios Central Public Library of Nafpaktos	Central Public Library	Greece, Nafpaktos
Veria Central Public Library	Public Library	Greece, Veria
Children Municipal Library of Neapoli - Volos	Municipal Library	Greece, Volos
Riga Central Library	Public Library	Latvia, Riga
Bibliotheek Kennemerwaard	Public Library	The Netherlands, Alkmaar

Municipal budgetary cultural institution „Kildinskaya library"	Municipal Public Library	Russian Federation, Kildinstroy, Kolsky District, Murmansk Oblast
Ljubljana City Library	Public Library	Slovenia, Ljubljana
Barcelona Public Library	Public Library	Spain, Barcelona
Kirklees Libraries	Public library	UK, Huddersfield/ Dewsbury
Newcastle Libraries	Public Library	UK, Newcastle upon Tyne

ASIA

Name of institution	Type of library	Country and town
Alternative Realities	Homeless Library (HoLi): Community Run Library	India, Mumbai
Chiyoda City's Hibiya Library and Museum	Public Library	Japan, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

AFRICA

Name of institution	Type of library	Country and town
Buwenda p/s and St. Marks SSS	School Library	Uganda, Buwenda

AUSTRALIA

Name of institution	Type of library	Country and town
Balmain Library	Public Library	Australia, Balmain
Waverley Library	Public Library	Australia, Bondi Junction
Newcastle Region Library	Public Library	Australia, Newcastle
State Library of Queensland	State Reference Library	Australia, South Brisbane

Appendix G Summary of Recommendations

This appendix includes the recommendations from each of the chapters that contained recommendations.   For the context of the recommendations and examples from local libraries, please read the entire chapter.

Chapter 4 Human Rights and Homelessness

Following a human rights-based approach, libraries can help strengthen the rights of people experiencing homelessness and improve their lives in concrete ways. Furthermore, such an approach can strengthen the public perception of libraries as important partners in the process of implementing universal human rights at home.

A human-rights based approach demands that:
- Respect the human rights of everyone to information and cultural participation
- Take measures to ensure that library staff do not discriminate and that barriers to access to the library's services are lowered or removed
- Regard serving people experiencing homelessness not merely as a question of voluntary social engagement but rather as a duty that libraries, as public institutions, must fulfil
- Promote and support the rights of library users experiencing homelessness by providing them with equal access to information, ICT and other services
- Respect people experiencing homelessness as subjects with rights who are capable of acting on their own behalf, and work together with them to create appropriate services and effective programs for them

To enhance their role as partners in implementing human rights, we further recommend that libraries do the following:
- Cooperate with partners outside of the library profession, for example local human rights organizations or National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) that deal with the challenges of homelessness
- Raise awareness and promote distribution of reports and recommendations regarding homelessness published by UN human rights bodies such as the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) or the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing

As key stakeholders enabling access to information, knowledge, education and social participation, libraries should:
- Contribute to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in their countries by supporting and empowering people who live in extreme poverty as well as in vulnerable situations, including people experiencing homelessness
- Advocate for their vital role in the world-wide national implementation of the SDGs
- Claim a role for libraries in national plans and strategies concerning the 2030 Agenda
- Demonstrate that libraries are helping to make the core mission of the UN 2030 Agenda — "Leave No One Behind" — a reality

Chapter 5 Needs Assessment and Evaluation of Services to People Experiencing Homelessness

Needs assessment
In conducting a needs assessment, a library should:

- Use any available data to evaluate the extent and nature of homelessness in a community
- Determine if local government has goals related to serving people experiencing homelessness
- Contact community agencies and NGOs that provide services to people experiencing homelessness to discuss needs they see and how the library might respond to these needs
- To the extent possible, interact with people experiencing homelessness to determine a role the library might plan in meeting their needs

Evaluation

In evaluating a program and activities serving people experiencing homelessness, a library should

- Keep a record of positive anecdotes relating the result of library services
- Create a method of documenting the use of library services
- Document assumptions and observations through interviews, surveys, and focus groups
- Cooperate with community agencies, government agencies, shelters, and NGOs to whom the library makes referrals to document the impact of library services on people experiencing homelessness

Chapter 6 Attitude

To create a welcoming and supportive attitude toward those who are experiencing homelessness:

Consider whom the library is welcoming

- Assess the library from the viewpoint of someone who is experiencing homelessness
- Use the library layout, the posters, displays, programs, art, resources and collection to welcome all library users

Assess the library's posted rules and policies

- If rules and policies are posted, use positive language. For example, rather than listing all the behaviours that are **not** allowed, provide a simple and short list of what **is** allowed. Post a single copy instead of multiple copies.
- Assess who is impacted by the rules and policies. If they disproportionately affect those who are experiencing homelessness, consider alternatives. For example, if the library doesn't allow sleeping, consider changing that rule to sleeping allowed as long as it doesn't disturb other library users.
- Consider making changes that could make the library a welcoming environment for all. For example, flexibility regarding getting a library card, having an "honour" book shelf, or providing safe storage for larger items. All of these can help create a public space that says "yes" to everyone.

Work with library staff

- Staff attitudes can vary greatly.
- Point out each person who uses the library deserves to be treated with respect and interest.
- Have a no-tolerance policy toward negative and hostile comments about library users who are experiencing homelessness. Challenge stereotypes.
- Discuss and address any staff concerns.
- Provide information and training. Training can help staff feel comfortable providing resources and interacting with library users who are unstably housed. (More extensive information about training can be found in the Training section). Denver Public Library, Colorado, USA "provides training and support to staff in the areas of Trauma Informed Services, Mental Health, Homelessness and Self Care." These kinds of training can help

create welcoming and supportive attitudes. Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA provides ongoing sensitivity training.

- Get to know the names of frequent library users and welcome them to the library. This positive approach can lessen tensions, clear up misunderstandings, and create a supportive environment for all.
- Provide your own name, as a sign of respect and a welcoming environment.

Be all-inclusive
- When adding to the library's collection, creating programs, designing displays, providing resources – consider the needs of the library users experiencing homelessness and include them. Not sure, ask – your library users, local service agencies.
- Listen and learn: Go into the community and listen to those who are experiencing homelessness, as well as those who provide services
- Invite speakers from the homeless community to be part of staff trainings related to homelessness and poverty
- Learn from community partners – attend their meetings, invite them to library meetings, ask them to provide staff trainings

Chapter 7 Library Services

As the examples show, there is a wide range of services offered to people experiencing homelessness.   Services, offered around the world, vary in size, complexity, intensity, and partnerships. Here are some suggestions for getting started on providing a program that serves people who are experiencing homelessness in your community.

- Explore the need for services to people experiencing homelessness. If you are sure your library is serving people experiencing homelessness, are they perceived as causing problems for the library?   If the number is low, they are not perceived as causing problems and they easily use existing library services, the library may not need to offer any services particularly relevant to their lives.
- Assuming that homelessness is present in your community, begin by identifying other agencies already providing services to people experiencing homelessness.   Attend their meetings and offer the library as a partner in their efforts to address the homelessness in the community.
- Form a staff committee to plan services for people experiencing homelessness.   This committee should be composed of staff sympathetic to and willing to develop services for unstably housed community members.
- Create an environment that is welcoming to those experiencing homelessness so they are comfortable discussing their needs. Unstably housed youth in particular can be reluctant to disclose their housing status and an environment that is supportive can help them be comfortable enough to interact with the library staff and discuss their particular needs.
- Begin planning library services for people experiencing homeless by looking at current library services that would engage or be useful to people experiencing homelessness.   Are there services that people experiencing homelessness are now using? Are their minimal changes or approaches that could be made making the services more applicable to the homeless population?   For example, recruit people experiencing homelessness specifically for computer classes.   If your library has a service to help people find jobs, consider tailoring this service to the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness.   If the library already has a book club, consider starting a book club that includes people experiencing homelessness and encourage them to choose the books.   Invite stably housed people to discuss the same book.

- Reach out to other agencies to bring their services into the library. These could include consultations with lawyers, social workers, nurses, and shelter staff to provide personal services to people experiencing homelessness.
- Become a leader in the community's efforts to address homelessness. Join community agency boards and share information about the library's services.
- Apply for grants or funding from local government to support services that would be difficult to provide for free or low cost. If the library is part of a government coalition, funding may be available for staff dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness.
- Review the services above and throughout these guidelines to see which are applicable for your library. Develop a plan of service. Include staff training as a necessary component in the plan.
- Choose services that are realistic for the library, that bring in community partners, and that meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

Chapter 8 Services for Refugees

Services
Depending on the needs (psychosocial, capacity‗building, and information‗related), libraries can offer the following services:
- Free phone charger
- Free computer and Internet access (video conferencing with relatives, email, social media, how to search online in case of family separation)
- Educational and entertaining activities for children and adults
    - Survival language courses (e.g., Survival English, Farsi/Persian, Greek, other languages of the countries that the refugees will travel through)
    - Vocational training (professional language, job search)
    - Activities to serve as links with the original cultures of the refugees
    - Activities in order for the refugees to learn about the culture of the host country
- Lending of books (e.g.. self-help books), newspapers and board games
- Access to informational material, curated by the library staff specifically for the refugees. The content could include the following topics:
    - First aid information
    - "How to deal with stress" helpful information
    - Basic principles of European, International and National Law regarding: Labour law, human rights, women's rights (rights of pregnant women), children's rights (education rights), migration and asylum law (family reunification)
    - News (about where they are going, what is happening in the world, etc.)
    - Basic local information (where to sleep, where to eat, where to get currency, how to get health assistance and find pharmacies, hospitals, medical centres)
    - Regional maps, tips and advice on how to travel to other places within the host country (e.g., Greece), the region nearby (e.g. Balkan area) and Europe and how to protect themselves from smugglers
- If possible, information/resources available in the languages of the refugees. For example, in the recent refugee crisis caused by the Arab Spring, the languages could be Arabic, Farsi/ Persian and English. The services may be offered as well in the language of the host country, so the library services are also a means of social inclusion
- Offered inside the library and through outreach programs, such as mobile libraries, which can visit the refugee camps. In the cases where the mobile library is hard to implement, then library staff should let refugees know about the services they offer, through a) printed brochures (written preferably in the refugees' languages) that they can

leave at the refugee camps and b) a map, instructions and the opening hours, regarding how refugees can come to the library.

- Developing actions for community awareness such as running fundraising and charity campaigns to gather food, clothes, medicine and money, and transferring the resources to the refugee centres or active NGOs that help refugees.
- Partnerships with local as well as national organisations that work with refugees can play a critical role in addressing the needs of refugees. Sharing relevant information, working together on projects, jointly applying for funding and keeping each other informed are all ways these kinds of partnerships can benefit everyone involved: libraries, the organisations and the refugees themselves.

<u>Library attitudes, library rules, and policies</u>

In order to achieve positive outcomes from the recommended library services, the library's staff and volunteers should:

- Be consistently and actively involved in partnerships with various local, national and international partners inside and outside the library field, in order to develop or participate in small or big scale projects
- Be provided training on how to deal with vulnerable people who have had traumatic experiences
- Be provided training on how to deal possible tensions between different communities and cultures

<u>Overcoming negative attitudes toward refugees</u>

- Libraries need to create a welcoming and friendly environment for all people, including refugees. As libraries are public buildings and they are considered to be a safe, democratic and all-inclusive place, everyone is welcome to the library. Find ways to demonstrate and communicate this positive attitude. Find ways to challenge stereotypes. Learn from examples that other libraries have followed or from methods that refugee relevant organizations have used (e.g. awareness campaigns run by UNISEF, UNHCR).
- Don't let the library give a message of "no, no, no" but rather offer one of a warm environment for all.
- Conduct and adopt specific rules and policies regarding services for refugees and make sure all library staff members will follow them. For a more complete overview on rules and policies regarding services for people who experience homelessness, refer to the relevant Chapter 11 "Library Policies and Their Effects" of the Guidelines, where many similarities to rules and policies regarding services for refugees can be found.
- Be sure library staff members follow in a gentle way the rules and policies regarding the library services for refugees. Bear in mind the library is serving people who are already traumatized and who need respectful and informed treatment, while at the same time they do not want to feel different and excluded from the general housed public. Think if, how, and where the library will communicate any specific rules inside the library. Having many rules or "shouting" by posting the rules everywhere to show there are specific rules and services for refugees is not the most all-inclusive and engaging method.
- Train library staff on the desired attitude they should demonstrate when they serve a refugee and on the library policies they have to enforce.

Chapter 9 Services for Families, Children and Youth without Parents or Guardians

Recommendations for services to families:

- Since government, NGO, and other responses to family homelessness vary so much from country to country and, within nations, from municipality to municipality, the most important first step in serving families experiencing homelessness is to learn about the issue in your own community. Call people, ask questions, and figure out who is responsible for what, so that you can have a broad understanding of the specific issues your families are facing.
- Examine existing library policies to determine if they are discriminating against families who are homeless and change them whenever possible. If they cannot be changed, determine how and where exceptions can be made.
- Offer training and support for staff working with families; they may not be aware that some families are experiencing homelessness and may need more information on the issues and resources.
- Consider staff training in trauma and mental health; these issues are closely connected to homelessness and most library staff members are not educated in managing difficult behaviours or understanding how trauma manifests, especially in children.
- Collaborate with other agencies and providers to reach children and families who may not be using the library already.
- Consider outreach and community events to reach the most underserved children and families; for example, read-aloud story programs in outdoor spaces where street children congregate, or at a site that serves free meals.
- Donate books that are weeded or removed from your collection to agencies serving homeless and refugee families (be sure they are in good condition and are culturally appropriate).

Recommendations for youth
Creating a welcoming, supportive and personal connection with these young people is key to helping youth help themselves.

- Reach out and learn their names. Tell them your name.
- Use their personal pronouns – and ask if you're not sure. Post a list of gender-neutral pronouns for staff and provide training on language related to LGBTQ+ lives
- Create book displays that reflect their lives: As LGBTQ+ youth; as youth who are experiencing homelessness
- Include their lives in programs, posters, collection development
- Offer them employment or volunteer opportunities
- Examine your policies, procedures and rules – could they be creating barriers for these young people?
- Reach out to local agencies so you can all work together to address the challenges in their lives
- Offer to display their writings or art work
- Provide all-genders toilets

Chapter 10 Staff Support and Partnerships

- Formally or informally survey library staff members to see where they identify gaps in their ability to effectively serve people experiencing homelessness. Use this information to identity the type of training that would be of most use to the staff.

- Speak to other service providers in the community to help identify reputable providers of training and education on the topics you have identified.   Consider partnering with other libraries or service providers to share any training costs and so that a wider network of staff can enjoy the benefits.   Take advantage of free or low-cost resources such as webinars, online toolkits, or local expertise to balance training offerings.
- Work with your library's partners to share each other's expertise and barter training; for example, a shelter provider can present information on homelessness in the area to library staff and a library staff member can present information on library resources and services to staff at the shelter.
- Since every community approaches services for people who are experiencing homelessness differently, it may take some research and networking to understand the landscape of your community.   Do not be afraid to call or email people whose information you find or have been given; start a list of questions you ask every new contact to learn more about what they do but also how they fit into the larger network of services.   Share what you have learned and what you are unclear about with others.
- Include people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability in conversations about programs, needs, and partnerships.   Many service providers (including library staff) may think it is easier to plan for, rather than with, the clients they serve, so be mindful of this and insist those you are serving have a voice in the planning process.
- Good partnerships are mutually beneficial; each side should get something from the relationship, so be clear about what you and your library have to offer other organizations as well as people who are experiencing homelessness.   The library is often not a resource social service providers think of for their clients, so you may have to prove your worth to be taken seriously.   Be realistic about what you can provide but also be willing to try something you may not have thought of as a possible need if it's suggested.

Chapter 11 Library Policies and Their Effects

Rules and policies: Recommendations
- Have as few rules as possible.
- Instead of posting rules everywhere in the library, have them posted one place or have copies of the rules available when asked for or needed. A library that seems to be shouting "no, no, no" to its library users can feel intimidating and unwelcoming to everyone, but can particularly impact those who have become accustomed to being ejected from public spaces.
- Consider a rule such as "be respectful of the space and others" so no one feels targeted. Then consider what is meant by "respectful" and how that may relate to how people experiencing homelessness may view that word. Be willing to reconsider the library's definition so it can be as all-inclusive as possible.
- Consider the impact of the library's rules and policies on the library users who are experiencing homelessness. If they act as barriers to using the library, how could that be addressed? For example, if sleeping isn't allowed, why isn't it allowed? Does it interfere with the use of the library by others? Is there a way the library could allow sleeping? If not, how could the library help the exhausted patron be able to use the library?

Creating a welcoming environment
Here are some suggestions on ways in which libraries can help offset the trauma of homelessness by visibly and creatively creating a library environment that feels welcoming and supportive.

- Create policies and provide resources that are specifically designed to create a welcoming environment for your library users who are experiencing homelessness.
- Create charging stations for mobile devices, such as phones and computers.
- Allow library users without a permanent address to use the Internet computers and to check out library materials.
- Create an "honour" shelf, with high interest and relevant books. Ask library users experiencing homelessness for suggestions for these shelves.
- Have Internet stations designed for longer periods of time, so those who need to fill out forms online, apply for jobs, housing or educational opportunities will have time to complete their applications.
- Offer free printing and scanning.
- Create a safe place to rest or eat.
- Provide free or low cost access to shower and laundry facilities, possibly through a partnership with a local organization that already has those services.
- Provide a current, always up-to-date and researched list of local social services. Be in close contact with these agencies, so library staff can personally recommend them.
- Consider the needs of unstably housed library users as important as those of stably housed library users, so the library is serving all library users equally well. Ask them what they need and actively address these needs. Like housed library users, library users experiencing homelessness are there to use the library resources, so they can apply for employment, services, housing, and educational opportunities. They are there to use recreational materials and to participate in relevant programs, stay in touch with friends and family and simply relax. However, unlike housed library users, they are disproportionately affected by some policies and procedures, which can act as barriers to access.
- When enforcing policies, be sure to enforce them equally. For example, if there is a no sleeping policy, does the library enforce that rule for all library users, of all ages, even babies in strollers? If strong odours are banned, does that apply to all library users, for example, housed library users who are wearing strong perfume? Or a sleeping baby who needs a diaper change? If there is a limit on the size of belongings, does this apply to baby carriages or student backpacks?

Advocacy
- Advocate for local and national funding that will address homelessness and poverty. In the long run, the library – and the community - will benefit.

Examples of Policies
Here are two links to examples of library policies that emphasize working with library users experiencing homelessness.
- Baggage policy (South Brisbane State Library of Queensland, Australia)
  - http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate/policies/bag-policy
- Responsible conduct policy (South Brisbane State Library of Queensland, Australia)
  - http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate/policies/responsible-conduct-policy

Chapter 12 Communication and Advocacy
- Given their role in the community and the public trust they enjoy, libraries are presented with numerous possibilities for raising awareness and advocacy. They should use their position to raise awareness and advocate for people experiencing homelessness.

- The goals of advocacy can be diverse: raising awareness among the public and wider community of the needs of people experiencing homelessness; fulfilling certain needs; expanding the network of partner organizations; and, raising funds for new services or improving existing ones. In order to achieve these goals, elaborate well thought out advocacy action plan is needed.
- The first step is to become familiar with the topic of homelessness in the community and with people experiencing homelessness, as well as organizations providing services to them.
- Successful communication requires a precise determination of the target audience and the message you want to convey.
- When preparing a strategy, five basic questions need to be answered: *What?* (the obstacles), *Where?* , *When? Who?* (is going to do it?), *How?* (the message)
- People experiencing homelessness are the most successful advocates. Highlighting their voices, experiences and expertise leads to a successful outcome, as well as a recognition of their contributions
- Given the target public and available resources, communication channels that will make the greatest impact must be determined: interpersonal, community-oriented channels that use existing social networks, modern media channels or "folk media".
- Evaluation is critical. At the very beginning of the advocacy planning process, it is important to determine the methods for evaluating established outcomes.

Chapter 13 Funding

- Collect information about the need for assistance to people experiencing homelessness and document that this population is using the library
- Seek commitment from the library and the primary funding body of the library to provide basic support of staff and programming
- Seek in-kind support from community agencies and participate in partnership relationships with community and government agencies
- Seek grants from foundations, national and international agencies, and other support groups for special projects
- Create partnerships with local and national organisations to share resources and jointly apply for relevant funds

Appendix A: Non-Professional Psychosocial Support

- *Teamwork and joint vision.*   Support to library users with complex obstacles is best provided within a defined, structured program that is acknowledged and supported both by management and staff in the library. The program does not need to be elaborate in the beginning.   A basic outline of who does what and when will offer library staff who are providing services to people experiencing homelessness with structure and regularity. Support, acceptance, and structure secured within an organization provide holistic service, better access, and continuity of services; a structured program implemented by a team contributes to the prevention of emotional fatigue and burnout by staff.
- *Basic training and support.* It is preferable that non-professionals providing psychosocial support to people experiencing homelessness have at least basic training in communication skills and dealing with challenging clients. This would contribute not only to the quality of service but also to self-confidence, a feeling of safety, and burnout prevention for library staff providing support to people experiencing homelessness. Continuous support to non-professional helpers in the form of debriefing and peer or professional supervision is recommended

- *Being informed.* There is a body of literature that will help library staff gain a better understanding of homelessness. Become acquainted with other library services, as models of good practice and that might be potentially replicable. Most importantly, create and keep an up-to-date database on locally available legal, health, housing, and other services in all sectors: public, private, and civic.
- *Individual approach.* No two persons experiencing homelessness are alike, even though they may have some life experiences in common. Therefore, it is preferable not to generalize and instead to approach each person independently.
- *Setting priorities.* Health and safety first. Make sure priorities are set collaboratively with the library user; instead of setting goals for a person experiencing homelessness, it is better if you work with them to agree on a goal.
- *Realistic expectations on both sides.* At the start, provide short and simple information to library users as to what the library service to people experiencing homelessness will consist of and what is to be expected. Nevertheless, persons experiencing homelessness may form unrealistic expectations and show disappointment with the services provided. It is important not to take this personally.
- *Active listening skills.* Active listening means setting aside your own personal assumptions, experiences, and viewpoints. Focus instead on what the library user is saying and how they feel while saying it. Staff should ask additional questions for clarification.
- *Healthy empathy.* Empathy helps library staff understand others and make perceptive responses to their stated and unstated emotions, needs, and circumstances. It is a necessary "tool" to help and support library staff. However, being overwhelmed with another person's emotions and grave circumstances to the extent of personally feeling their emotions and hardships is not helpful. It is a sign to seek support from colleagues/supervisors.
- *Positive attitude.* It is helpful and important to act from and maintain positive and hopeful attitudes as long as it does not foster unrealistic and false expectations and minimize problems and gravity of situation.
- *Consistency.* It is best if people experiencing homelessness do not receive different service at different times or with different library staff. All staff should implement library policies consistently. Consistent behaviour of library staff supports a sense of predictability and fairness that is too often lacking in the lives of persons experiencing homelessness.
- *Appropriate emotional responsibility.* Emotions, perceptions, and beliefs, whether self-defeating or self-helping, are created by an event or interaction. Therefore, each library staff member is responsible for their own feelings. As library service providers, library staff should not be caught in a trap of taking responsibility for a library user's anger, depression, self-pity, or other dysfunctional feeling. On the other side, staff's own self-defeating feelings about persons experiencing homelessness and the work with them are an individual staff's responsibility. If staff feel depressed or angry, or if it hampers staff from enjoying work and life, it is important to address this.
- *Maintaining personal and professional boundaries.* Explain the role of library staff as a service provider, the limits of availability, and be consistent in delivering service. Staff should be cautious in self-disclosure. It is preferable to avoid double roles: it is helpful to act friendly with a library user but becoming friends outside the library may cause confusion. Avoid lending or borrowing money, or receiving or giving valuable gifts. Foster independence by avoiding carrying out duties or tasks for the library user.

Appendix H Checklist for Developing Library Services to People Experiencing Homelessness

This checklist is a summary of the more extensive recommendations that can be found throughout these Guidelines.   For more information about how to implement this checklist and rationale for these actions, refer to the summary of Recommendations (Appendix G) and the individual chapters.

Done	Human Rights (Chapter 4)
	Establish a library policy that respects the human rights of everyone to information and cultural participation. Take measures to ensure library staff do not discriminate and that barriers to access to the library services are lowered or removed. Provide equal access to information, ICT, and other services.
	Contact and form partnerships with organizations outside the library profession that support human rights.
	Raise awareness and promote distribution of reports and recommendations on human rights, particularly as they relate to homelessness.
	Needs Assessment (Chapter 5)
	Gather data to determine the extent and nature of homelessness in your community.
	Contact community agencies and NGOs that provide services to people experiencing homelessness to discuss needs they see and how the library might respond to these needs. Regularly attend their meetings and offer the library as a partner in their efforts to address homelessness in the community.
	Become an active partner in the community's efforts to address homelessness. If possible, join local governing boards (NGOs, etc.) and share information about the library's services.
	Form a library committee of staff interested in developing a program to serve people experiencing homelessness. The committee should be composed of staff sympathetic to and willing to develop services for unstably housed community members.
	In conversations about needs, programs, services, and partnerships (families, refugees, youth, for example), include people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
	Attitude toward People Experiencing Homelessness (Chapter 6)
	Assess the library from the viewpoint of someone who is experiencing homelessness.
	Evaluate the library's physical layout and signage to determine if it is welcoming to all, including people experiencing homelessness.
	Evaluate the libraries policies and procedures (both posted and in the staff handbook) to determine if any policy discrimates against a group of people, including people experiencing homelessness.
	Use language in posted signs that is positive rather than punitive, polite rather than autocratic.
	Evaluate staff attitude towards people experiencing homelessness and conduct training as needed to ensure that all library users are treated with respect and provided equal service.

	Establish a no tolerance policy toward negative and hostile comments about library users who are experiencing homelessness, including comments made in library staff areas.
	Gather information about homelessness and share with staff to increase awareness and understanding. Invite members of the community who are experiencing homelessness to speak at staff meetings about their life experiences.
	Library Services (Chapter 7)
	Referring to the needs assessment you conducted and your conversations with community groups, determine what services the library currently offers that are or could be used by people experiencing homelessness.
	Enhance communication about existing services to current and potential library users who are experiencing homelessness.
	Develop new services (see multiple examples in Chapter 7) that: • Meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness • Help the local government address homelessness on a community level • Encourage the library to partner with other agencies to serve people experiencing homelessness
	Invite agencies serving people experiencing homelessness to visit the library on a regular basis where they can offer their services to the library's users.
	Apply for grants or funding from local government to support services that would be difficult to provide for free or low cost. If the library is part of a government coalition, funding may be available for staff dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness.
	Services for Refugees (Chapter 8)
	As part of equal access to resources and services, commit to serving refugees in your community as you would all library users.
	Determine which additional services might be of most interest to refugees in your community, such as information about refugee rights, language, computer services, local social services.
	If refugee camps are in your library's service area, take services such as children's story hours and information on refugee rights to refugees.
	Conduct staff training on the lives of refugees, human and civil rights of refugees, effects of trauma on individuals, and dealing with tension between different communities and culture.
	Review library policies to identify any policies that might have a negative impact on refugees and make all efforts to remove or lessen their impact.
	Services for Families, Children, and Youth without Parents or Guardians (Chapter 9)
	Seek out agencies in your community that serve families and independent youth experiencing homelessness and determine ways the library can partner to serve this population.
	Review policies that might be discriminatory against families or unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness and, if possible, change them to be more welcoming.
	Offer programs in family shelters, community events, outdoor parks, or food centres where underserved families and youth living on the streets might congregate.
	Train staff on issues specifically related to youth experiencing homelessness who may be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender and estranged from their families. Be prepared to use appropriate pronouns without judgment.

	Staff Support and Partnerships (Chapter 10)
	Survey staff to determine staff attitudes toward all the groups mentioned in these guidelines and checklist.
	Provide staff with awareness activities, information on causes of homelessness, different needs related to individual causes of homelessness, and ways to deal with specific situations of families, youth, refugees, those with mental health life experiences, including substance use disorders, and those in need of social services.
	Ask community agencies and social workers to assist in training of library staff.
	Library Policies and their Effects; Create a Welcoming Environment (Chapter 11)
	To create meaningful access to information and services, for all people experiencing homelessness – regardless of the cause – examine library policies to ensure the policies are as positive and supportive as possible.
	Create policies and provide resources that are specifically designed to create a welcoming environment for library users who are experiencing homelessness.
	Train staff in implementing policies in a positive and supportive manner; allow staff to use judgment in implementing policies to the extent possible. See more recommendations in Executive summary.
	Create, distribute, or link to an up-to-date list of local service agencies, their services, and contact information. Regularly and frequently confirm this list is current.
	Communication and Advocacy (Chapter 12)
	Become aware of and familiar with the issue of homelessness in your community, causes of homelessness, government programs to combat homelessness, and agencies that service people experiencing homelessness.
	Communicate to government and other agencies that serve people experiencing homelessness how the library can partner with them.
	Target publicity to people experiencing homelessness directly and through agencies that serve them. Emphasize the library as a welcoming environment.
	Provide information to the community at large and library users about the library's policies and services to people experiencing homelessness
	Use the library's position of trust in the community to raise awareness and advocate for community members who are experiencing homelessness.
	Make the library's efforts SMART – Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented with Responsibilities stated and Timed.
	Involve those who are experiencing homelessness in advocacy efforts.
	Funding (Chapter 13)
	Collect information about the need for assistance to people experiencing homelessness and document the fact that population is using the library.
	Obtain commitment from the library and the library's primary funding body to provide basic support of staff and programming.
	Seek in-kind support from community agencies and participate in partnerships with community and government agencies.
	Seek grants from foundations, national and international agencies, and other support groups for library programs and services.