

## **National Library Services Trends**

### **NLST – TS1: Redesigning the Library to Meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century Needs**

For many years libraries have all been designed relatively the same; however, that is beginning to change. The library is becoming more a social center and less of a space for dusty old books. As this continues to be the norm for libraries, they are looking for ways to update their looks and engage patrons in the layout of the library.

Many libraries are shifting from practical layouts of libraries, to those that engage and invite the patron to become an active participant in their library experience. For instance, some libraries are now using natural lighting and feng shui to make spaces more open and inviting for the patrons.<sup>1</sup> Libraries are shifting from merely being store houses of information to being showrooms for materials and ideas.

Another major trend is to build sustainable libraries that not only protect the environment, but are cost-effective and long lasting for the library and the community it serves. Geothermal industry, making use of windows and natural lighting, seem to be the most popular ways library are using.

### **Implications for JCPL**

- Monitor library literature for trends in sustainable building design.
- As print reference and other physical media age out, consider repurposing space that enables collaborative work and other social interaction.

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<sup>1</sup> "21st Century Librarian." *21st Century Librarian*. N.p., n.d. Web. 03 Dec. 2012. <<http://thenextgenerationlibrarian.wordpress.com/2012/03/19/notes-on-the-future-of-libraries-trends-in-building-design-user-experience-and-community-partnerships-pla12/>>.

## **National Library Services Trends**

### **NLST – TS2: Meshing the Physical with the Digital**

Hardback books and encyclopedias are standards in the library world. But, with the advent of eBooks and other electronic resources, they are no longer all that a library offers. Many libraries, JCPL included, are beginning to circulate digital materials and even the readers themselves.<sup>2</sup>

JCPL currently has a kiosk where patrons can browse only what we own in electronic format. Some libraries are beginning to have their catalogs pull up not only what they have on their physical shelves, but also what is part of their digital collections. This allows for patrons to more readily see what is available.

Libraries are even going so far as to include plasma screens, both touch screen and regular, in their shelving. This helps to promote not only books, but the many services of the library, including programs, events and services (such as tutoring.)

### **Implications for JCPL**

- Availability and accessibility of digital content will continue to evolve as vendors and content providers explore new delivery models that include libraries to varying degrees.
- JCPL will seek to meet patrons' digital content needs and expectations while using an approach that is financially responsible and mindful of long-term accessibility.
- As the cost of digital signage such as small, portable flat screen monitors continues to decline, JCPL may consider investing in this equipment as an eye-catching alternative to paper signage, that may also save money in the long term as printing and duplication costs are reduced.

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<sup>2</sup> Hendrix, Jennifer C. "Checking Out the Future of the Library." *Www.ala.org*. American Library Association, Feb. 2010. Web. 6 Dec. 2012.  
[http://www.ala.org/offices/sites/ala.org.offices/files/content/oitp/publications/policybriefs/ala\\_checking\\_out\\_the.pdf](http://www.ala.org/offices/sites/ala.org.offices/files/content/oitp/publications/policybriefs/ala_checking_out_the.pdf)

## **National Library Services Trends**

### **NSLT – TS3: Creating Play & Learn Spaces in Public Libraries**

Despite overwhelming agreement among early childhood researchers that play is the vehicle through which social, intellectual, and language skills are developed, play among children ages 0-6 is in decline.<sup>3</sup> Many families living in poverty reside in areas that are unsafe for children to play outdoors. As a result, these children are exposed to more screen time and have little to no opportunity to explore or engage in their environment. On the other side of the socioeconomic spectrum, many affluent children are rushed from one lesson or “enriching activity” to the next. Consequently they, too, have no time left in their busy schedules for unstructured play.

Fortunately, librarians are aware of this trend and its implications to early childhood development and literacy. In fact, the latest revision of Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) includes play as one of the five essential elements for the successful development of early literacy skills. Embracing play as an “integral component of developing reading readiness,” and a “developmentally appropriate way for children to map concepts onto words,” play is now seen as an essential part of the mission of public library service to young children.<sup>4</sup> Many libraries are using their resources to create dedicated play spaces to meet the developmental needs of their youngest patrons. Where budgets or space considerations do not allow for these dedicated spaces, libraries have come up with effective alternatives such as play areas in multi-purpose rooms or “play kits” which rotate from branch to branch on a monthly schedule.

#### **Implications for JCPL:**

- Children’s librarians will continue to incorporate opportunities for play in their programming and outreach activities.
- JCPL branches will use existing spaces within children’s areas, as well as activity rooms and community rooms, to provide safe places for unstructured play among children and their caregivers.

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<sup>3</sup> Kim Van der Veen, et al. “We Play Here!.” *Children & Libraries: The Journal Of The Association For Library Service To Children* 10.1 (2012): 3-52. Academic Search Premier. Web. 5 Dec. 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Koester, Amy. “Early Literacy Play Kits: Adding more play to your library system.” *The Show Me Librarian*. 7 Nov. 2012. Web. 5 Dec. 2012 <http://showmelibrarian.blogspot.com/2012/11/early-literacy-play-kits-adding-more.html>

## **National Library Services Trends**

### **NSLT - TS4: Bringing Makerspaces to Public Libraries**

While libraries have always been a resource for knowledge consumption, they are also increasingly used as a source for knowledge creation. Currently, this creativity is happening within library “makerspaces.” The Library as Incubator Project defines makerspaces as “collaborative learning environments where people come together to share materials and learn new skills... makerspaces are not necessarily born out of a specific set of materials or spaces, but rather a mindset of community partnership, collaboration, and creation.”<sup>5</sup>

Makerspaces promote project-based learning in the most literal sense; encouraging interdisciplinary work and the desire to visualize and create.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, with charitable foundations committing more resources to STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), makerspaces can be an attractive investment. Makerspaces offer the means to explore both free and guided creation. Patrons can come in and run with their imaginations or participate in programs that focus on creating something specific.<sup>7</sup> Makerspaces can include 3D printers, laser-cutters, CAM (computer aided manufacture) equipment, as well as lower-tech equipment such as hand tools, sewing machines and bike repair equipment. Makerspaces are an important vehicle for the trend in library service to move from the “grocery store model,” where patrons select and consume materials to the “kitchen model,” where patrons create their own content.

### **Implications for JCPL**

- JCPL should explore opportunities for Makerspace areas to develop organically, in response to the needs and abilities of the Johnson County community.
- JCPL should be open to partnering with other community members and organizations to share space, resources and most importantly expertise, as the types of skills used to set up and operate a makerspace are not typically those of a professional librarian.

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<sup>5</sup> Hamilton, Buffy. “Makerspaces, Participatory Learning, and Libraries.” *The Unquiet Librarian*. 28 Jun. 2012. Web. 6 Dec. 2012. <http://theunquietlibrarian.wordpress.com/2012/06/28/makerspaces-participatory-learning-and-libraries/>

<sup>6</sup> Loertscher, David V. “Maker Spaces and the Learning Commons.” *Teacher Librarian* 39.6 (2012): 45-46. Academic Search Premier. Web. 6 Dec. 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Britton, Lauren. “The Makings of Maker Spaces.” *Library Journal* 137.16 (2012): 20. MAS Ultra - School Edition. Web. 6 Dec. 2012.