

STRONGER TOGETHER

The Power of Library-Health
Partnerships to Enhance Family
Literacy Support

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MAY 10, 2018

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Identify and describe the similarities between goals of library and health sector: we have more in common than you may think!
- ▶ Identify the organizational/cultural strengths and limitations that exist in libraries and health environments
- ▶ Understand the Cross-Sector Collaboration model – and how it can help us achieve results we could not achieve in isolation
- ▶ Learn about BCCH and VPL examples of success
- ▶ Understand how to replicate cross-collaborative models

WHO SAID THAT?

“Children’s early experiences with books and reading help prepare them for school and set them up for success later in life. Exposing babies to books and reading increases vocabulary and makes it easier for them to learn to read later on. Just as important, sharing books provides babies and children with warm and nurturing interactions with the adults they care about.”

Answer: HEALTH



The screenshot shows the website of the Canadian Paediatric Society. The header includes the society's logo and name, along with the tagline "Protecting and promoting the health and well-being of children and youth". A navigation menu lists various sections: Policy & Advocacy, Clinical Practice, Education & Events, News & Publications, Programs, Membership, and About the CPS. Below the navigation, there is a breadcrumb trail "Home > Position statements and...", a "Print Share" button with social media icons, and the title "POSITION STATEMENT". The main heading is "Read, speak, sing: Promoting literacy in the physician's office". Below the heading, it states "Posted: Nov 1 2006 | Reaffirmed: Jan 30 2017" and a "Hide right menu" button. A paragraph of text explains the society's permission to print single copies and refers to a copyright policy. A box titled "Principal author(s)" lists "A Shaw; Canadian Paediatric Society, Community Paediatrics Committee" and the citation "Paediatr Child Health 2006;11(9):601-6". Below this is an "Abstract" section with text about literacy's impact and a "Key Words" section listing "Literacy; Reading". Finally, an "Objectives" section states the objectives of the present statement are to: review the current status of literacy in Canada, discuss current evidence-based research, review current evidence for the role of physicians, and provide practical resources.

Canadian Paediatric Society
Protecting and promoting the health and well-being of children and youth

Policy & Advocacy Clinical Practice Education & Events News & Publications Programs Membership About the CPS

Home > Position statements and...     

POSITION STATEMENT

Read, speak, sing: Promoting literacy in the physician's office

Posted: Nov 1 2006 | Reaffirmed: Jan 30 2017 [Hide right menu](#)

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Abstract

Low literacy is an important issue affecting the health of millions of Canadians. At its root, it is a paediatric problem. New evidence suggests that physicians can have a positive role in promoting literacy among their young patients. Physicians need to be aware of the scope of this problem, provide anticipatory guidance to families, and promote reading to babies and children in their practices. Recommendations and strategies are discussed.

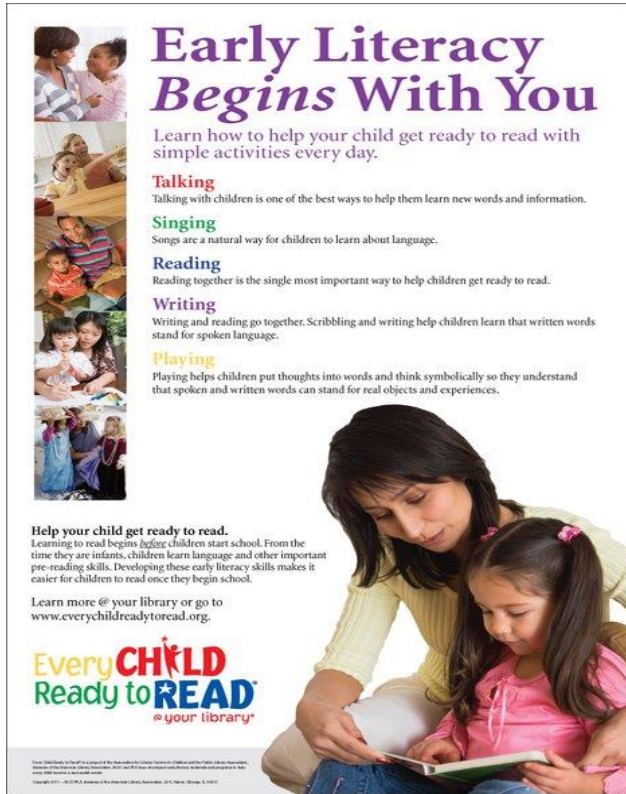
Key Words: *Literacy; Reading*

Objectives

The objectives of the present statement are to:

- Review the current status of literacy in Canada and its impact on health;
- Discuss current evidence-based research on how literacy develops;
- Review current evidence for the role of physicians in literacy promotion; and
- Provide practical resources to enable physicians to promote literacy in their practices.

NOT SO DIFFERENT!



Early Literacy Begins With You

Learn how to help your child get ready to read with simple activities every day.

Talking
Talking with children is one of the best ways to help them learn new words and information.

Singing
Songs are a natural way for children to learn about language.

Reading
Reading together is the single most important way to help children get ready to read.

Writing
Writing and reading go together. Scribbling and writing help children learn that written words stand for spoken language.


Playing
Playing helps children put thoughts into words and think symbolically so they understand that spoken and written words can stand for real objects and experiences.

Help your child get ready to read.
Learning to read begins before children start school. From the time they are infants, children learn language and other important pre-reading skills. Developing these early literacy skills makes it easier for children to read once they begin school.

Learn more @ your library or go to www.everychildreadytoread.org.

EveryCHILD Ready to READ
@ your library

From: "Every Child Ready to Read" is a program of The National Child Development Study and the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Center for the Study of Early Child Care Development, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. ©2002. All rights reserved. www.ncees.org



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PROMOTING LITERACY IN THE PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE:

1. Literacy promotion is a key part of practicing preventive medicine.
2. At its root, low literacy begins in early childhood
3. Primary care physicians have a unique opportunity to promote literacy.

LITERACY DETERMINES HEALTH AND CAREGIVERS MATTER

TABLE 1

Health consequences of low literacy

Direct effects of low literacy on health

Incorrect use of medications
Failure to comply with medical directions
Errors in administration of infant formula
Safety risks in the community, the workplace and at home

Indirect associations between low literacy and health

Higher rates of poverty
Higher than average rates of occupational injuries
Higher degrees of stress
Unhealthy lifestyle practices such as:
•smoking
•poor nutrition
•infrequent physical activity
•lack of seatbelt use or wearing of bicycle helmets
•less prevalence of breastfeeding (where applicable)
•less likely to ever have had a blood pressure check
•(among women) less likely to practice breast self-examination and to obtain pap smears
Limited access to and understanding of health information
Inappropriate use of medical services

Data from reference [\[12\]](#) and [\[13\]](#)

LIBRARY STRENGTHS



Early Literacy Experts: Our Staff



Collections and Programs



Outreach

BUT...CHALLENGES TOO!



Q: How do we reach families in 'non-traditional' library spaces?

Q: How can we build family literacy support alongside our many other projects and responsibilities?

Q: How do we position early literacy as part of health and child wellbeing?

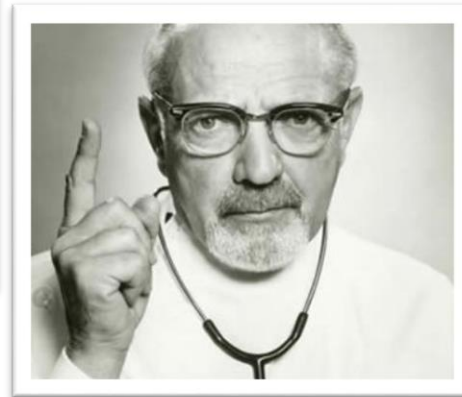
HEALTH STRENGTHS



ACCESS TO FAMILIES

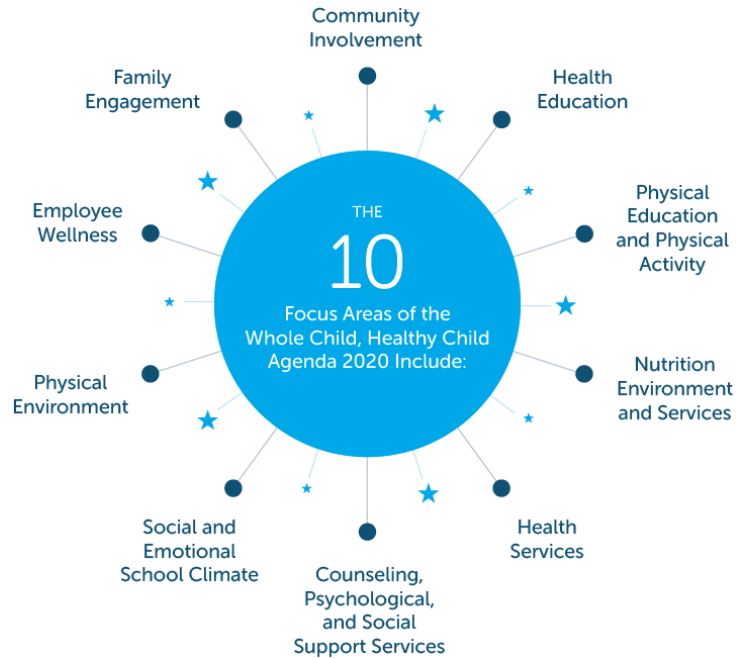


PERSONALIZE THE MESSAGE



TRUST, AUTHORITY
FIGURES

BUT... CHALLENGES TOO!



THE ARGUMENT

We propose that Health/Library collaborations can effectively overcome the challenges/obstacles we face in our individual work so that we can ultimately provide better care and better literacy support to families.

CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS



Cross sector collaboration can be defined as the “linking or sharing of information, resources, activities, and capabilities by organizations in two or more sectors to achieve jointly an outcome **that could not be achieved in isolation.**”

(Bryan, Cosby, Stone 2015).

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

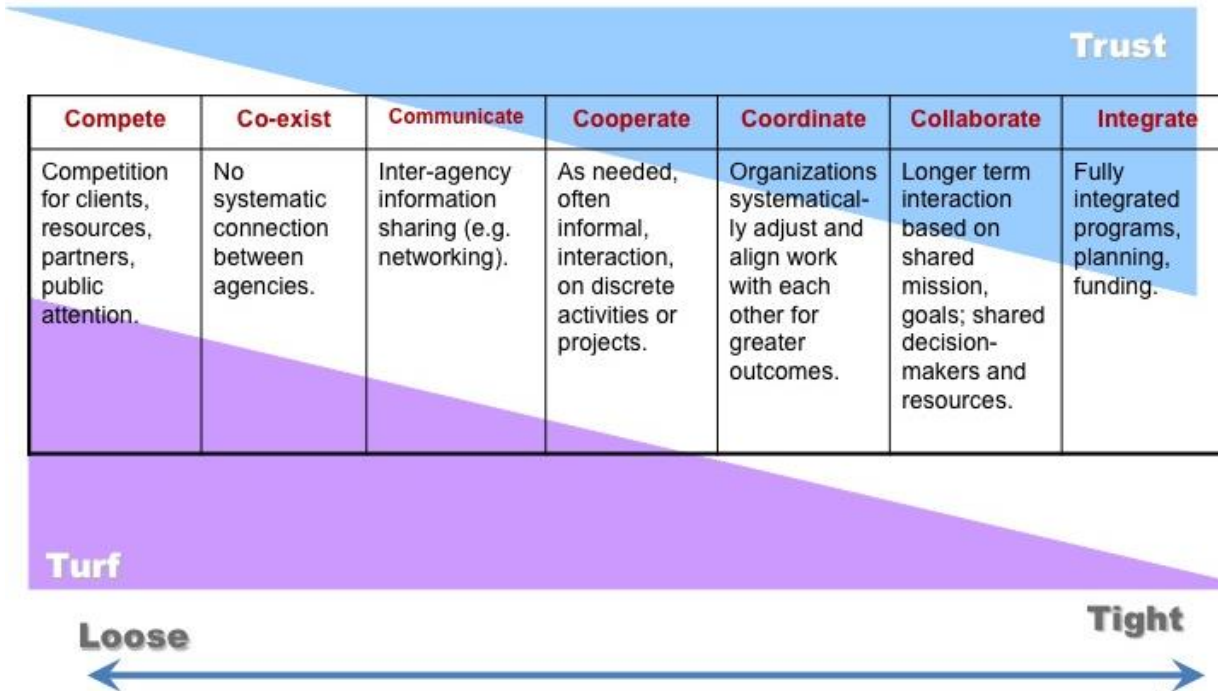
1. Exist in the middle of partnership continuum
2. Clear collaborative advantage to working together
3. Clear articulation of goal
4. Agreement on how to measure success
5. Committed sponsors/project champion

Bryson, John M., et al. 2015. Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations: Needed *and* Challenging. *Public Administration Review* 75(5): 647-663.

Hartman, Laura Pincus and Kathy Kanwalroop. 2018. Cross-Sector Partnerships: An Examination of Success Factors. *Business and Society Review* 123(1): 181-214.

Kettl, Donald F. 2015. The Job of Government: Interweaving Public Functions and Private Hands. *Public Administration Review* 75(2): 219–29.

THE COLLABORATION CONTINUUM



HEALTH-LIBRARY COLLABORATION

Collaborative Advantage

Library staff expertise and resources

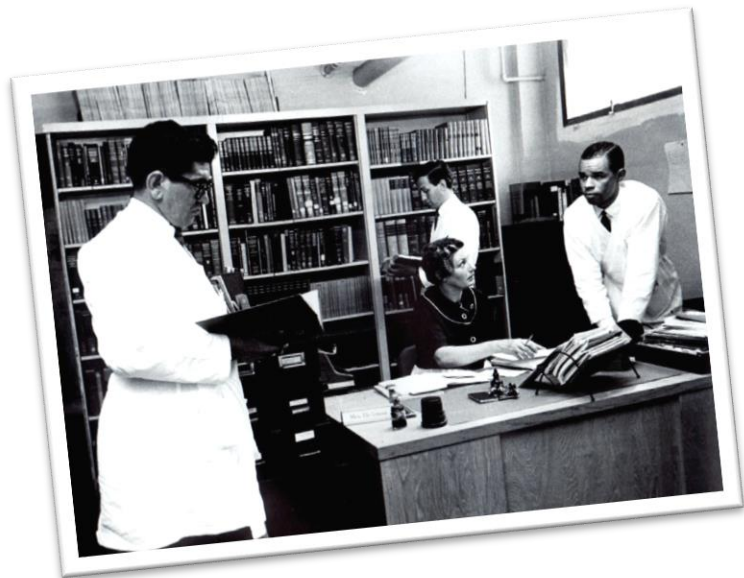
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physician access to vulnerable families
and role as credible health educator

=

enhanced family literacy support

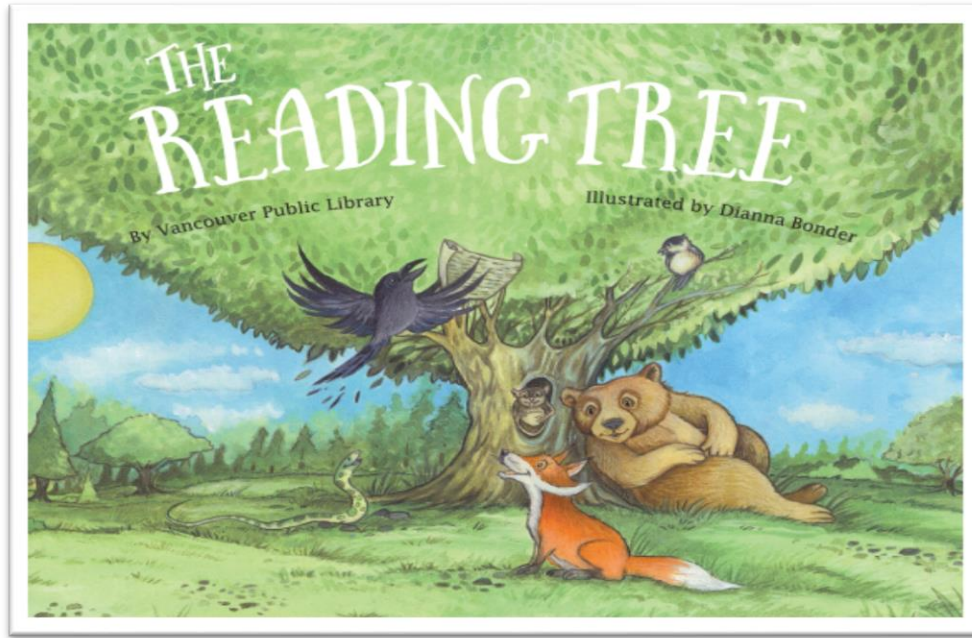
THE RESULT



STAFF EDUCATION



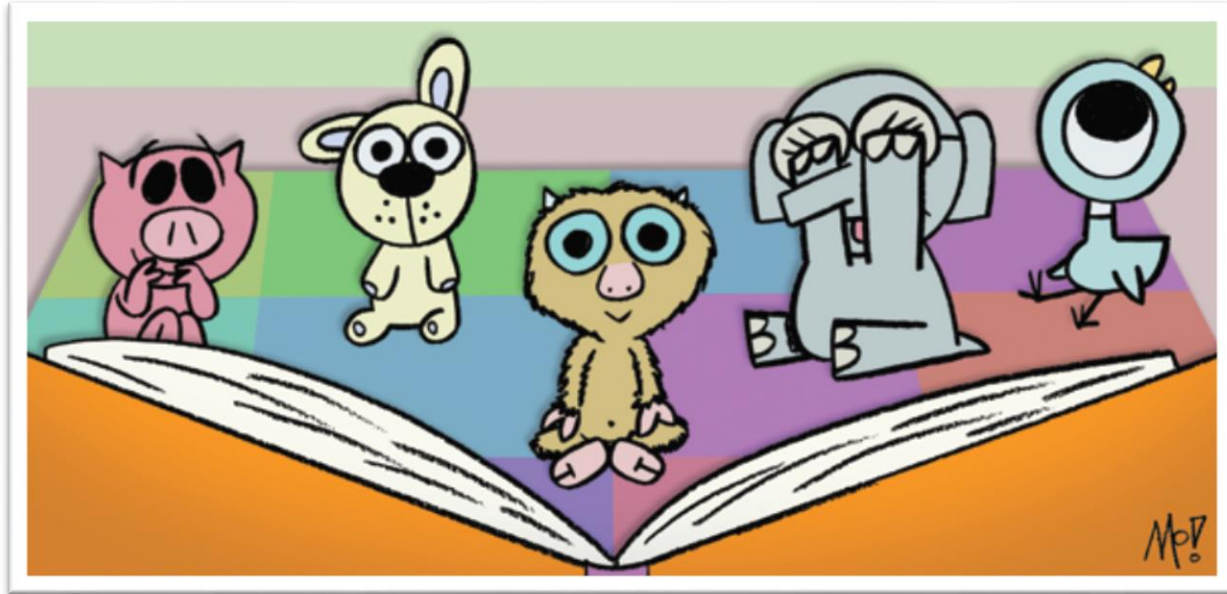
RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION



THE RESULTS

1. Approximately **45 Pediatric Residents** receive training from VPL Children's Librarians
2. **Every family** between age of 6mo-3yr receives copy of book, with early literacy message, in health context

STORYTIME



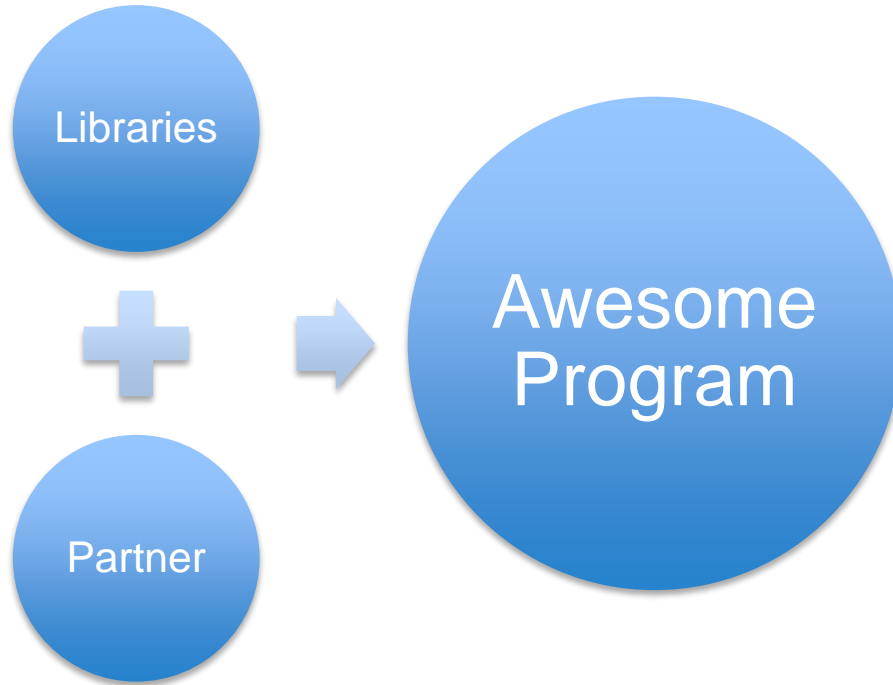
AND BEYOND!



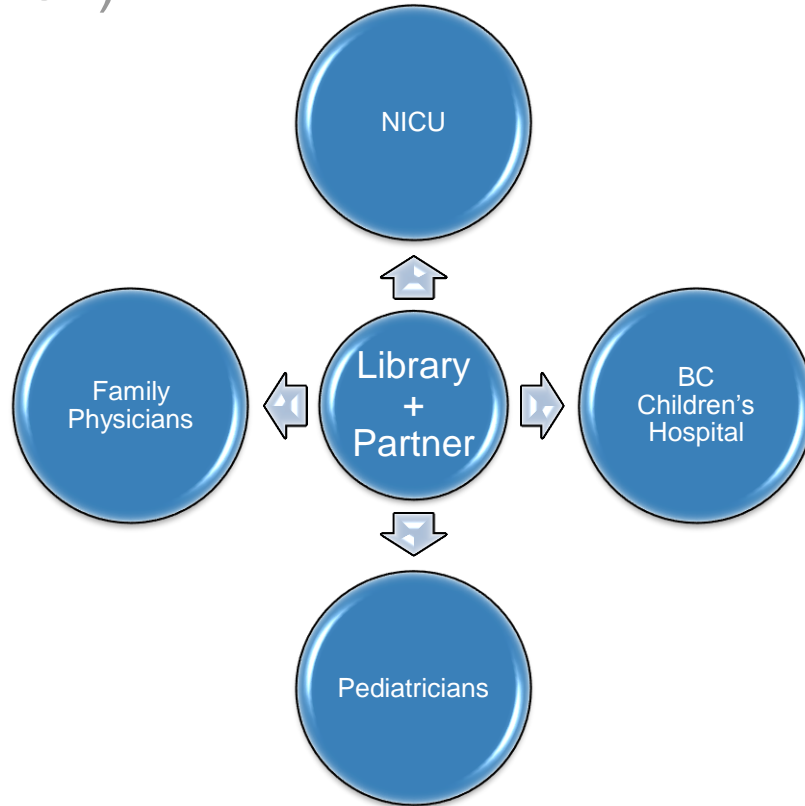
BEYOND A SINGLE PROGRAM



Cooperation vs Collaboration (OR: Partnership vs Inter-Sectoral Collaboration)



Cooperation vs Collaboration (Also: Partnership vs Inter-Sectoral Collaboration)



GETTING STARTED

- ▶ Think about who you aren't reaching in your community
- ▶ Which health organizations can help you get to them?
- ▶ Approach with goal of learning not teaching
- ▶ Start a conversation
- ▶ Be flexible
- ▶ Resist urge to offer program!

BUT...CHALLENGES TOO!

Reality Check: No partnership is without challenges

Organizations were built around principles that deify conformance, control, alignment, discipline and efficiency. The principles that organizations have at their core are antithetical to innovation.

-Gary Hamel



VALUE

- ▶ We are supporting the next generation of pediatricians – 45 next gen who will now have information to share with families
- ▶ Libraries positioned in Vancouver as part of Health Context
- ▶ New families coming to library after talking to doctors
- ▶ Effectively increasing the likelihood of families receiving high quality early literacy messaging

ACTIVITY

1. What are the health care organizations in your community?
2. What questions can ask to better understand who they are reaching and what they are doing?

Remember: Resist the urge to talk about existing library programs..

POWERED BY THE PEOPLE

Libraries empower the people. They fuel communities by providing resources, programs, services and support for self-directed growth and development. Libraries have always been, and always will be, for the people.

SPECIAL THANKS



Vancouver Public Library

- ❖ Julie Iannacone
- ❖ VPL Children's Librarians



- ❖ Dr. M. Virji
- ❖ Julie de Salaberry

QUESTIONS?

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