wild WISCONSIN
· WINTER WEB CONFERENCE · JANUARY 27-28, 2021 ·

DECREASING BARRIERS TO LIBRARY USE

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

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INTRODUCTIONS

Learning Outcomes

- **Identify potential barriers** to library use in your community
- Find and **develop solutions** to barriers
- **Consider alternative** policies, operations, and programming initiatives that may decrease barriers

What is a barrier?

Something that limits access

Barriers to Library Access

1. Policies
2. Fees
3. Accessibility
4. Literacies
5. Awareness
6. COVID-19*

1. Policies

People have difficulty understanding and navigating public library policies.

- **Borrowing Materials**
- **Membership**

2. Fees

People are afraid of, cannot always afford, and do not feel like they have options for paying fees.

- **Late Fees**
- **Membership Fees**

3. Accessibility

People have difficulty getting to the library during operating hours.

- **Transportation**
- **Distance**
- **Operating Hours**

4. Literacies

People lack literacy and digital literacy skills.

- **Social Stigma**
- **Intimidation**

5. Awareness

People do not understand what library services exist and how those services can benefit their lives.

- **Services**
- **Programs**

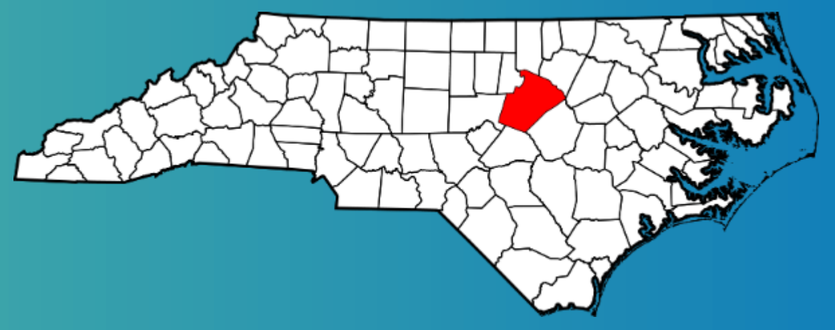
Methodology for identifying barriers.

Step 1.

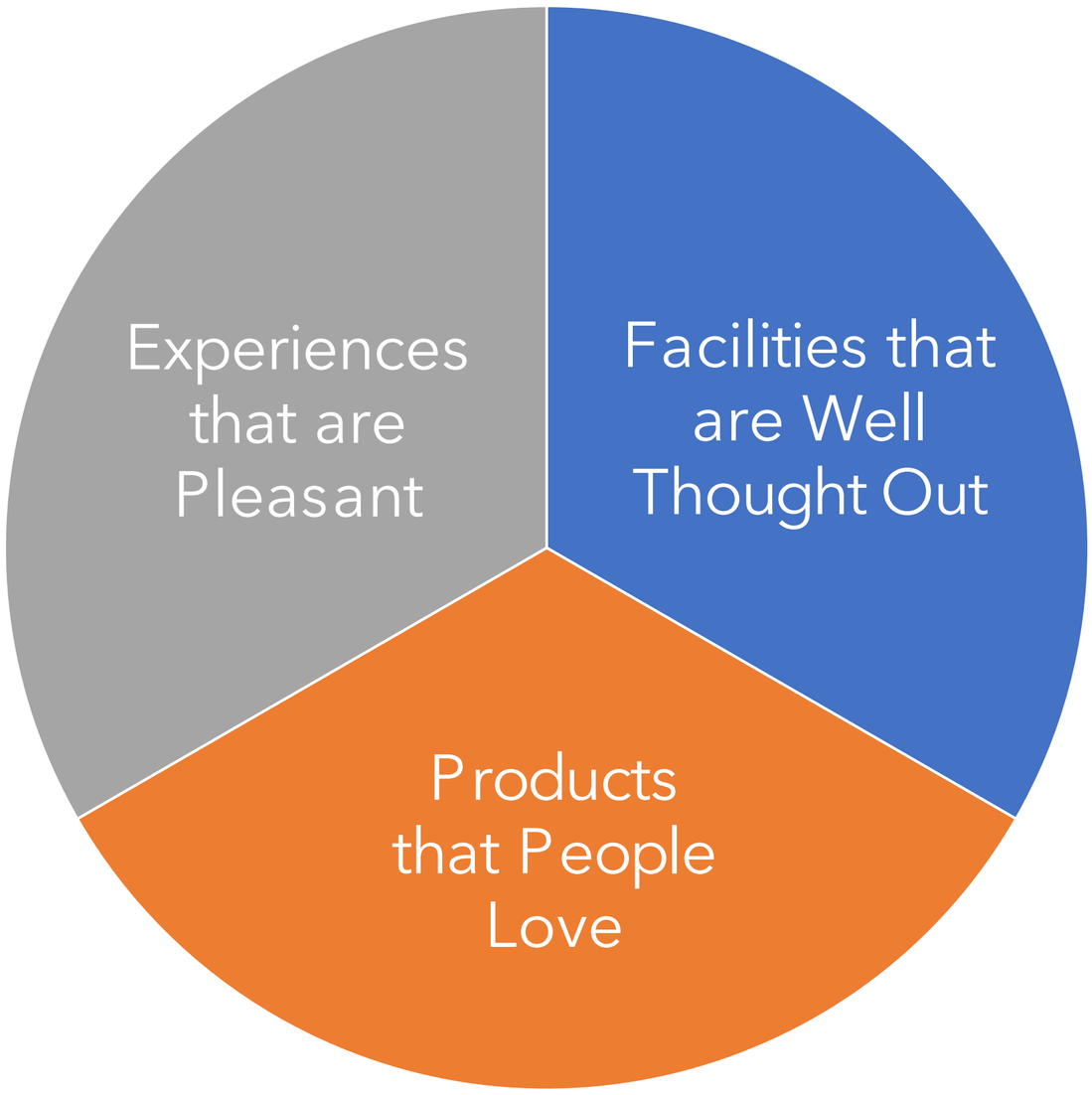
Determine your library's priorities.

SNAPSHOT of WCPL

- Decentralized system
- 23 locations
- 1.1 million residents



WCPL'S TACTICAL PLAN

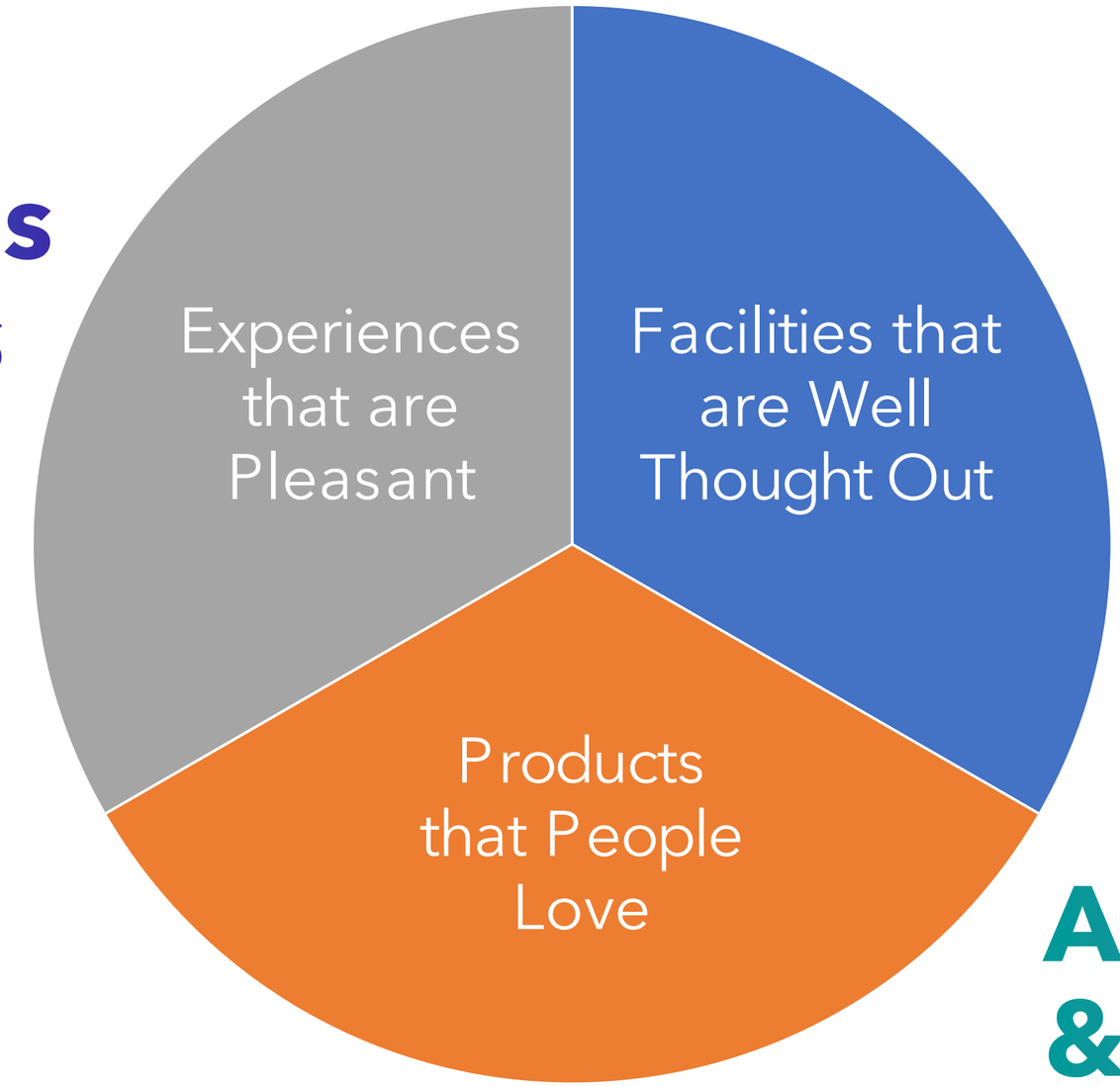


Step 2.

Identify barriers that impact priorities.

BARRIERS vs. PRIORITIES

Policies & Fees



Accessibility

Awareness & Literacies

Step 3.

Perform a gap analysis.

1&2. Policies & Fees

People have difficulty understanding and navigating public library policies.

- **Regularly review and update policies**

People are afraid of, cannot always afford, and do not feel like they have options for paying fees.

1&2. Policies & Fees

Extend checkout period

Enable autorenewal

Ease library card registration

1&2. Policies & Fees

Self-Registered Cards Created 2020 vs 2019

	2019	2020	% +/-
Mar - Dec	7,141	25,169	252%

1&2. Policies & Fees

Extend checkout period

Enable autorenewal

Ease library card registration

1&2. Policies & Fees

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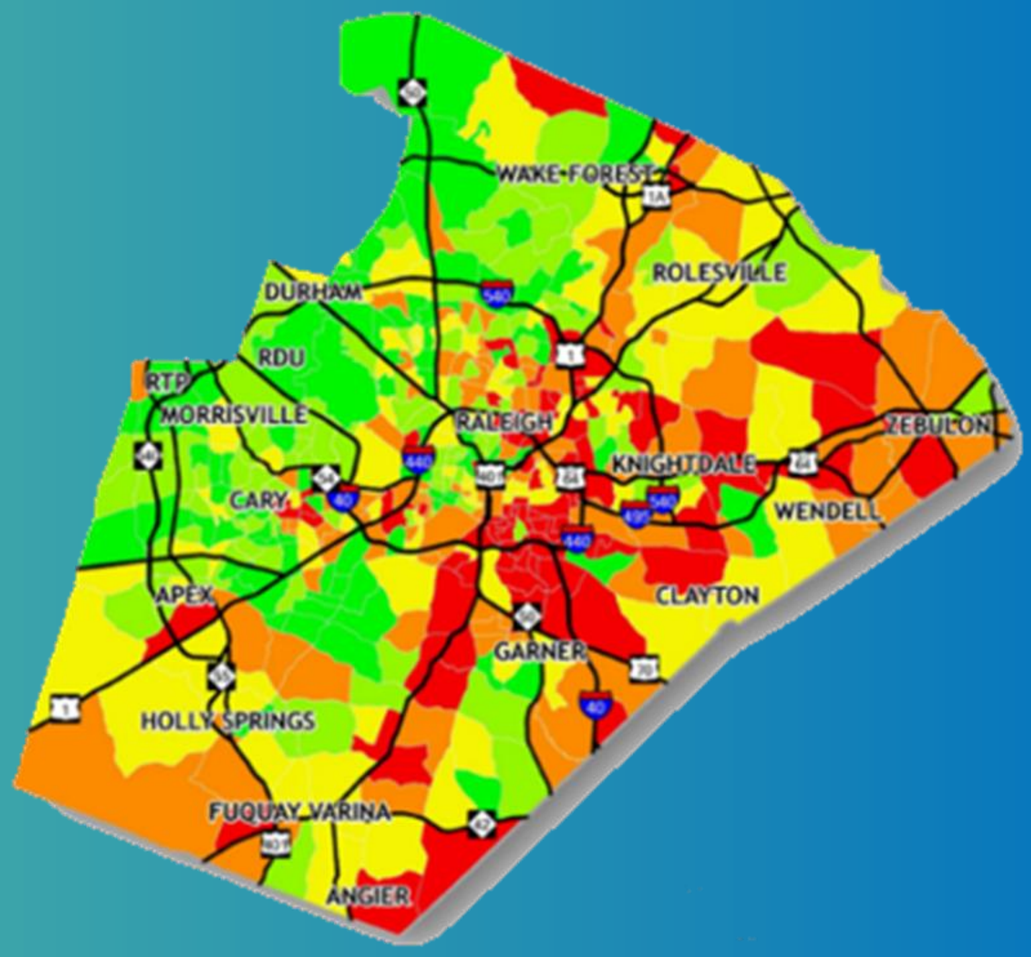
1&2. Policies & Fees

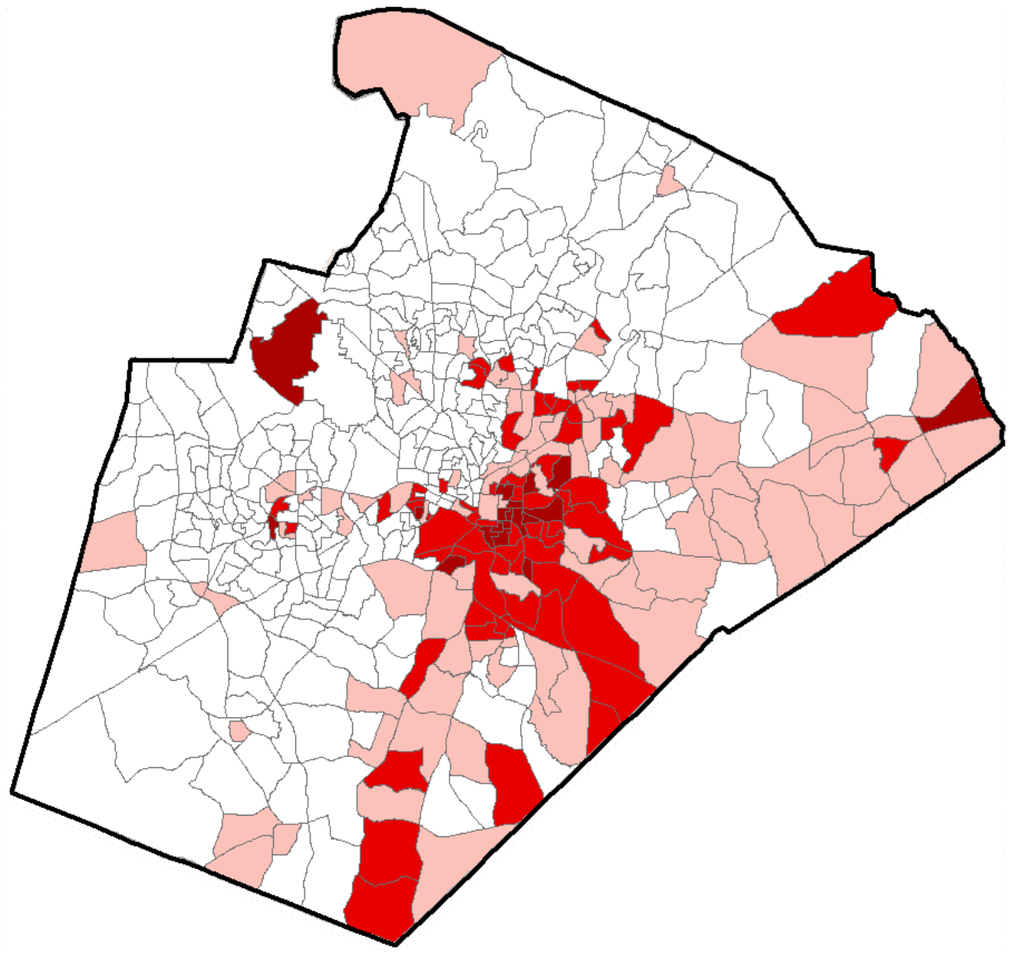
All WCPL print materials	$.10 per day, per item
Maximum fine	$2 per item, per loan period
Overdue fine cap	$10 per account

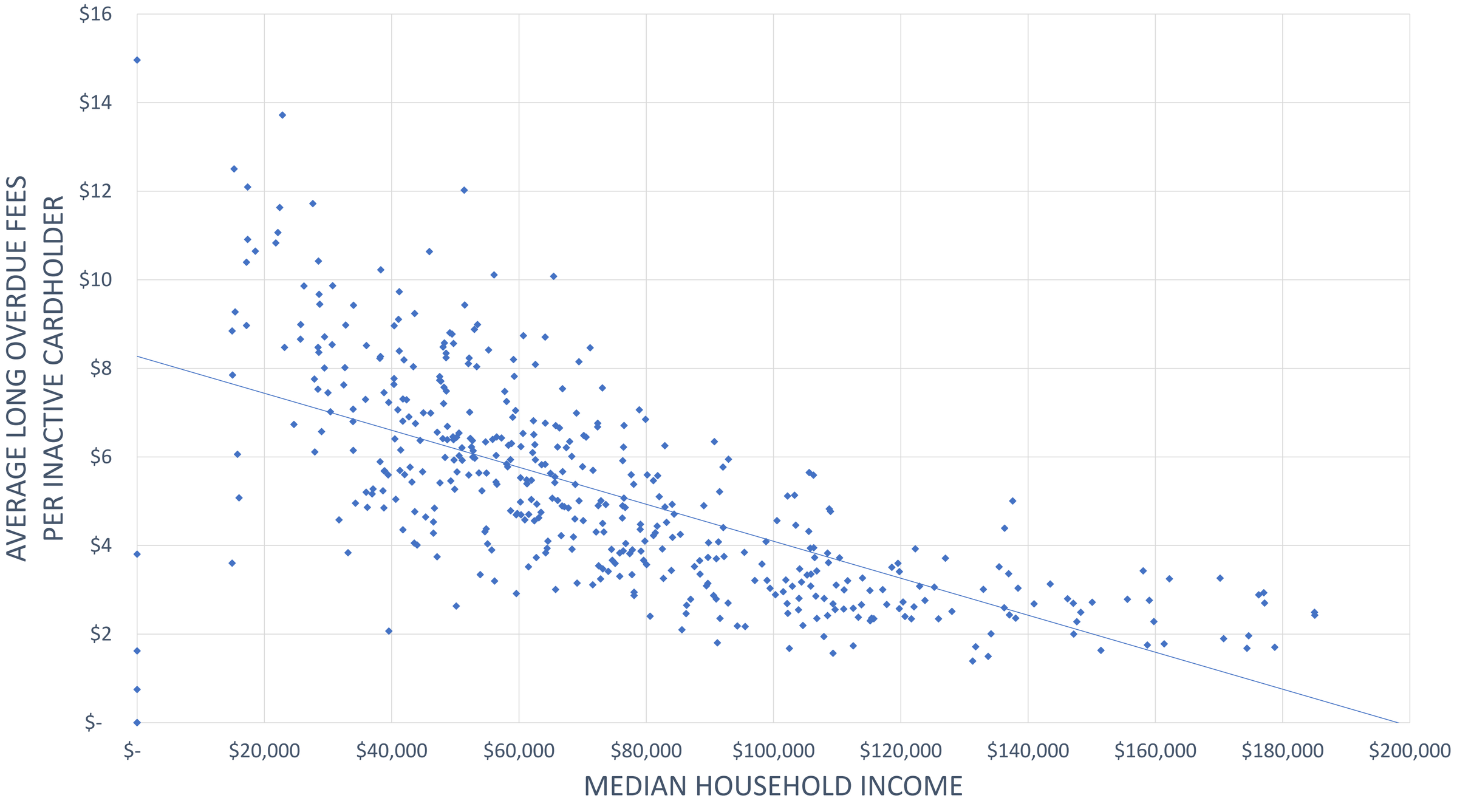
The poor live on **less than $2 per day**.
Low income live on $2.01 - $10 per day.



Vulnerability Index

Inactive Library Cards with High Balances




AVERAGE LONG OVERDUE FEES PER INACTIVE CARDHOLDER
$16
$14
$12
$10
$8
$6
$4
$2
$-
$-
$20,000
$40,000
$60,000
$80,000
$100,000
$120,000
$140,000
$160,000
$180,000
$200,000
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

LATE FEE FREE POLICY

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- 3 WEEK CHECKOUT
- 2 RENEWALS
- 1 HAPPY CUSTOMER
- 0 LATE FEES

3. Accessibility

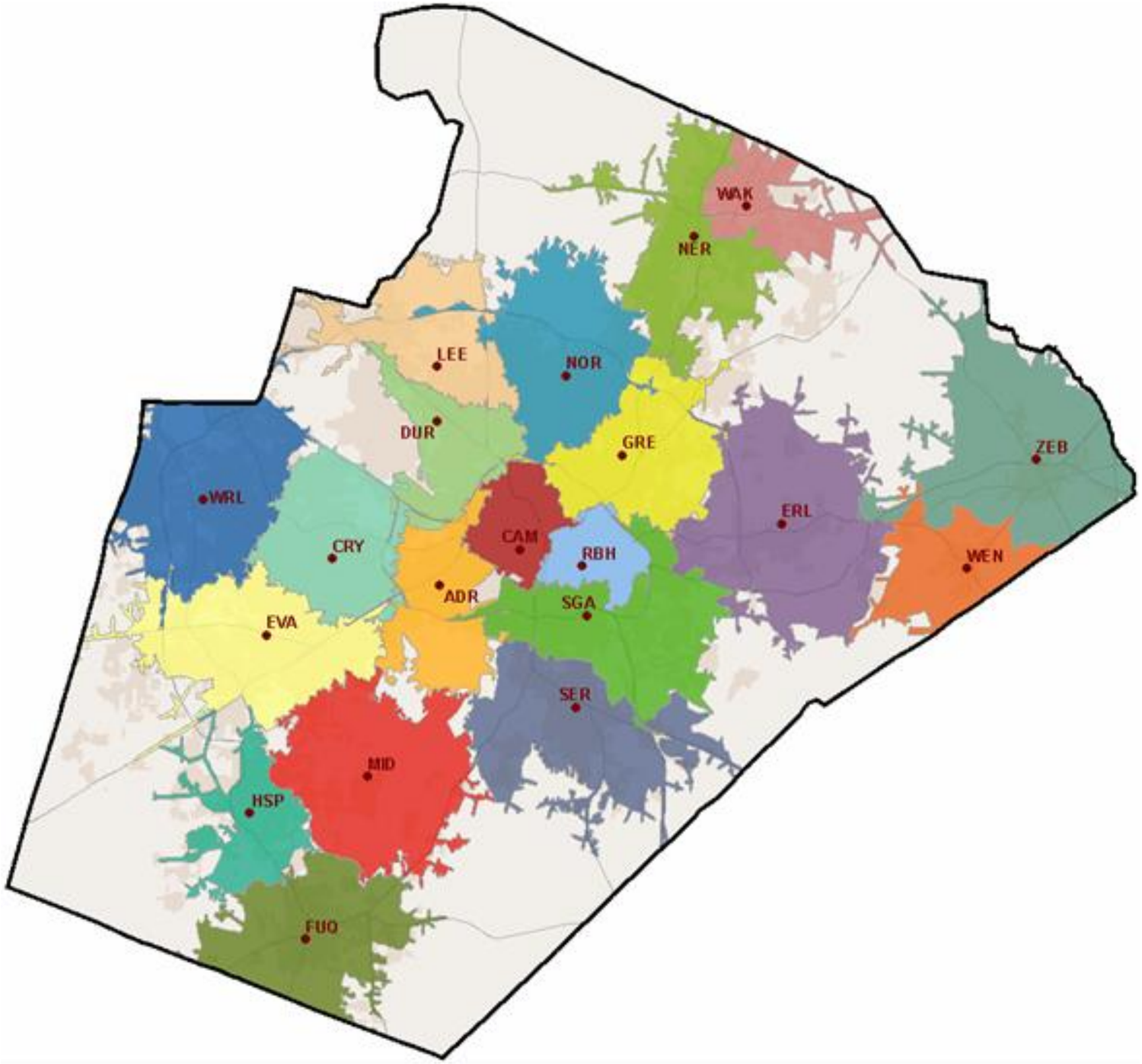
People have difficulty getting to the library during operating hours.

- **Location** – where libraries are located
- **Operating Hours** – when libraries are open
- **Frequency of Programs** – how often libraries offer programs

Location of Libraries

WCPL is committed to a regional system that places libraries where people live, work, and shop.

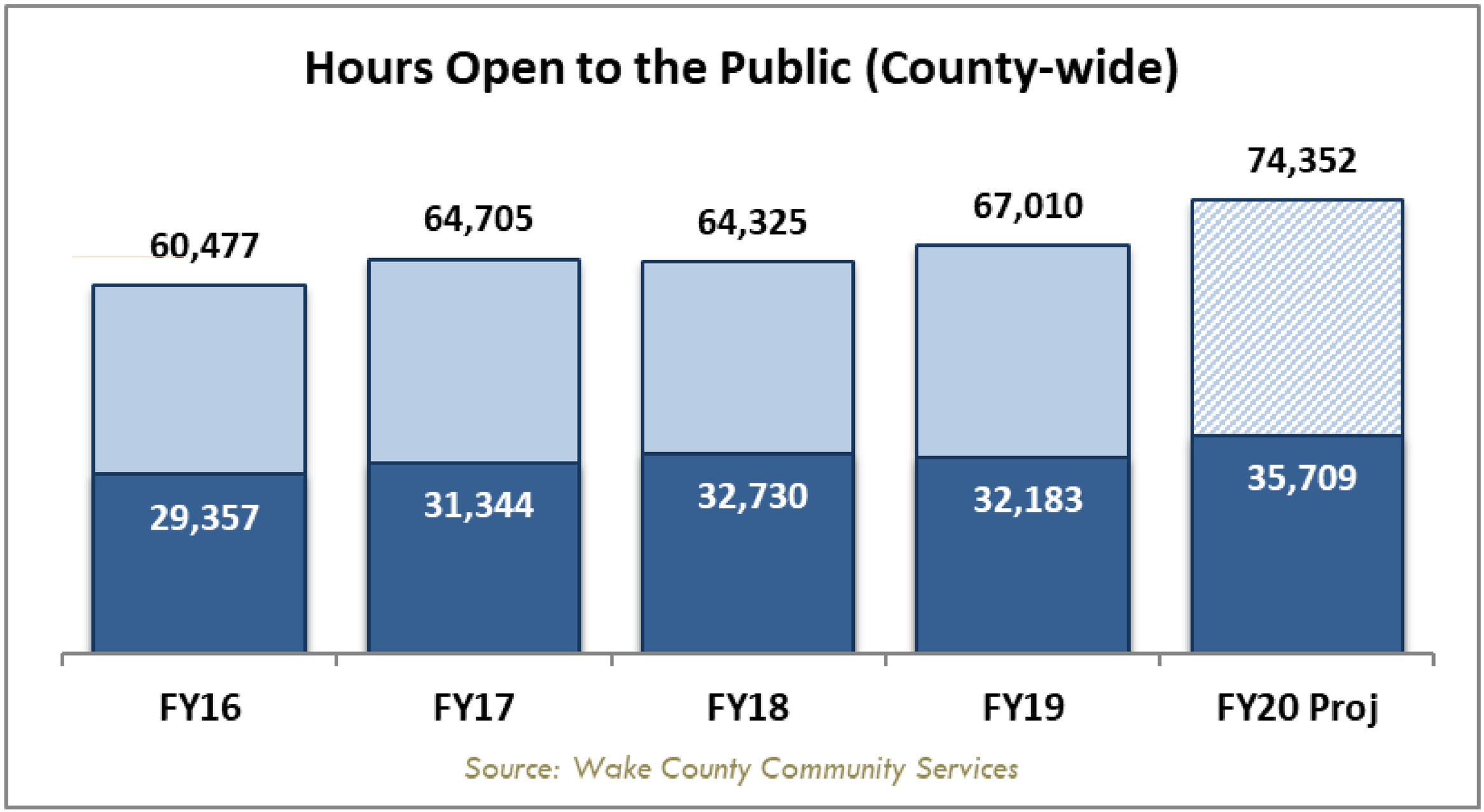
Drive time areas



Operating Hours of Libraries

Consistent and plentiful hours provide more opportunity for patrons to visit the libraries.

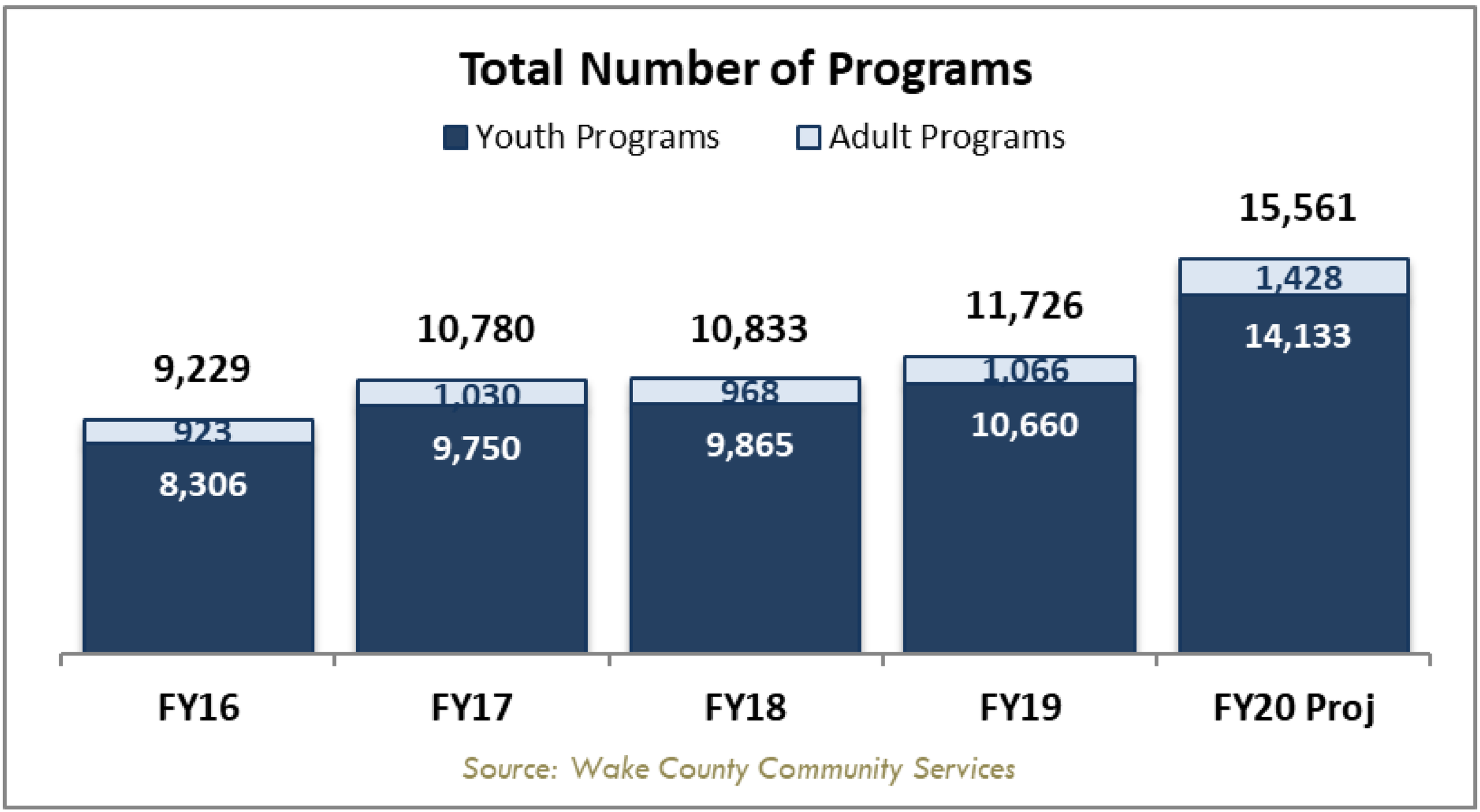
Operating Hours of Libraries



Frequency of Programs

Consistent, weekly programs make it easier to understand what the library offers and attend library programs.

Frequency of Programs



Source: Wake County Community Services

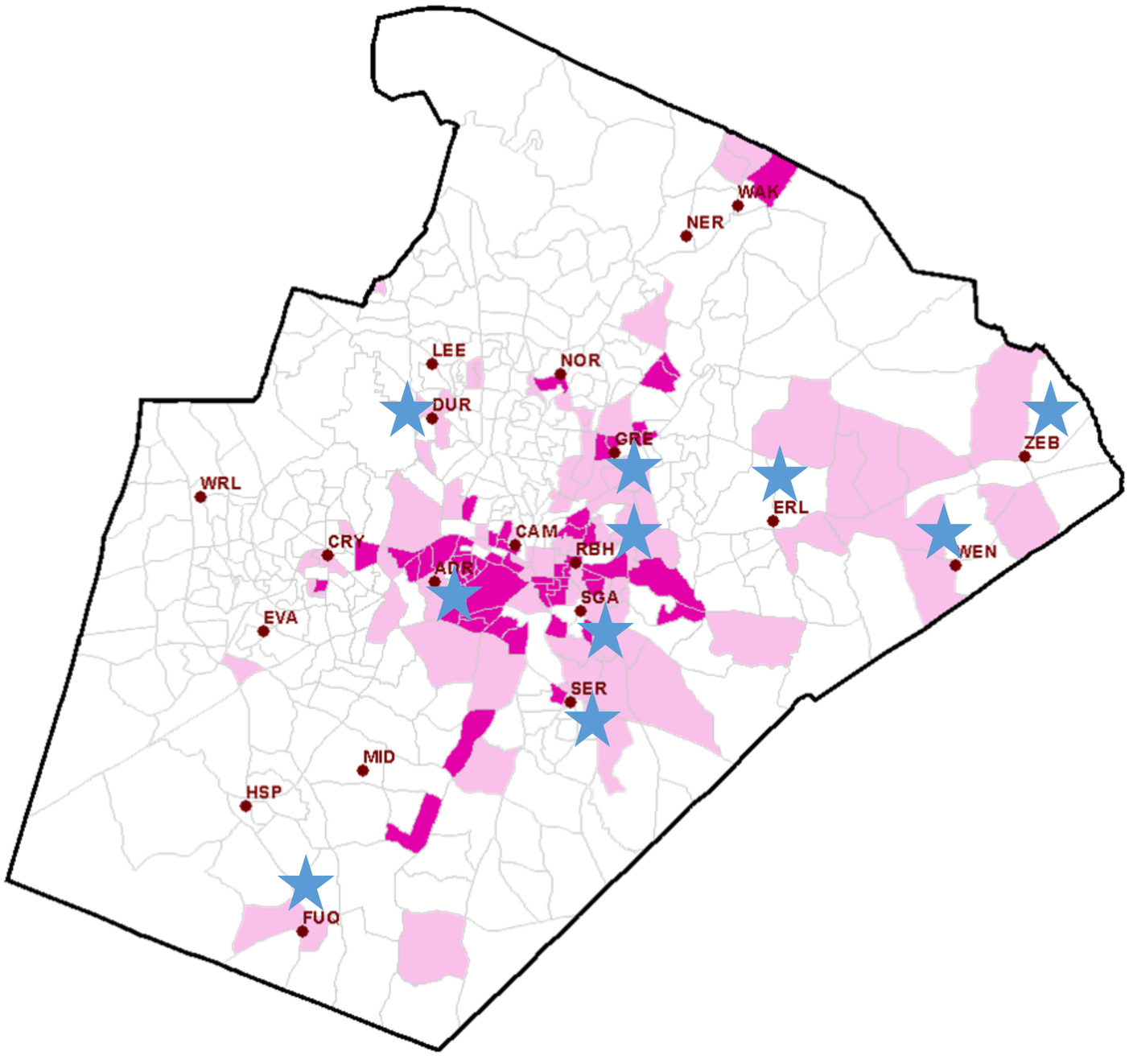
4. Literacies

People lack early literacy, information literacy, and digital literacy skills.

Types of Programs

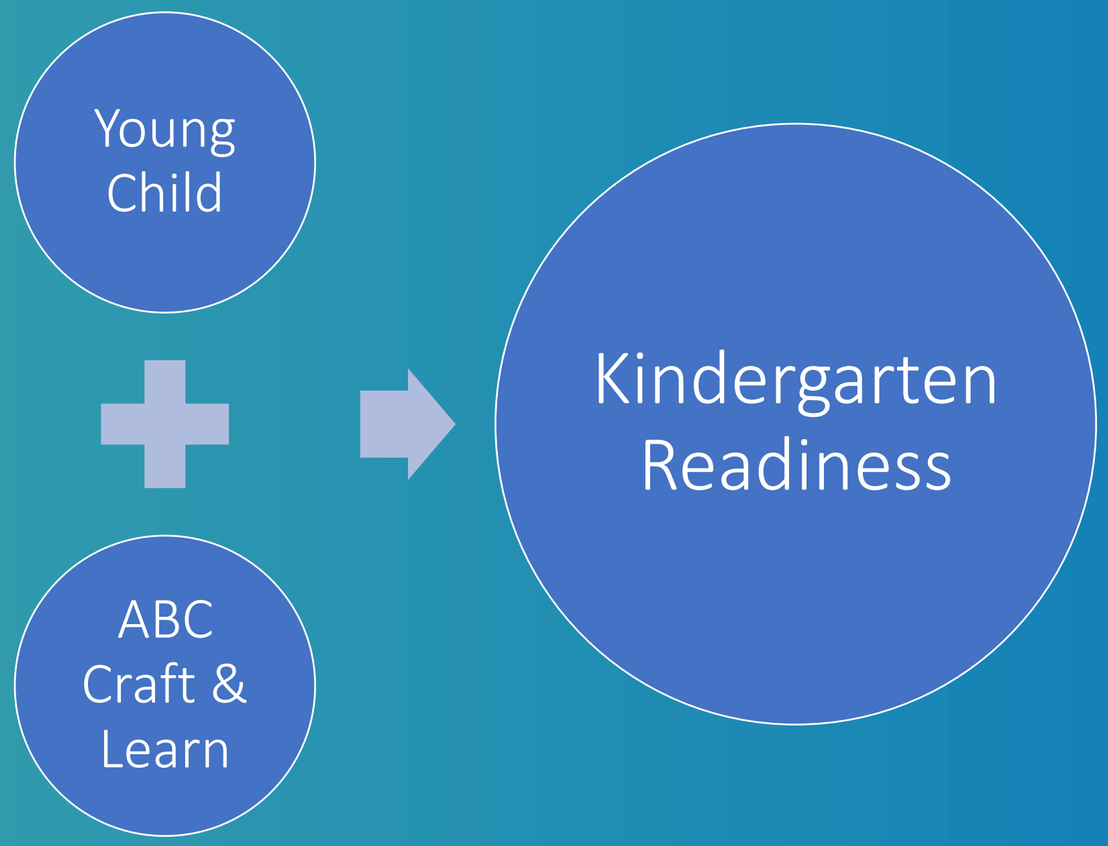
Programs that are designed to instill the love of reading and foster the pursuit of knowledge create a bridge to literacies.

Libraries in Underserved Communities



Every Family Ready to Achieve

Programs for all ages fill community needs



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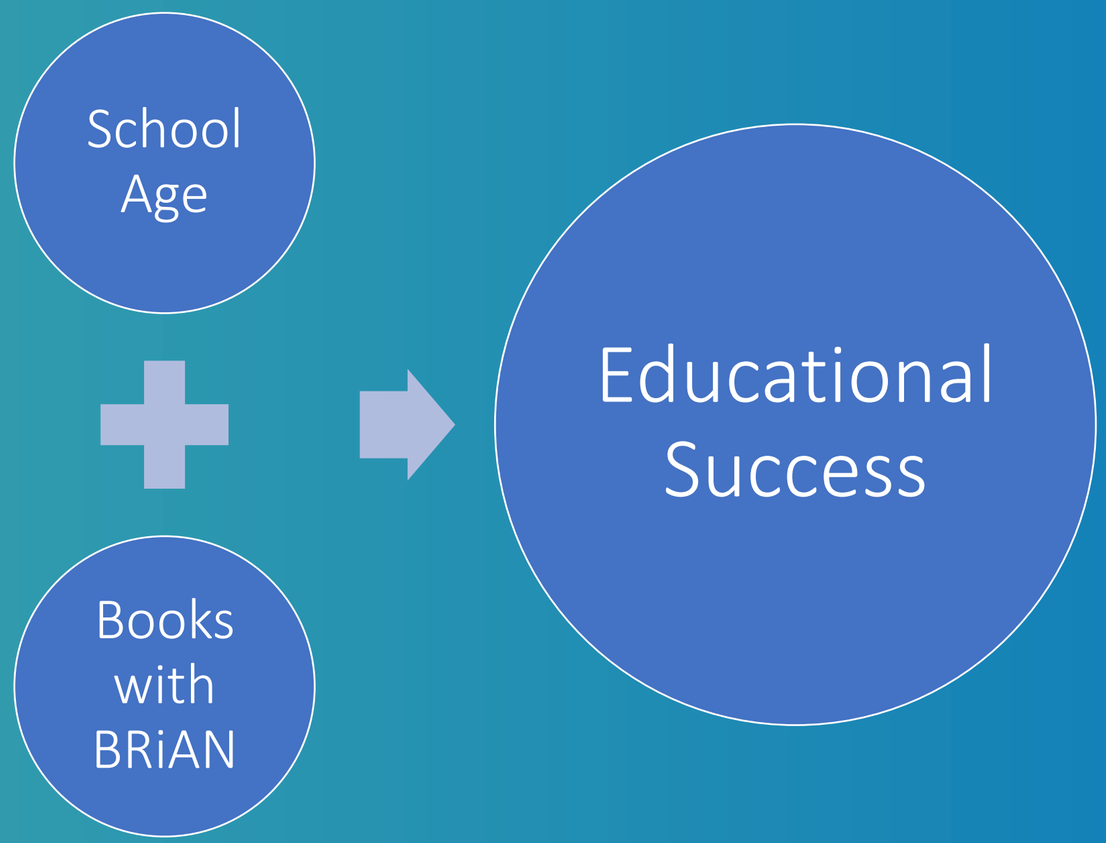

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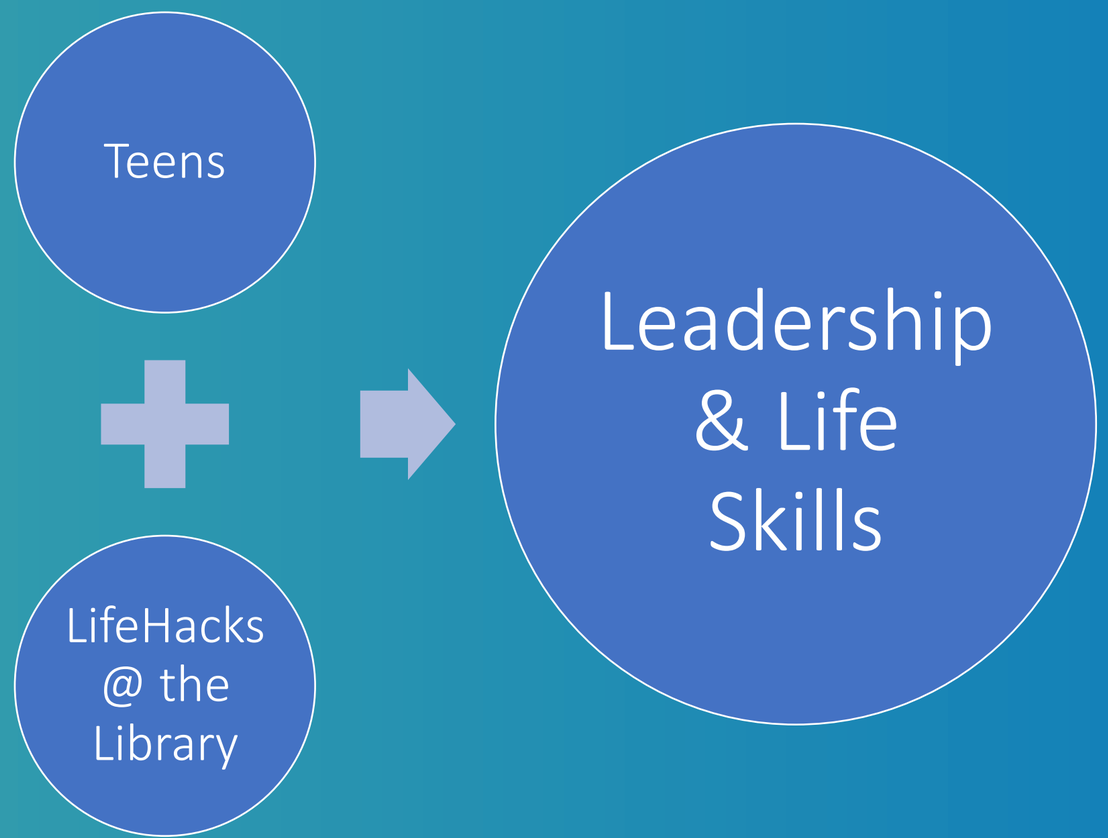

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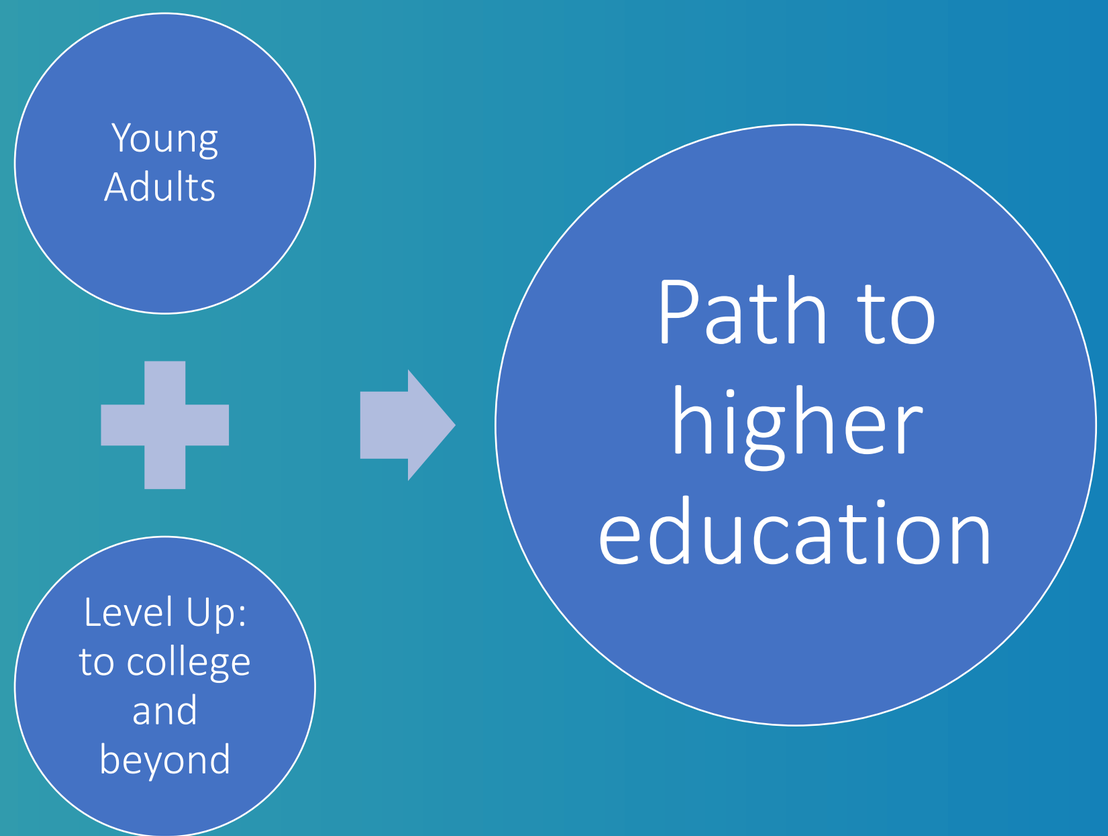

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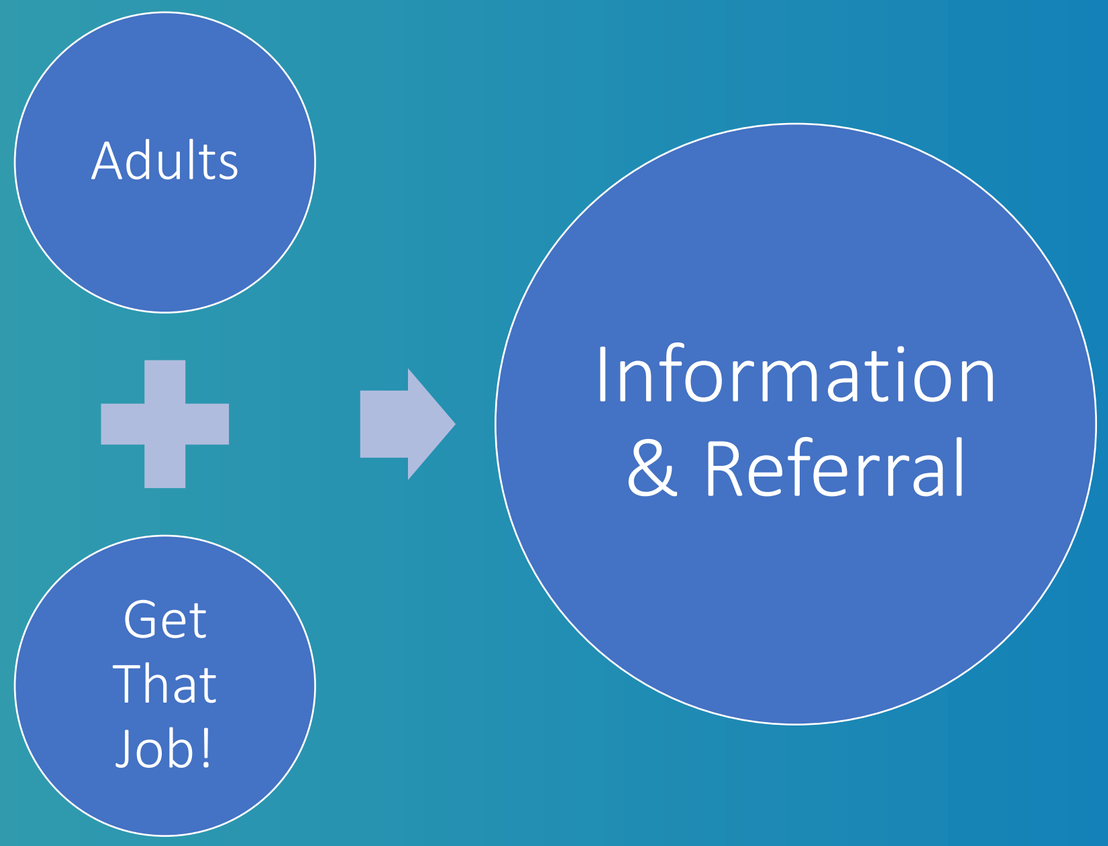


Expansion of Services to Exceptional Populations

Sensory Storytimé

Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Young children and their families are invited to participate in an interactive storytime designed for exceptional audiences. Space is limited. Program runs through November.

5. Awareness

People do not understand what library services exist and how those services can benefit their lives.

Customers

Organization

Internal

Library Customers

Library Staff

Awareness

External

Non-Users

Funding Authorities

6. COVID-19*

Wake County Public Libraries is 'instilling the love of reading and fostering the pursuit of knowledge" by developing experiences that reflect the comfort levels of our library customers.

Libraries during COVID-19

Virtual Library

- eContent
- Programs/Services
- Self-Registration

Contact-free Services

- Books on the Go
- Book Bundles

Express Service

- Book Browsing
- On the Go Programs

Virtual Library

- eContent
- Programs/Services
- Self-Registration

LIBRARY ACCESS FROM HOME

Contact-free Services

- Books on the Go
- Book Bundles

myraleighnc • Follow
North Regional Library

myraleighnc Books on the Go at @wcplonline went as smoothly as promised and exceeded expectations 👏

For everyone looking for a bookshelf refresh, head to the Wake County Library site for details and to start reserving books 📚📚📚

#raleigh #downtownraleigh #dtr #northcarolina #wakecounty #librarybook #librarybooks #publiclibrary #readingisfundamental #919 #nc #covid19 #community #bookworm #readabook

30w

patricecgraham What???? Thank you!!! Needed to hear about this! Thanks for sharing!!!

Liked by **wcplonline** and **59 others**

JUNE 22, 2020

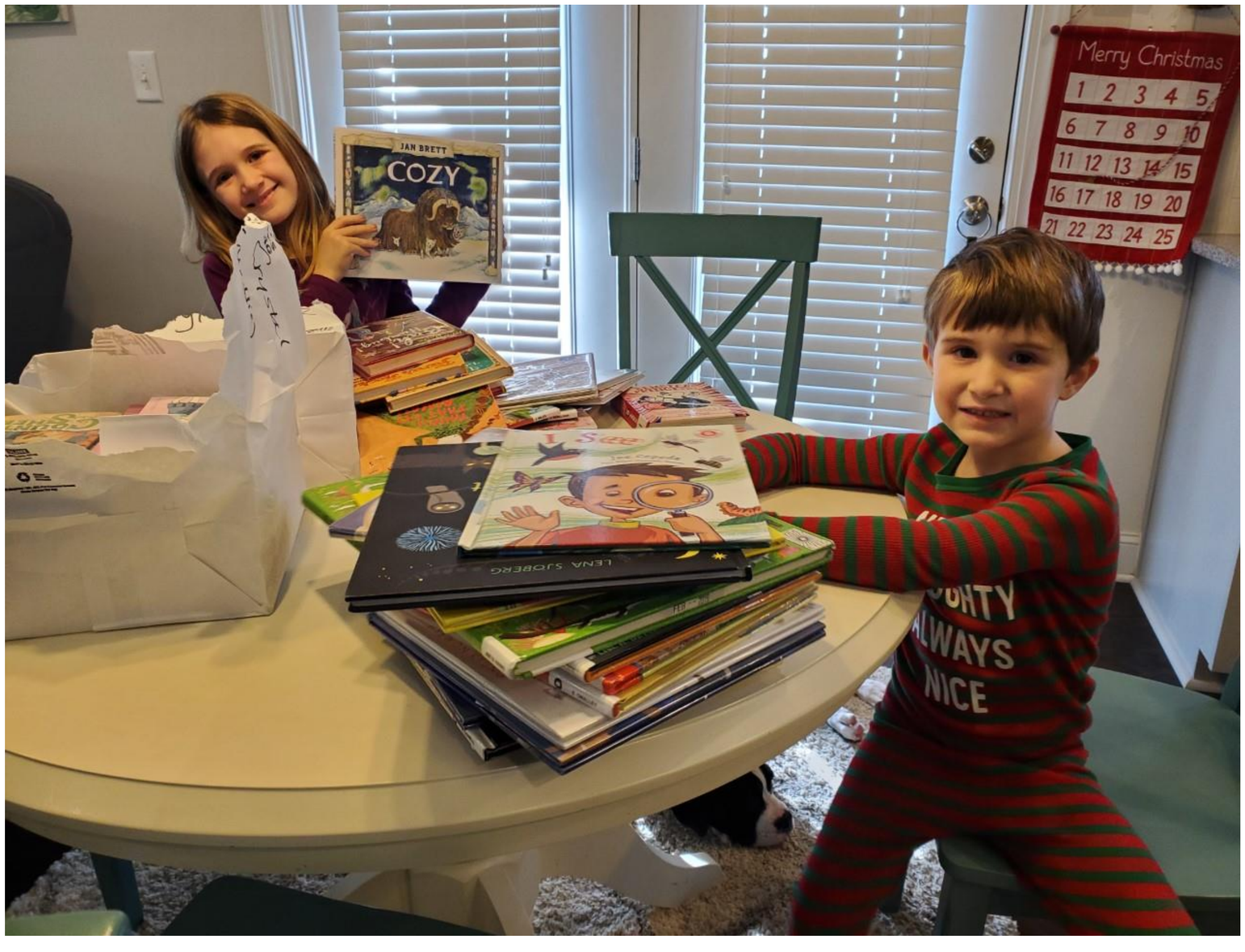
Add a comment... Post

For information about COVID-19, visit cdc.gov.

Kids BOOK BUNDLES

Contact-free Services

- Books on the Go
- Book Bundles



Express Service

- Book Browsing
- On the Go Programs

ENJOY YOUR EXPRESS LIBRARY VISIT

Thank you for limiting visits to 30 minutes or less, wearing a mask and social distancing.

AVAILABLE	IN THE LIBRARY	VIRTUALLY
Check out books	✓	
Pick up books on reserve	✓	
Return books	✓	
Browse for books	✓	
Use a computer *One 30 minute session and printing*	✓	
Pick up an "on the go" program	✓	
Events *Book discussions, storytimes, etc*		✓
Service appointments *Reference, Job help, etc*		✓

Learning Outcomes

- **Identify potential barriers** to library use in your community
- Find and **develop solutions** to barriers
- **Consider alternative** policies, operations, and programming initiatives that may decrease barriers

Learning Outcomes

Understand our methodology for decreasing barriers:

- **Determine** your library's priorities
- **Identify** barriers that impact priorities
- **Perform** a gap analysis

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Questions & Comments