

## Bookmobile Program Evaluation

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this evaluation was to measure current Bookmobile patrons' satisfaction and usage of the Bookmobile. Further aims were to examine the likelihood of visiting the Bookmobile again and the helpfulness of the staff. Literacy and education can directly affect an individual's health and wellbeing. Socio-economic factors and other disparities influence educational outcomes. Public libraries are committed to enhancing literacy through their educational and social programming. A handful of public libraries across the nation are bridging the social inequality gap by providing connections to health information and resources. Results from this evaluation will aid in identifying areas for improvement and potential new strategies to engage more Bookmobile patrons as well as maximizing the value of the visit.

The methods of the evaluation were a non-random, one-group post-test only and utilized a paper-based survey distributed to Bookmobile Patrons at regular stops over three weeks. Twenty-five patrons completed the survey. The survey's intention was to determine the impact of the Bookmobile on themselves and their families. Demographic data was extracted from the South Central Library System database for patrons who borrow materials, this includes: location, the date and time, anonymous identification number, home library, sex, age, and the items issued. Interval data analysis and descriptive statistics were used for analysis.

The three main evaluation questions are:

1. What is the overall satisfaction and experienced of the patrons of the DCLS Bookmobile?
2. What are the rates of Bookmobile use for rural and urban stops?
3. What are the rates of Bookmobile use for communities with higher and lower poverty thresholds?

The survey results showed an overwhelming approval of the Bookmobile. The most issued item for the Bookmobile in 2018 was adult large print fiction books ( $n = 7385$ , 15.7%). There was a significantly larger proportion of female patrons ( $n = 799$  or 61.9%) in comparison to males ( $n = 349$  or 27.1%). Seven of the 18 stops are urban ( $>1,000$  mi<sup>2</sup>) and they account for seventy percent ( $n = 905$ ) of the Bookmobile users. Poverty threshold varied little across communities (mean 3.89, SD 1.75).

Limitations of the evaluation include the small sample size of patrons completing the survey. At such response rate, sampling error in which the sample is not representative of the population cannot be entirely excluded. Another limitation is the use of a targeted audience for the non-random sample. The potential for bias related to satisfaction should be considered for return patrons of the Bookmobile. Adding an additional question to the survey asking patrons how long they have been using the bookmobile would be helpful demographic data.

The recommendations from the evaluation are:

1. Add a question to the survey related to repeat visits to the Bookmobile. And, complete the survey for a strategic timeframe to improve the response rate.
2. Provide programing directed at fathers.
3. Add stops to communities with a higher poverty threshold.