

CHILDREN CHOOSE:

Children's Advisory Boards in Libraries

The Problem

Children's services in libraries are mediated entirely through adults. Are libraries meeting children's needs if children are not included in collection development and program planning?

The Solution

Implement Children's Advisory Boards (CABs) in three pilot libraries. Use best practices to create a toolkit for the Collaborative Summer Library Program.

Children's Advisory Boards are a facilitated group where elementary-aged children advise libraries on collection development and library programming specific to children.

How We Did It

THE RULES

Based on research of child information behavior and the needs of children in a research setting, we established the following protocol for our pilot CABs:

- Children could leave at any time
- Children were given access to advance reading copies
- Children were not required to read the books
- Children chose their level of participation at each meeting
- Children were not required to attend the next meeting
- Librarian acted only as a guide to facilitate respectful discussion

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- After-school programs
- Children recommended future book and item purchases
- Children tested tech (robots, virtual reality, coding) to propose programs

SCHOOL LIBRARY

- Lunchtime programs
- Children browsed and suggested eBooks
- Children brainstormed their dream library

ALL

- Any child ages 9-11 could participate
- Children were asked about library programming

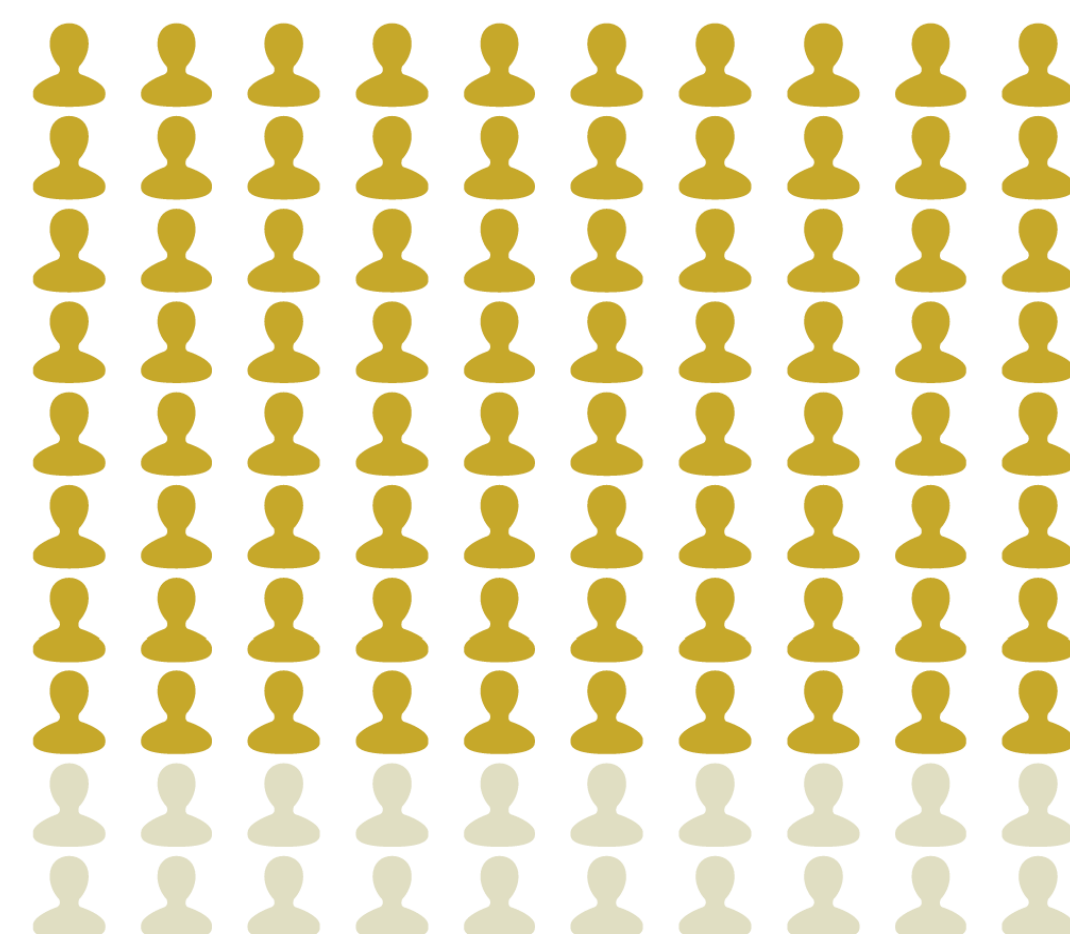
THE TAKEAWAYS

Children chose diverse books

Children gained library ownership

50-80% of CAB participants were new

Enthusiastic participant/caregiver buy-in



80%
of participants wanted CABs to continue at their libraries



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