

# Mohave County Library Teen Engagement Survey: Researching the needs of teens in rural Arizona

## Background

- Mohave County is a desert county located in northwestern Arizona, and is the second largest county within the state.
- Mohave County is very spread out, and is a rural county with many small communities isolated between large population centers.
- The Mohave County Library district has 10 libraries, with 3 main branches and seven small community libraries in outlying communities.
- Each of the main branches maintains a Teen Center, and teen attendance has been steadily declining over the last two years, dropping to less than half of previous attendance.

The survey involved questions about how long teens use the library, the kinds of programs they have attended, what they do while at the library, and which services they use most.

Staffing issues have cut down on time that Youth Services staff have available for data gathering on Teen use of library services, thus necessitating this project

## Objectives and Methodology

- The sponsor tasked me to investigate the needs and wants of teens within the county so that they are better able to allocate resources to meet the needs and expectations of teen patrons.
- In order to give teens direct input, I surveyed teens within the library district that use the three main libraries: Bullhead City, Kingman, and Lake Havasu City.
- Community Libraries were not surveyed as they do not have teen centers or host teen programs.

Typical visits last 2 to 4 hours and are almost entirely spent engaging with technology.

All Mohave County schools are in the three main cities, not in outlying areas, so Community Libraries do not maintain Youth Services Departments

## Results and recommendations

- Assessment of results indicates a lack of outreach to local schools, thus lower attendance as teens do not know about Teen Centers
- The survey concluded that the majority of teens that do use the Teen Center do so for technology access that they do not have at home.
- The survey also concluded that teens desire programs that incorporate digital technologies that are currently restricted by the library's IT department.
- Increased outreach and working with It to unrestrict certain programs such as Minecraft will undoubtedly bolster awareness and attendance.

