

Introduction

Multnomah County Library's (MCL) Día de los Niños y Día de los Libros is a multicultural celebration of children and literacy. All three Saturday events in April included music, crafts, literacy activities and storytimes.

The target audience for Día included families from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, especially the Spanish-speaking community. In partnership with MCL it was our job to plan, promote, organize, and assess the three Saturday Día events in Portland, Oregon.

Historically 11 branches out of the 19 branches in MCL each planned their own Día events.

Two years ago, MCL decided to centralize Día programming planning to reduce expenses and maximize staff time. The Outreach Specialist in the We Speak Your Language Department became the Día coordinator.



Objectives

- To successfully implement enjoyable, fun, and educational Día celebrations that encourage families to become frequent library users.
- To maximize library resources and reduce branch staff workload.
- To balance the atmosphere and individuality of each branch's celebration with the efficiency of the centralization of Día.
- To market Día to diverse multicultural communities, with an emphasis on the Spanish-speaking community.
- To take staff, patron, and volunteer feedback and assessment into consideration when making recommendations for Día 2015.

"I am very impressed with the quantity--and quality--of activities--and music, Mexican sweet bread...and so many people! Well done!"

"Estoy super-impresionada con la cantidad--y calidad--de actividades--y música, pan dulce...¡y tanta gente! ¡Bien hecho!"

Centralizing Multnomah County Library's Día Program

Reimagining models for library programming in the 21st Century

By Lauren Furnish and Lisa Jordan



"Me pareció divertido para mis hijos, caritas felices, y para animar los a leer todos los días."

"This (Día) seemed very fun for my children, happy faces, and helps motivate them to read every day."

Results

- Día was a success with 3,600 people total attending the three events and 132 new library cards registered and 5,403 checkouts.
- The branch staff, managers, and Director of Neighborhood Libraries expressed that the workload was greatly reduced for staff.
- Diverse communities in MCL were reached by partnering with six school districts, calling 70 schools, and staff running over 256 outreach events promoting Día.
- After presenting our staff assessment results to the Día Planning & Budget Committee, we recommended the event planning should remain centralized, the outreach plan should be changed to a joint local branch and centralization model.



Conclusion

As public libraries budgets and resources shift, it is the goal of many libraries to reimagine how to plan outreach and programming. Based on our experience, we have concluded:

- MCL's Día event is at the forefront of this reimagined centralized program planning model.
- The centralization of Día will serve as a successful model to other libraries also looking to centralize program planning. We are sharing our success with other libraries via a simple report submitted to ALA.
- Creating, marketing and implementing a culturally diverse program brings new patrons into the library.

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