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# A Message from the San Joaquin Valley Library System Manager



The San Joaquin Valley Library System (SJVLS) is pleased to present this publication on our Young Adult Services Institute, *Serving San Joaquin Valley Teens in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. SJVLS has long recognized the need for better library service to teens. In recent years, library service to young adults has become a priority in many communities across the country.

This renewed focus on teens spawned the idea for the San Joaquin Valley Library System Young Adult Services Institute. The California State Library provided Library Services and Technology Act funding for the two-year project. The Institute provided training to library staff from the public libraries who make up the San Joaquin Valley Library System, including: Coalinga-Huron District Library, Fresno County Library, Kern County Library, Kings County Library, Mariposa County Library, Porterville Public Library, Tulare County Library, and Tulare Public Library.

The Institute also provided a comprehensive program of planning, needs assessment, and the development of young adult services models. This publication provides an overview of the Institute training provided by a team of nationally recognized young adult services consultants.

In the San Joaquin Valley, children and youth are important members of our library service population. Making up ten percent of the population, teens in the San Joaquin Valley face significant problems. Many of them are part of a growing population of ethnic minorities. In most Valley counties, more than 30 percent of young adults live in poverty, and 30 percent do not graduate from high school. Nearly 50 percent of youth are considered to be “at risk.” Limited staff awareness of young adults’ needs and staff attitudes about teens further complicate the challenge.

Our Young Adult Services Institute set out to provide tools to train staff on the best methods to meet the needs of young adults. To accomplish this goal, SJVLS created a regional approach to gaining expertise on how to effectively serve young adults. The Institute workshops helped library staff enhance their understanding of young adult service needs, learn new skills, and develop strategies to make effective service to teens a major component of our libraries’ long-term service delivery programs.

I hope this publication will help you and your colleagues develop insight into the hearts and minds of the young adults your libraries serve while helping you design new solutions to serving young adult needs more effectively.

*Mary Ellen Tyckoson*

Mary Ellen Tyckoson, Manager  
San Joaquin Valley Library System

