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How Libraries and Librarians Help: A Guide to Identifying User-Centered Outcomes

Joan C. Durrance, Karen E. Fisher

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Being able to "tell your library's story," illustrating how library services provide value and help the community and users, is the key to your library's future. The practice of measuring outcomes is becoming crucial to the library's ongoing mission: libraries are being called upon to address the value of library programs by assessing their effects on library patrons and the community as a whole. With funding under a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Durrance and Fisher have developed the "How Libraries and Librarians Help (HLLH) Outcome Model," field testing it in six libraries over two years. In this practical reference, they share their findings, cutting-edge, step-by-step HLLH methods, and library success stories that bring the process to life with outcomes like, "Empowering Youth" and "Strengthening Community." Use this straightforward model to: Strategize the big picture, collect, and interpret data with seven easy exercises; Apply the four-step process to assess and present outcomes; Measure and report your library's contributions; Draw together all the pieces to communicate a compelling case for library services; To stay in the game, library directors, administrators, managers, and community leaders must prove the value of the library and its services using outcome measures. Here's how to quantify the contribution of your library's programs to individuals and communities to gain recognition and funding.

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