

Illinois State Library “Targeting Autism” Forum Survey



Submitted on June 2, 2016

Executive Summary

The Illinois State Library received an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant to focus on the important issue of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The proposal promotes the development of a multi-organizational infrastructure throughout Illinois that empowers libraries to collaborate with ASD support services with the goal of improving the quality of life for those individuals with ASD. The resulting project explores how libraries can work with diverse community organizations and programs to address the topic of ASD, through training, education and support services.

In March 2016, the Illinois State Library (ISL) conducted a forum to continue work towards the following goals: 1) increasing ASD awareness, education and support services; 2) improving and streamlining access to educational material -both online and in the collection- to families and individuals with ASDs; and 3) establish sustainable, inter-organizational collaborations committed to enhancing ASD support, statewide. The Illinois State Library contacted the University of Illinois Springfield's Survey Research Office (SRO) to evaluate the forum. To conduct the evaluation, SRO staff first attended the forum to gain a better understanding of its contents and then developed an electronic survey to send to the forum participants via their email addresses. Using data collected from the survey, the SRO was able to provide an analysis of what content the participants felt was most useful in meeting these goals and helping them to gain a better understanding of ASD. While every respondent experienced the forum in his or her own way, there were some key findings which speak to the effectiveness of the forum in conveying its message of increasing ASD awareness, education and support services.

ASD awareness and education

Increasing ASD awareness, education, and knowledge of support services has been at the forefront of the forums, and the speakers chosen reflect that. Presenters spoke on topics including technology, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), and support services. The keynote speakers were John Donovan and Caren Zucker, authors of *In a Different Key: The Story of Autism*. Over 95% of the respondents found their presentation helpful. But overwhelmingly, respondents report they gained the most knowledge and awareness from self-advocates who spoke at the forum. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents either agree or strongly agree with the statement "hearing from ASD self-advocates helped me to better understand the importance of making accommodations in my library". Furthermore, when respondents were asked in an open-ended question to comment on the speakers or topics, self-advocates received the most positive statements. Self-advocates who spoke at the 2016 forum were Marti Murphy, Adria Nassim, Alex Dudzenski, and Hayden Davis. Alex and Hayden host a YouTube show with their classmates. Comments written by participants include "I appreciated the discussion by Adria. Being able to learn from the experiences of those on the spectrum is incredibly helpful", "The show with the 2 young boys (Alex & Hayden) was especially interesting. Hearing from each of them about their show and what they hope to accomplish with it was great. It took a lot of courage for young boys to share so much of themselves and I think it was wonderful they did that for us!", and "I found the presentations

97% of the participants either agree or strongly agree with the statement "hearing from ASD self-advocates helped me to better understand the importance of making accommodations in my library"

by Marti Murphy and Adria Nassim had particular impact due to their unique and informed perspectives as individuals with ASD. Their voices are so valuable in the process of learning how to better support those with ASD and their care givers.”

Accessibility and educational materials

In addition to reporting an increased knowledge of ASD, participants also report their libraries are working towards becoming more accessible to patrons and families with ASD, whether it be through technology, through physical changes made within the library, or through increasing the library’s material on ASD. Sixty-one percent of respondents report that their library has increased its holdings of educational material on ASD, while 60% of the respondents report their library have added video games, iPads, and other devices that can help their libraries feel more welcoming for patrons with ASD. An assistive technology “petting zoo” presented at the forum allowed participants a chance to learn about available technology that could help their libraries increase accessibility. Eighty percent of the respondents report that they found the assistive technology petting zoo to be helpful. Additional data below looks at progress made towards this goal.

KEY FINDINGS:

- ✓ 86% of the participants agree or strongly agree with the statement, “The information I learned from this forum has been indispensable in creating a more inclusive environment for my library.”
- ✓ 92% of the participants agree or strongly agree with the statement, “I am confident I can take the information I learned at the forum and use it to make my library more welcoming to individuals with ASD.”
- ✓ 61% of the participants report their library has increased its holdings of educational material on ASD
- ✓ 90% of the participants agree or strongly agree with the statement, “I now know how to create a physical space in my library that is more welcoming to individuals of all ages with ASD.”

Collaboration

In addition to ASD education and awareness, another goal of the forum was to help participants identify and then establish relationships with their community ASD stakeholders. With libraries already well-positioned to be a central hub of the community, the goal is that by connecting them to current ASD support services this could not only enhance these services, but also lead to the creation of a multi-organizational infrastructure, statewide. Though it is still early in the process, the results thus far are largely positive. Nearly 77% of the respondents agreed with the statement, “As a result of the forum, I have begun to network with ASD stakeholders/advocates in my community to plan ways to make my library more welcoming for individuals with ASD.” Nonetheless, it seems that while participants report being aware of as well as networking with their community ASD stakeholders, more work still needs to be done in regards to establishing libraries as the community hub for people and families with ASD. While 58% of the respondents agree to the statement, “The goal for my library is to become a community hub for people with ASD as well as their friends and families”, 36% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree.

	I know where to go in my community to find the resources to help make my library more accessible to patrons with ASD.	The goal for my library is to become a community hub for people with ASD as well as their friends and families.	As a result of the forum, I have begun to network with ASD stakeholders/advocates in my community to plan ways to make my library more welcoming for individuals with ASD.
Strongly agree	25.6%	27.8%	35.9%
Agree	53.8%	19.4%	33.3 %
3	12.8%	11.1%	7.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	7.7%	36.1%	20.5%
5	0	2.8%	2.6%
Disagree	0	2.8%	0
Strongly disagree	0	0	0

**Targeting Autism Survey Topline Report
(N=55)**

Section 1: Evaluation of Targeting Autism Forum

This section below provides a list of all the workshops held at this year’s Targeting Autism Forum. On a scale for 1-7, in which 1 represents “Very helpful” and 7 represents “Not at all helpful,” how helpful, if at all, was the information presented during the workshop?

Autism: Beyond the Books- Marty Murphy

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Very helpful	61.9% (26)
2	26.2% (11)
3	4.8% (2)
4	4.8% (2)
5	2.4% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Assistive technology petting zoo

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Very helpful	32.5% (13)
2	15.0% (6)
3	32.5% (13)
4	12.5% (5)
5	5.0% (2)
6	0
Not at all helpful	2.5(1)

Importance of building relationships with service providers and advocacy groups- Ann Ford

	Valid percent (<i>n</i>)
Very helpful	40.5% (17)
2	28.6% (12)
3	21.4% (9)
4	7.1% (3)
5	2.4% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

On sensory processing - Adria Nassim

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	39.0% (16)
2	31.7% (13)
3	19.5% (8)
4	9.8% (4)
5	0
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Libraries, disabilities, and Washington D.C. - Patti Foerster

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	42.5% (17)
2	25.0% (10)
3	15.0% (6)
4	10.0% (4)
5	2.5% (1)
6	5.0% (2)
Not at all helpful	0

Report from The Answer Inc., an autism awareness and support agency – Debra Vines

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	40.5% (15)
2	27.0% (10)
3	18.9% (7)
4	13.5% (5)
5	0
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Southern Illinois Targeting Autism collaborative community report – Amanda Marti

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	35.0% (14)
2	25.0% (10)
3	30.0% (12)
4	10.0% (4)
5	0
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Supporting transition-aged students at Skokie Public library: patron stories and lessons learned- Dawn Wiezen

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	42.5% (17)
2	40.0% (16)
3	7.5% (3)
4	10.0% (4)
5	0
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Community report- DuPage, Kane & Will counties - Cate Loveday

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	33.3% (13)
2	28.6% (11)
3	25.6% (10)
4	10.3% (4)
5	2.6% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Community report-small libraries-Sheryl Siebert

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	31.6% (12)
2	23.7% (9)
3	28.9% (11)
4	13.2% (5)
5	2.6% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Play - The Other Room- Ariadne Blayde

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	53.8% (21)
2	20.5% (8)
3	12.8% (5)
4	10.3% (4)
5	2.6% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

The Alex and Hayden Show

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	53.7% (22)
2	29.3% (12)
3	7.3% (3)
4	4.9% (2)
5	4.9% (2)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Keynote speakers - John Donovan & Caren Zucker- Authors of In a Different Key: The Story of Autism

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	66.7% (28)
2	28.6% (12)
3	0
4	4.8% (2)
5	0
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

The Americans with Disabilities Act & hidden disabilities - Sarah Colby Weaver

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	33.3% (14)
2	33.3% (14)
3	21.4% (9)
4	7.1% (3)
5	2.4% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	2.4% (1)

A Mother's Journey - Mary Pelich

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	53.7% (22)
2	22.0% (9)
3	14.6% (6)
4	9.8% (4)
5	0
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Information Connections: For parents of children with developmental disabilities and chronic diseases-
Nalini Mahajan

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	47.5% (19)
2	35.0% (14)
3	7.5% (3)
4	7.5% (3)
5	2.5% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Early intervention clearinghouse - Sarah Isaacs

	Valid percent (n)
Very helpful	45.2% (19)
2	35.7% (15)
3	11.9% (5)
4	4.8% (2)
5	2.4% (1)
6	0
Not at all helpful	0

Of the speakers and topics listed above, is there one in particular in which you would like to

The show with the 2 young boys was especially interesting. Hearing from each of them about their show and what they hope to accomplish with it was great. It took a lot of courage for young boys to share so much of themselves and I think it was wonderful they did that for us!

Adria was fantastic-great perspective on her journey living with autism.

All of the speakers were passionate about the topic of Autism Awareness and knowledgeable. Some were more engaging and offered areas of expertise that I was more interested in hearing about.

All those marked as "Very Helpful" are worthy of a big "thumbs up"!

Honestly, there are too many to count. Marty had great ideas that we are implementing right now.

I appreciated the discussion by Adria. Being able to learn from the experiences of those on the spectrum is incredibly helpful.

I did not find Marty helpful because I knew most of what she was saying. She was awesome as a speaker though and entertaining

I feel so privileged to have been a part of this forum. This time around the things that I was most impressed with include the keynote, Marty Murphy, everyone involved in the Alex and Heyden Show, John Donovan and Caren Zucker(so happy to have been able to add a second copy of their book to our collection--both of which are currently checked out) and Skokie Public Library's volunteer program.

I found the presentations by Marti Murphy and Adria Nassim had particular impact due to their unique and informed perspectives as individuals with ASD. Their voices are so valuable in the process of learning how to better support those with ASD and there are givers.

I knew next to nothing about Autism so I was just blown away by everything i saw, heard and learned. I am so glad I attended this forum!!

I loved the authors the best - John Donovan & Caren Zucker. I thought having people with autism talk to us was very effective.

I loved the Just for Men sediment from The Answer Inc. and A Mother's Journey

I think the mother's story was exceptional. Many of the speakers were moving, but she exemplified what parents experience and what can be achieved. She was also very real and articulate.

I would love to see Debra Vines present any research she may have through her organization. Her presentation was incredibly valuable, especially considering the state of affairs in the state and the lack of autism services in more urban, poorer areas. What an amazing person she is and what wonderful work she does!! I'd also like to mention that Mary (the parent advocate) who shared her story was incredibly moving. She should share her story and shout it from the rooftops! Amazing, she was! Also, I really appreciated having the groups feature the work they did since the last forum. Cate and Renee, as well as Dawn and Holly were particularly great!

It was an amazing conference. Thank you.

It was incredibly meaningful to have Alex and Hayden right there with us to talk about their experience with their show. Genuinely super-inspiring model on engaging all our kids, inclusive of those with autism. Plus, just really entertaining!

Marty Murphy probably made the most impact on me, although they were all great. I have referred many people to Marty's Youtube presentations and am looking into seeking her as a staff training possibility. Marty was so awesome! She was so much fun! Please invite her back!

Marty's story - I always like to hear from an autistic person their perspective on life, interactions. daily journey, and basic thoughts and ideas.

Nope!

The Americans with Disabilities Act & hidden disabilities - Sarah Colby Weaver This was such an important topic and Weaver's presentation was frankly a disaster. She was unprepared and unhelpful.

The authors, John Donovan and Caren Zucker, which presented their anecdotes about writing, In a Different Key: The Story of Autism, provided some interesting insights about the process and some of their investigative work--and very flattering comments about librarians :-).

The Other Room by Ariadne Blayde was especially powerful.

The portrayal of what goes on in the mind of an autistic person.

The speakers who were directly impacted by autism were of particular interest. But all in all this was a very enlightening, well worth learning experience!!

There were so many good ones it is hard to pick just one, although, Play - The Other Room- Ariadne Blayde really gave me a different perspective on the spectrum

Section 2

This section below looks at understanding and application. How much do you agree or disagree with EACH of the following statements? Please indicate your answer using the scale below ranging from strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

I now know how to create a physical space in my library that is more welcoming to individuals of all ages with ASD.

Valid percent(*n*)

Strongly Agree	28.2% (11)
2	46.2% (18)
3	15.4% (6)
4	5.1% (2)
5	5.1% (2)
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

I have been unable to teach others at my library how to better serve patrons with ASD.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	2.6% (1)
2	10.5% (4)
3	13.2% (5)
4	15.8% (6)
5	10.5% (4)
6	23.7%(9)
Strongly Disagree	23.7%(9)

I do not understand how any of the information I learned at the forum applies to me or my library.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	0
2	0
3	2.6% (1)
4	2.6% (1)
5	5.1% (2)
6	76.9%(30)
Strongly Disagree	0

I do not understand what is meant by a hidden disability.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	0
2	0
3	0
4	5.1% (2)
5	2.6% (1)
6	7.7% (6)
Strongly Disagree	84.6% (33)

As a result of the forum, I have begun to network with ASD stakeholders/advocates in my community to plan ways to make my library more welcoming for individuals with ASD.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	35.9% (14)
2	33.3% (13)
3	7.7% (3)
4	20.5% (8)
5	2.6% (1)
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

I know where to go in my community to find the resources to help make my library more accessible to patrons with ASD.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	25.6% (10)
2	53.8% (21)
3	12.8% (5)
4	7.7% (3)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

I am confident I can take the information I learned at the forum and use it to make my library more welcoming to individuals with ASD.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	55.3% (21)
2	31.6% (12)
3	5.3% (2)
4	7.9% (3)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

Prior to attending the forum, I did not know how to recognize if an individual might have autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	2.6% (1)
2	5.1% (2)
3	5.1% (2)
4	12.8% (5)
5	7.7% (3)
6	20.5% (8)
Strongly Disagree	46.2% (18)

Hearing from ASD self-advocates helped me to better understand the importance of making accommodations in my library.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	74.4% (29)
2	17.9% (7)
3	5.1% (2)
4	2.6% (1)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

I have a better understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) & why people with ASD are included.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	35.9% (14)
2	43.6% (17)
3	7.7% (3)
4	10.3% (4)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	2.6% (1)

I know how to recognize and assist a patron with ASD who might be having a meltdown.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	23.7% (9)
2	42.1% (16)
3	21.1% (8)
4	13.2% (5)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

Prior to attending the forum, I didn't see the need to make my library more inclusive for patrons with ASD.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	0
2	7.7% (3)
3	7.7% (3)
4	10.3% (4)
5	2.6% (1)

6	20.5% (8)
Strongly Disagree	51.3% (20)

It is not a priority for me to help make my library more accessible to patrons and families dealing with ASD.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	2.5% (1)
2	2.5% (1)
3	0
4	2.5% (1)
5	2.5% (1)
6	7.5% (3)
Strongly Disagree	82.5% (33)

Section 3

This section looks at changes made in your library. If you are not a librarian, feel free to skip this section, or answer using your home library as a model.

Since attending the forum, please select whether you have been able to implement the following at your library, have been working on implementing, or have no current plans to implement the following at your library? Or did you already have it at your library?

Staff training on ways to expand inclusiveness for patrons with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	23.5% (8)
Currently working on implementing	55.9% (19)
No current plans to implement	5.9% (2)
My library already had this in place	14.7% (5)

Collaboration with community stakeholders who can aid in making the library more welcoming for patrons with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	21.2% (7)
Currently working on implementing	51.5% (17)
No current plans to implement	9.1% (3)
My library already had this in place	18.2% (6)

Increased educational material on ASD

	Valid percent(n)
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Been able to implement since attending the forum	32.4% (11)
Currently working on implementing	41.2% (14)
No current plans to implement	11.8% (4)
My library already had this in place	14.7% (5)

Volunteer opportunities for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	3.0% (1)
Currently working on implementing	48.5% (16)
No current plans to implement	27.3% (9)
My library already had this in place	21.2% (7)

An activity room for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	5.9% (2)
Currently working on implementing	26.5% (9)
No current plans to implement	67.6% (23)
My library already had this in place	0

A quiet room for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	8.8% (3)
Currently working on implementing	47.1% (16)
No current plans to implement	35.3% (12)
My library already had this in place	8.8% (3)

Social skills group for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	8.8% (3)
Currently working on implementing	29.4% (10)
No current plans to implement	58.8% (20)
My library already had this in place	2.9% (1)

A book group for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	5.9% (2)
Currently working on implementing	23.5% (8)
No current plans to implement	61.8% (21)
My library already had this in place	8.8% (3)

A LEGO group for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	2.9% (1)
Currently working on implementing	38.2% (13)
No current plans to implement	55.9% (19)
My library already had this in place	2.9% (1)

Video games/ iPads, Applications for individuals with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	3.0% (1)
Currently working on implementing	51.5% (17)
No current plans to implement	39.4% (13)
My library already had this in place	6.1% (2)

Support groups for parents of children with ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Been able to implement since attending the forum	3.0% (1)
Currently working on implementing	42.4% (14)
No current plans to implement	54.5% (18)
My library already had this in place	0

Has your library implemented something that is not listed above that you would like to share?

A better understanding of how to incorporate such individuals into Story Hours or school-aged Book Groups and Summer Reading Program.

Not presently working as a librarian

Autism Awareness information fair held at a community college; brought in community stakeholders to participate

Cannot think of anything

I do not work at the library, but have met with the new director who was very receptive to inclusion of people with ASD - all bullet points noted on preceding page were agreed as good ideas. I will be following up with the director in the weeks ahead to resume conversation and move forward.

I presented a small informational video I found on the Libraries and Autism: Get Connected site at our annual Staff Development Meeting held just a few weeks after attending the Targeting Autism Forum. The staff were very receptive.

Inclusion Game Night and Inclusion Movie Night for teens and young adults.

It's not something we've been able to implement yet, but we are currently working towards more tools for nonverbal patrons, building on what I learned about PECS at the forum.

N/A

Our library developed website for parents of children with developmental disabilities - Information

Connections

Over the summer my library is going to be completely gutted and I asked for a quiet room, tiny spaces for reading and furniture that is soft and will be good for sensory issues of students with ASD. We will open the new library in the fall!!

We are currently conducting a community survey to learn what my community knows/doesn't know about ASD and to start a conversation about autism. Over the next few months we hope to continue the conversation community leaders in order to make changes not just in the library but community wide. We are currently working to develop a quiet room/space and have developed a special needs section of books. We are such a small library that our focus is on inclusion and educating staff, and perhaps a program for parents.

We are working on creating a library portal webpage with links to the information provided by the Marianjoy Medical and Library and resources from the ISL. Not everyone on our staff can be an expert, but we can all point our patrons to web resources to help them find answers to their questions.

We have a sensory story hour.

We have a sensory story time for young patrons and we have a social story on our website to view before your library visit.

We have a Special Needs Story time that we started in October 2014. Between meetings with stakeholders, attending the Forum, attending networking meetings with the Special Needs and Inclusive Services group and reading articles and books I have learned so much in the past year! I hope to be able to use all that I have learned in current and future endeavors and to continue to learn more.

We have begun networking and raising awareness. Some limitations due to space and staff limitations.

We have created a "This is my library" social story downloadable for people with ASD. Implemented story time programs for children with ASD and other disabilities. Currently working on a Special Needs collection, which will feature materials about and for people with autism.

We've been able to strengthen relationships with groups because of the experience.

Section 4

How much do you agree or disagree with EACH of the following statements. Please indicate your answer using the scale below ranging from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (7).

Community stakeholders have been crucial in helping my library to become more inclusive for patrons with ASD.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	22.9% (8)
2	25.7% (9)
3	14.3% (5)
Neither agree nor disagree	31.4% (11)
5	0
6	5.7% (2)
Strongly Disagree	0

Materials about ASD has increased at our library.

Valid percent(n)

Strongly Agree	30.6% (11)
2	19.4% (7)
3	11.1% (4)
Neither agree nor disagree	33.3% (12)
5	0
6	5.6% (2)
Strongly Disagree	0

In my library, I have become the go-to person for staff and patrons with questions about ASD

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	58.3% (21)
2	13.9% (5)
3	0
Neither agree nor disagree	22.2% (8)
5	0
6	2.8% (1)
Strongly Disagree	2.8% (1)

The information I learned from this forum has been indispensable in creating a more inclusive environment for my library.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	44.4% (16)
2	33.3% (12)
3	8.3% (3)
Neither agree nor disagree	13.9% (5)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

Helping my library become more accessible is frustrating and takes time away from more important duties.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	5.6% (2)
2	0
3	5.6% (2)
Neither agree nor disagree	13.9% (5)
5	2.8% (1)
6	25.0% (9)
Strongly Disagree	47.2% (17)

My library has taken steps to become more inclusive and friendly to patrons with ASD.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	36.1% (13)
2	25.0% (9)
3	22.2% (8)
Neither agree nor disagree	16.7% (6)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

My job is much more gratifying now that I better understand how to help people who might have ASD or other invisible disabilities.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	45.7% (16)
2	25.7% (9)
3	17.1% (6)
Neither agree nor disagree	11.4% (4)
5	0
6	0
Strongly Disagree	0

My library has become more inclusive to children with ASD but has not made any changes to help adult patrons with ASD.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	11.1% (4)
2	13.9% (5)
3	5.6% (2)
Neither agree nor disagree	44.4% (16)
5	11.1% (4)
6	5.6% (2)
Strongly Disagree	8.3% (3)

The goal for my library is to become a community hub for people with ASD as well as their friends and families.

	Valid percent(<i>n</i>)
Strongly Agree	27.8% (10)
2	19.4% (7)
3	11.1% (4)
Neither agree nor disagree	36.1% (13)
5	2.8% (1)

6	2.8% (1)
Strongly Disagree	0

I feel it is not a priority for my library to increase accessibility for people with ASD and other hidden disabilities.

	Valid percent(n)
Strongly Agree	2.8% (1)
2	2.8 (1)
3	2.8% (1)
Neither agree nor disagree	11.1% (4)
5	0
6	11.1% (4)
Strongly Disagree	69.4% (25)

Section 5

Please mark if you attended the 2015 Targeting Autism forum

	Valid percent(n)
Yes	47.3% (26)
No	52.7% (29)

What has been the most valuable part of the forum(s) for you?

All the formal presentations were fantastic, inspiring, enlightening, engaging--I can't say enough! But I also want to note that the informal in-between times, chatting with people at our tables, was extremely valuable in terms of sharing ideas and inspiration, making connections and discovering new resources. Thanks for getting so many great brains in one place!

Being given tangible, concrete examples of programs or outreach opportunities to ASD community.

Connecting with libraries

Education and inspiration

Everyone from around the state coming together and hearing what they are doing in their libraries. Such a wealth of information and ideas is an amazing thing to be a part of to help me grow personally and professionally in the library system.

First, hearing from individuals on the ASD spectrum was helpful in providing first-hand info. on what works/doesn't work for them in a library setting. I would include in this category, hearing from the kids, their mom and their teacher about the talk show--the Alex and Hayden Show--because this was an excellent example of how technology and media can be used creatively in support of those on the spectrum and those who want to know more about ASDs. Second, I thought that it was useful to hear what various librarians are doing to provide programs for individuals with autism and their families. Two of these programs come to mind: the Broadview/Bellwood/Maywood area--where The Answer Inc. is doing some interesting support programs, and the excellent website and resources available via Information Connections at the Marianjoy

Medical Library.

Having people with autism talk and tell real life stories.

Hearing from autism self-advocates, networking with other librarians,

Hearing from the self-advocates and those having personal experience living with both visible and hidden disabilities.

Hearing the personal stories and increasing my new found appreciation for the need to reach out to this population.

I was impressed with the entire two days but the play was pretty incredible.

Increasing my confidence now that I have more knowledge on the topic. I am now more likely to take proactive steps on behalf of our library serving people on the spectrum. It was especially inspirational meeting people on the spectrum at the workshop....ad having them interacting among us during several days.

Learning from individuals with ASD what ways libraries could better accommodate their needs as children and as adults. Learning what other libraries have accomplished and/or plan to accomplish to be more inclusive and an integral part of the disability community.

Learning from people currently living on the spectrum has been most valuable.

Listening to other personal stories, how other ideas were implemented, and the need for more wide spread information.

Listening to the speakers who are on the spectrum

Meeting people on the autism spectrum and finding out firsthand how they feel when visiting the library.

Meeting with other librarians and sharing ideas.

Networking

Networking with other libraries and library staff.

Networking with others in the autism community and getting to learn from them as well as teach others about the personal side of autism

Networking with the other librarians and talking ASD with them.

Networking. Presentations. Self-advocate speakers. Reviewing the data from the first survey.

New ideas and information

Talking to others, networking, learning what worked for them or didn't work and why.

The Answer Inc information

The forum in March 2016 was very instrumental to not just myself but several other southern Illinois librarians who attended. The smaller populations and budgets of our libraries make it more difficult to provide services and information to our patrons. The March 2016 Forum demonstrated that every library can be autism aware and proactively work towards making its staff and programs ASD friendly. The awareness that the southern Illinois librarians gained from the forum is just the beginning of a change in the way we understand and provide services for our ASD patrons.

The second forum had more valuable content and I greatly appreciated hearing from self-advocates and the types of resources/programming that they would enjoy.

The second session, in March 2016, was infinitely helpful. The speakers and resources all were very well received after I had a year of studying and research following the first session in March 2015. The speakers all were practical and gave much needed advice and insight.

The vast array of speakers and the networking. The gathering was extremely enjoyable.

What is the city and state in which you live?

Aurora, IL	Geneseo, IL
Arlington Heights, IL	Glen Carbon, Illinois
Belleville IL	Godfrey, Illinois
Bloomington Illinois	Highland IL
Bloomington Indiana	Illinois
Champaign, IL	Illinois
Chatham, IL	North Riverside, Illinois
Chenoa, IL	Peoria, IL
Chicago IL	Rantoul, Illinois
Chicago IL	Springfield, IL
Chicago IL	Springfield, IL
Dixon, IL	Sycamore, IL
Downers Grove, IL	Warrenville, IL
Eureka, IL	Wheaton, IL
Fanwood, NJ	Wilmington, IL
Forest Park	Woodstock IL

Are you a librarian?

	Valid percent(n)
Yes	41.8% (23)
No	27.3% (15)

If no, then please state your purpose for attending

I work for a program that does have a community library. I am also a parent of a young man with ASD. I also work with families and educators who have children with ASD.
Library Technical Assistant
Presenter
Self-Advocate
stakeholder
Stakeholder
stakeholder, presenter
Library management
presenter
Presenter, former librarian, Board member
Speaker
stakeholder
stakeholder

How has the forum shaped your understanding of the role a library can play in the lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?

Absolutely. There are many things libraries can do to help be more welcoming and I look forward to working with my local libraries to do so.

accommodating, educating, increasing community supports

By becoming more aware and sensitive to their needs and by being available. Also by learning about all the community resources available to this population.

Definitely.

Even though I am the parent of two teen with ASD and a former Special Ed teacher, I struggled with knowing what accommodations were needed and how to implement them. Some of this struggle can be attributed to lack of understanding from my superiors. So, the fact that a forum on just this one topic was offered combined with my interest and excitement afterwards has changed the level of resistance. Now I have great examples what is needed and can be done in a library.

Expanded my knowledge on how to include community stakeholders; expanded my knowledge on how to work with adults on the spectrum within the confines of the library

I have a better sense that libraries can provide library service to people with ASD, without becoming an ASD service provider and overstepping our boundaries.

I see the library as a great community resource to offer services in a neutral, non-stigmatized setting. A place for integrated activities to build awareness and acceptance of people of all abilities.

I think it's a wonderful opportunity for people on the spectrum, their families and the entire community! It's something that needed to have happened a very long time ago. I'm just pleased to see that it is finally happening!

I think we can be so much more helpful to those on the spectrum when visiting the library. We have so much to offer.

I understand that I am part of the solution for helping people without Autism to understand people with Autism. I am also the person who can make the library a comfortable place for people with Autism as well as their families. I can help reduce their anxiety.

I'd say it's expanded the idea of what kind of resource the library can be for families living with autism, and helped me appreciate the importance of serving patrons throughout the transitions in their lives, from child to teen to adult.

It has given me tools to advocate for additional programs and services.

It has helped me realize the value of our service to individuals with ASD. Being a relatively small library, we are the only real resource for these individuals and their families.

It has helped to reinforce the idea that as a community center the library can be the perfect place to promote awareness, acceptance, inclusion and help to move others to this perspective.

It is a warm and welcoming place that autistic individuals rely on.

It's given me more things to think about and address in our libraries here at UIUC.

Libraries are amazing! They are wonderful! I love them! The library is my favorite place in town! I like it because it is quiet and you can be in your own little world and be perfectly happy!

Night and day difference. Important to realize what exactly we can accomplish, with ideas for the future, as well as recognizing our limitations in a small town. We can be proud of things we can change, and not be disappointed that we can't do everything.

Parental education seems to fit perfectly with our library's mission. Since libraries may be the first public forum where parents bring their children -- long before they turn 5 - an educated library staff may help

facilitate early awareness/diagnosis and/or intervention. Creating forums where parents/grandparents/caregivers feel comfortable bringing their children is a goal for us -- that I think is achievable for libraries. Imagining volunteer or work opportunities for people on the spectrum in libraries now seems more plausible.

That there is so much more that needs to be done, and it takes a village to make it happen not just the library.

The Forum has helped me understand that libraries should be the place where people living on the spectrum are welcome and able to experience new assistive technology like the apps and social robots.

The forum helped expand my understanding of how the library can support and enrich the lives of those with ASD and their caregivers and also provided some resources and tools for doing so. I have worked with a young adult with ASD and his parents for several years by providing a volunteer work experience for him at my library. I also have been working with my staff to provide materials and services for residents of a nearby supportive living facility for special needs adults, many of whom have ASD. So the forum really helped support my awareness and provided great networking opportunities as well as the information and resources.

The forum helped me to understand the important role of the library as community center for all people. I learned so much and would love for my coworkers to have some of this information to give them a better understanding and awareness of people on the spectrum and their families. I am happy to share with them things that I have learned, but I feel it would be important for them to have more first-hand experience with people on the spectrum as well as training by professionals in the field.

This forum has increased my confidence in libraries for serving people with ASD. I have a background in creating welcoming programs and services for people with ASD in libraries. But this forum showed me that libraries are not alone. Communities will come together to help each other despite financial crises, loss of staff or resources, etc. Libraries can be leaders in the field of inclusion and accessibility for people with ASD. And this forum opened my eyes to what potential impact libraries could have across the state if we unify, are trained, and collaborate. Thank you, ISL!

This second forum in particular provided some excellent examples of programs offered in other libraries that could be used to model support programs in the libraries I might be working at in the future. Libraries offer the space needed for individuals with ASD and their families to find resources, support, and a sense of community so that they can continue to be fully engaged members of society--and this can happen in any kind of library, anywhere as long as the staff is sensitive to the needs of these individuals. The various presentations made this clear. The forum was interesting and inspiring.

Very definitely. I learned a very valuable life lesson while listening to the speakers. We all have behaviors/characteristics that could be ASD. Most of us learn to compensate for those behaviors. For that one person in sixty-eight who can't compensate, we as libraries need to step forward, make accommodations, and let our patrons know that libraries are for everyone.

We can become a valuable community gathering place for families dealing with ASD loved ones.

yes

Yes - we can and have done the following since the forums- 1. Talk to parents and let them know we are okay with noise or meltdowns in the library 2. Use iPads with those on the spectrum 3. Discussed the sensitivity and soothing needs of ASDs 4. Planned summer reading activities to support ASDs 5. Invited an adult on the spectrum to become a volunteer. He accepted our offer and also studies in the library for his GED

Yes, I better see the need to assist our families who are affected with ASD, especially those with transitioning adolescents. So many programs in Peoria are for young children and there is very little out there for young adults and adults. We are working towards offering more programming and resources for these individuals.

What would be helpful to you for future forums?

--More 'success' stories--what librarians and libraries are doing to support ASD individuals and their families; --Info on how programs were or could be tweaked to be inclusive of individuals with various kinds of disabilities; --Info on grants and funding opportunities that might provide needed \$ to implement a support program at a library (in addition to the Autism Welcome Here program); --More hands-on info. of the 'petting zoo' type that shows 'must-have' technology that every library might want to incorporate into their program; --Related to the above, an overview (e.g., a listing and explanation) of simple, low- or no-cost apps that librarians should be aware of that would be helpful to working with ASD individuals and their families -- Idea-sharing for ways to get-the-word-out--i.e., how can libraries elsewhere capitalize on what was learned here and what is being done in IL, and how can we capitalize to a greater degree on what is being done elsewhere? (What is the best means of sharing this information??)

Adding an extra day for sessions. There was so much information provided in the two day forum and it was all beneficial. It was just a lot for attendees who aren't familiar with ASD.

Books for children about autism.

Further presentations of what libraries and schools are doing to accommodate people with ASD. The personal stories of advocates really bring the issue home too. Success (and failures) of ideas that were implemented after (or because of) the 2016 forum.

Guided project management. While I appreciate the show and tell types of presentations, doing stuff helps me learn more. Help me make changes. Help me develop a plan to implement.

How other organizations have created other options and avenues within their library or community and then report back on the progress, and the steps and timeline it took to get where they are to where they came from.

I really liked hearing about what other libraries are doing and there wasn't enough of that. Also, I would like more on employees on the spectrum - how can we help them be successful. In general, anything on ASD adults. For instance, I know there is a big push to help connect ASD adults with jobs and also there are colleges that have very strong programs for ASD students and I'd like to know more about these.

I truly hope there are more forums. I would be glad to help with a future forum. In the future, I would like to share library experiences, have tips on how to approach parents when we suspect autism, and learn of resources as new ones are created. I would also like to hear more people on the spectrum speak to us. Some different people than those from before.

I would like more community resources and I loved meeting the authors.

I would like to hear what happens in the future. I would like to hear and see pictures of what changes libraries all around our state have done since this forum began.

I would like to see more inclusion from university and school libraries - different kind of population and needs.

I'd like to see more discussion among the groups about what the libraries are doing or plan to do with the information we have gathered. Also some specific information about what programs can be implemented.

I'm so happy that the presentation videos are all kept online for the 2015 and 2016 forums! Maybe more online resources, a pool of the actual documents or PowerPoints shared? Or--if this IS online somewhere, and I missed it, I guess a little more highlighting where they are for those of us who don't know.

It was so well done, I honestly cannot think of how to improve on it.

Love the practical side and hearing from those on the spectrum. Updates on programs and resources.

More concrete examples, the ones provided were very useful. Discussion on social stories - templates would be wonderful.

More information from the large variety of sources that have presented in the past. I do best when I hear something more than once, it settles in my mind better and I feel more confident about sharing my knowledge with others.

More tangible, "standard operating procedures" information for libraries on programming and outreach.

More time to network with other attendees. Less of a packed schedule. Perhaps draw it out across three days.

Perhaps a "problem solving" segment focused on circumstances where persons living on the spectrum are overwhelmed or uncomfortable. It would be helpful to have real world examples of this and solutions on what to do.

Perhaps more discussion among the attendees, and fewer formal presentations. It was a lot of information packed into two days.

Perhaps offer shorter programs more often in regional locations... it is difficult to get away for two full days and to travel more than one-two hours.

The ability to meet in similar geographic area groups.

Updates on success stories (things that could be easily duplicated at other libraries). Training on new technology that could benefit individuals with ASD.

What other libraries are doing, needs expressed in other communities

Would it be possible to have a dialogue between professionals who work with individuals on the spectrum and those individuals? (I'm thinking of the instructors from AZ that turned the life of our first speaker around.) Including more community agencies - so that they begin to think of libraries as strong partners. Even if agency personnel attend only one day or a portion of a day. Perhaps they share "success stories" in informal panel presentations, listen to a similar panel of librarians sharing success stories, and then share a meal together to provide opportunities for informal conversations. The drama presentation was memorable and instructive.

What do you see as the next step?

A general map of how each library can proceed - targeting specific model libraries - those that are ahead of the game and utilize their knowledge to develop that map for others to use. Target dates for milestones to accomplish.

After the first forum, we expected to see evidence of some type of database being put together that library patrons could access to find resources. My colleague and I conducted several stakeholder interviews and while those contacts will possibly help us in making our library more accessible, no one asked to see the information that we gathered at those interviews. We were under the impression that those interviews were being conducted by all attendees to ultimately be used in a future database.

Community awareness

Continue as I have been - one step at a time.

Continue the conversation.

Create a permanent group of librarians who meet once a year to share and learn.

For my library I would like to bring in someone from the local agency to educate our staff. Also, I am hoping to put together a list of resources that can be shared with folks that come in the library.

For our library, we are focused on providing resources (including links on our website) for ASD folks and parents of those on the spectrum. Also, we are planning on educating our staff on how to better interact with patrons who may not behave in ways that they are comfortable with (and also educating them on not

diagnosing anyone themselves).

Get school systems and others in the outside community aware of this initiative.

Having the courage to do something with the lessons and tips learned at forum.

I am sure I will be happy with whatever information you will present. On a personal level, my next step is to present the information I learned to the public library (I am a school librarian). I am scheduled to present at the May staff meeting.

I am trying to create a joint program with our special recreation organization that comes in and utilizes our library but it would be fun to do a program together.

I really need time think, so many things to do but where do we start. Is there a right start, I do not know. Changing one thing a year will that help, I do not know. I do believe to do nothing is wrong, and doing something is better than nothing.

I think it would be great if the forum was advertised as being open to members of the public living with autism, that way librarians can get used to interacting with this community of people and their caregivers during the forum.

I want to develop some programming at my library geared toward teens and young adults with ASD.

Implement more stuff! Also, maybe some kind of ongoing (possibly online?) forum as a medium for libraries to report on what they've implemented, and to find out what other libraries are up to?

In our library we are working on library wide training and focusing on teens with ASD. In terms of the Forums I think larger collaboration between organizations and possibly helping us facilitate that collaboration.

Keep doing what is already being done!

Meeting annually at ALA or another conference

Not quite sure what this question means--next step for the present grant? for future grants? I'll assume for the present grant: (A) I would say that comments from this survey and any other data from forum participants should be culled for incorporation into a white paper resulting from this grant. (B) Maybe a follow-up opportunity should be sought so that forum participants are asked again in several months for comments/concerns/questions/ideas that they have after having attended one or both forums-sort of a 'Okay, now what did you actually implement? What are you in the planning stages of doing? What stumbling blocks have you encountered? What other information do you still need?' type of information-gathering exercise.

Not sure!

Our library will create a new page on the Information Connections website related to transition to adulthood

Pulling all the stakeholders together and requesting updates and pictures of the differences in their library since the forum began. A picture can speak louder than words and most of us are visual learners and we can take many of the ideas back to our own libraries to adapt them.

Reports on what libraries are doing, brainstorming what more can be done and how we can work together

State funding. It's just that simple. We all want to help, but we need more tools. The Forum was fabulous but two days of concentrated information and emotional testimonials isn't enough. We serve every citizen of our state and as librarians we want to do the best job we can.

Training. Training. Training. Everywhere and anywhere.

Unsure

We will make step by step progress. I think it would be helpful to log meetings, changes and insights.

Another forum a year from now -- maybe just a one day?

Is there anything else that you would like to share concerning the forum?

Thank you to Anne Craig and her ISL staff, Suzanne Schriar, and Russ Bonanno for escorting us all to a world

of better understanding of ASD. It was a huge job to arrange the inspirational speakers and to accumulate so much valuable information. The outcome was well worth the efforts.

Very well organized and thoughtful topics for presentation.

A most productive and useful venture. One of the more meaningful and worthy tasks I have participated in. A great group of people - from Suzanne on down. Thank you for the opportunity to participate!

Again I would like to convey what a privilege it has been to be a part of the forum and I hope to continue to be involved with the ASD community throughout my professional career.

For all its faults, the forum is valuable and a great place to learn and share.

I am grateful for the opportunity and thought the last forum was even better than the first one. It was not only a learning experience, but was also quite enjoyable. As I said, we now have an autistic volunteer and we may be able to help him earn his GE. We are growing our books on autism and other unseen learning challenges. I learned that our users are more diverse than I realized.

I like that we all stayed at the same hotel so that we could talk to each other about what we just learned and learn about each other's backgrounds in a relaxed "non-workshop" way. I would have liked to have moved around a little. Sitting in the same spot all day, into the evening, even to eat meals was tiring. Maybe just ask people to do some stretches or something. Overall, I truly enjoyed the whole thing and hope I can be part of the next forum.

I really enjoyed being a part of the forum. Thank you.

I thought this forum was very successful--both from the standpoint of idea-sharing, and from the stand-point of partnership-forming. I met some people with whom I will try to maintain contact, just so that I can be aware of what they are doing in their libraries; and I met some people that are service-providers that I also want to keep tabs on, so that I can get other information from them as the need arises. That, on a mini-scale, represents what I think was the goal for the Targeting Autism program--which can help make this happen on a more global scale.

I would share gratitude to the people who developed the grant proposal and who implemented the forums.

It was a fantastic experience and am encouraging more library participation.

It was a very valuable learning experience, and not just for librarians. I kind of wish everyone person not living on the spectrum could have attended this event.

It was excellent!

IT WAS WONDERFUL! HATS OFF TO SUZANNE AND EVERYONE ELSE AT ISL WHO SPENT SO MUCH TIME AND ENERGY ON IT! WE LOVED SEEING EVERYONE! SEE YOU NEXT SPRING! -Adria and Lu "Woof!"

Just phenomenal. Some of the most valuable professional development time I've spent in the last decade, seriously--no exaggeration. Thanks for stepping up and doing such important, impactful work, making this happen despite all the hurdles. Bravo!

Let me know how I can help! This project is vitally important to people with ASD but also to libraries. Thank you, ISL, for your incredible efforts. And thank you to Suzanne!! You are a superhero and none of this would have happened without your passion and hard work.

Loved, loved, loved connecting with other members who are affected by autism. Great support system.

Maybe some of the talks could have been longer with more detail.

Nope! It was nice.

Thank you! It was such a pleasure to be able to attend. It's such an important topic and I'm excited that libraries are taking the initiative on it.

This year's forum was amazing. Job well done!!
