

Name: Elizabeth Dragga

Information Sources Survey Assignment

Introduction:

My information community is urban teens, defined by me as adolescents living in an urban setting (or large city). Although more research is needed on the topic, preliminary findings suggest “teenagers have similar needs across socioeconomic, ethnic, cultural, and geographic boundaries” (Agosto & Hughes-Hassell, 2006, p. 1425). These needs occur across several categories including: relationships, popular culture, emotional needs, physical health/safety, emerging sexuality, consumer needs, academics, leisure activities/interests, careers, and college. (Agosto, 2011). In selecting my sources for review, I aimed to find information sources that would address the needs above.

Research-based source:

The Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults. Young Adult Library Services

Association. Retrieved from: <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/>

- Position within the information cycle: Like other academic journals, events are reported in this publication months after they happen. This is relatively late in the information cycle. This amount of time must pass so that sufficient research can be gathered about a topic, synthesized, and reported on in a way that meets the standards of academic research (Reid, 2017).
- Scope and content: “The scope of the journal includes all aspects of library services to young adults at every level and for all types of libraries” (“About JRLYA,” n.d.).
Regarding content, the journal publishes high quality, original research on the following

topics: the informational and developmental needs of young adults; implementation and evaluation of library services for young adults; other critical issues relevant to young adult librarians; as well as analysis of contemporary and classic young adult literature (“About JRLYA,” n.d.).

- Credentials and authority of the author, editor, and/or publisher: This journal has a high level of authority as it is published by the Young Adult Library Services Association, a national organization made up of librarians and advocates who are dedicated to strengthening library services for teens (“About YALSA,” n.d.). These are professionals who work with teens in library and school settings, as well as researchers in the young adult library services field and other key stakeholders. Additionally, this journal is peer-reviewed. Articles in peer-reviewed journals have been reviewed for accuracy and edited by other professionals in the field, adding to the authority of their contents (Reid, 2017).
- Purposes and uses: The purpose of this journal is to promote and disseminate research of interest to people whose professional work focuses on library service to young adults, age 12-18 (“About JRLYA,” n.d.).
- Intended audience: The intended audience for this journal is “academics, public librarians, school library media specialists, and secondary school educators” working to support the educational and developmental needs of teenagers (“About JRLYA,” n.d.).
- Design: This journal is published exclusively online, and is accessible through their website (<http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/>). This is an open-access journal, meaning anyone can access the articles for free through the website.

- Currency and frequency of update: This is a relatively current resource. The most recent issue of the journal was published in December 2016. It is published on a rolling basis. According to the website, they publish once a quarter on average (“About JRLYA,” n.d.).
- Biases and gaps: This resource is aimed at professionals who work with young adults. It addresses a wide array of potential teen information needs and behaviors. If there were any gaps, it would be the lack of youth voice in the publication. It might be nice if an occasional article or feature reflected specific teen commentary and/or feedback.
- Value for your information community: This journal has great value for the urban teen community. It provides research-based resources to teen service providers at no cost to them. This is particularly important for resource providers in underserved and/or impoverished areas. These resources give providers the opportunity to better serve the teens in their communities based on the most current research and data.

Community-based source:

Teen Line. (2017). Retrieved from <https://teenlineonline.org/>

- Position within the information cycle: This information resource is positioned at the very beginning of the information cycle. Teens are able to seek advice from other teens about events that are happening in real time. In addition to a phone line, this resource offers a text messaging service and website with information and message boards where issues/concerns can be posted for feedback from the community (“Our Story,” n.d.).
- Scope and content: Teen Line is a confidential hotline for teenagers. The teen volunteers who respond to the phone calls, emails, and texts receive specialized training to listen to a teen’s concern without advice or judgment. They help teens clarify their concerns,

define options and make positive decisions. As the website states, “No problem is too small, too large, or too shocking for the TEEN LINE volunteers.” Issues frequently addressed include depression, divorce, bullying, pregnancy, substance abuse, gender identity, homelessness, and suicide (“Our Story,” n.d.).

- Credentials and authority of the author, editor, and/or publisher: Research indicates that teens (including those from urban communities) go to humans first when they need information, and prefer friends and family members when available (Agosto & Hughs-Hassell, 2006). Because the people responding to Teen Line questions are other teens, they are in a unique position to be a trusted source of information. Adding to their authority, these teens have received specialized training and have access to resources and information the teen callers might need. Additionally, volunteer mental health professionals are available to provide on-site support and supervision to teen volunteers. Since its inception, Teen Line has been an affiliated program of the Cedars-Sinai Department of Psychiatry (“Our Story,” n.d.).
- Purposes and uses: “TEEN LINE provides a safe, confidential place to talk things out with another teen who can understand and will listen, but not judge” (“Our Story,” n.d.). It was born out of a need for a more inclusive approach to mental health services for adolescents. The topics addressed include many of the teen information needs listed in the introduction above.
- Intended audience: The intended audience is any teenager who has a problem or wants to talk with another teen who understands (“Our Story,” n.d.). The website also contains links to resources and tools for parents with questions about raising a teenager.

- Design: This resource can be accessed by phone line, text messaging, or email. Information is also available through the website via articles, videos, and message boards. This multifaceted approach allows for maximum flexibility in addressing teen information needs.
- Currency and frequency of update: Teen Line answers questions in real time. It is open every evening from 6pm to 10pm EST. This means the information provided for a specific question is very current. It's not clear how frequently the information on their website is updated. However, the most recent blog entry was posted February 1, 2017. Questions posted to message boards on the website are answered multiple times a day.
- Biases and gaps: Teen Line is available as a resource to teens that have questions and need someone to listen. Although the teen volunteers are trained and supervised by mental health professionals, the advice is still coming from individuals and contains all of the personal biases and gaps that occur when one person is providing another with information. This is pretty significant. I think Teen Line functions best as a jumping off point for additional information. Fortunately, teen volunteers facilitate this process by connecting teens with helpful links and resources in their answers to questions.
- Value for your information community: This is a wonderful resource for teens across the country. It provides needed information in a format that is both easy for teens to access and comfortable for them to use. When dealing with the pressures of adolescence, both of these things are very important.

Compare and Contrast:

These two resources serve very different, but important functions for the information needs of urban teens. *The Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults* provides academic research for teen service providers. It gives these providers the information they need to address the needs of the teens they work with. The journal also works to advance the theories and practice of working with young adults and their information needs. Teen Line takes a more direct approach. They provide resources for immediate teen needs. While important to the everyday life of individual teens, this resource does not advance the big picture needs of teens as an information community.

Reflection:

It's very hard for me to say which of these resources I find more valuable. As a teen service provider, I am drawn to the information resource that is directed more toward my needs. However, as a teenager, I would have felt so fortunate to have a resource like Teen Line. The questions that come up at that time in your life are very hard to ask, and most of your friends don't know what they're talking about. At the beginning of this assignment, I was stuck on trying to find resources that teens would use. However, I now see the value in resources for the people serving teens, especially when those resources are research-based and working to advance the field as a whole.

Sources:

About JRLYA. (n.d). Retrieved from <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/about/>

About YALSA. (n.d). Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa>

Agosto, D.E. & Hughes-Hassell, S. (2006). Toward a model of the everyday life information needs of urban teenagers: Part 2. A theoretical model. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 57(11), 1418–1426. doi:10.1002/asi.20452

Agosto, D. (2011, November 15). Young adults' information behavior: What we know so far and where we need to go from here. *Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*, 2(1). Retrieved from [http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/2011/11/young-adults%
%99-information-behavior-what-we-know-so-far-and-where-we-need-to-go-from-here/](http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/2011/11/young-adults%E2%80%99-information-behavior-what-we-know-so-far-and-where-we-need-to-go-from-here/)

The Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults. Young Adult Library Services Association. Retrieved from: <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/>

Our story. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://teenlineonline.org/our-story/>

Reid, A. (2017). Connecting users with information: Research-based resources and services [Video Lecture]. Retrieved from <https://sjsuischool.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=88012cf8-a7e8-4f8d-8611-a588a48493c3>

Teen Line. (2017). Retrieved from <https://teenlineonline.org/>