



Tip Sheet:

Establishing Community Partnerships

Partnership

A partnership is a relationship between individuals or groups that have a mutual understanding, cooperation and responsibility and all parties are usually striving to achieve the same specific goal. There is usually a “mutual benefit” for the partners and this often leads to a long term relationship.

Collaboration

Involved parties merge resources to reach a common goal and this is usually short term relationship.

Developing Partnerships

- Network - know what groups/organizations are out in your community and what they are doing. Look for similar goals, missions or activities.
- Identify key individuals within the groups you think you’ll want to partner with. Talk with them, invite them to relevant programs/functions/meetings.
- Attend town or organization meetings and let the community know that the library is willing and wanting to partner with agencies, businesses and individuals to provide quality programming to the community.
- The conversation is essentially “what we can do for you, what you can do for us” (mutual benefit) and “what we can do together that will benefit this community” (the bigger picture).

Mutual Benefit

- Libraries can provide a safe space and advertising for a program
- Organizations can supply the expertise
- Map out the roles and responsibilities of the library and the partner (ie. Who is in charge of the room set-up and clean-up, etc)

Partnerships take time and patience to grow and often start with one small program or a demonstration project. Rarely does a full-grown partnership happen all at once, unless the participants have had successful partnerships or collaborations in the past.

For more information please see Okotok’s Programming Presentation.

If you experience technical difficulties, alert library staff immediately.