CSL

Connecticut State Library

Library Services and Technology Act Funds in Connecticut
2003 - 2007

An Evaluation of Connecticut's Five-Year LSTA Plan

I. Impact of Library Services and Technology Act Funds to Support Library Services in Connecticut

Connecticut's Five Year LSTA Plan (2002-2007) provided a framework to effectively address the library and information needs of the state's residents. Connecticut used LSTA funds to provide residents with access to essential information and educational resources, to ensure all children in Connecticut have access to quality library services, to support library services to newcomer families, older adults, and children, to provide direct library services to the blind and physically handicapped, to train library staff, trustees and friends, to expand access to library materials through statewide delivery, and to provide consulting and collection support to libraries. The State Library successfully met or made substantial progress toward each of the goals in the five year plan.

LSTA funds supported continued development of iCONN, Connecticut's statewide catalog and online database program which provides access to essential information and educational resources through the state's public, school, and academic libraries. In terms of return on investment, iCONN saves libraries over $14 for each dollar of state and federal funds expended. Every output measure indicates that iCONN is meeting the information needs of Connecticut citizens. Catalog searches have increased 129% from 921,061 to 2,111,533, interlibrary loan requests rose 149% from 78,037 to 194,382 and database searching from 4.8 million to 33.5 million. An in-depth evaluation of iCONN is provided in Section III of this report.

Connecticut made substantial progress toward assuring that all children have access to quality library services. Statewide programs increased the skill level of library staff giving research based pre-school literacy programs, and furnished collections and training to promote outreach programs to children. Subgrants supported local library programs that provided access to children who have difficulty using the library. Traditional output measures demonstrate steady growth of library services to children; circulation to children under age 5 shows a modest 3.14% increase from 2002 to 2006, while the number of programs for preschool children grew steadily at 7%. Program attendance rose by over 15% during this same period. Outcome based evaluation of emergent literacy training for children's librarians demonstrated that over half of the trainees increased the use of research-based activities in pre-school programming by an average of 17% above pre-training survey levels; certain baseline criteria increased from between 22% and 33%. Subgrant programs routinely demonstrated dramatic early literacy gains and increased parental involvement in time spent reading and engagement in literacy activities.

Improvements to the already substantial amount of training available to library staff, trustees and friends assure that all residents have access to high quality library service. In particular, technology training helped libraries provide public access to information resources by allowing staff to continually upgrade their skills and keep pace with advances in technology. Since 2002, the number of users of electronic information in public libraries increased 6,263% from 93,194 to 5,930,206. The number of public access

internet stations increased 77% from 1,609 to 2,852.

Outcome based evaluation of continuing education and training demonstrated increases in the knowledge and skills staff require to meet the public's evolving service demands. In 2004 the average attendee self-reported about a 25% rise in knowledge of the training topic. Improved 2005 outcome based evaluations demonstrated that typical training attendees experienced a self-assessed 98% rise in technical topics and 161% in general continuing education areas. As of March 2006, outcome based evaluation surveys measuring 85 outcomes from 33 sampled technical and general continuing education training sessions show an average skill improvement of 107.4%.

LSTA funds enabled libraries in Connecticut to expand services to individuals with disabilities through subgranted adaptive technology projects which enhance services to people of all ages and abilities. The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped continues to address the specific library and information needs of approximately 10,000 state residents, keeping them intellectually and socially engaged.

LSTA funds supported improved services to older adults and multilingual populations through training, consulting, support of collaborations between libraries, and subgrants.

Who benefits from Connecticut LSTA funding?
- adults and children accessing resources in health, business, history, and science as well as current events online through iCONN;
- school children and their parents accessing quality information resources available through their schools, public libraries and online;
- citizens using well-run libraries guided by priorities set by long range planning and managed by staff with continually upgraded skills;
- children who enter kindergarten ready to read because of the literacy programming and outreach efforts of local public libraries;
- multilingual populations served with collections and services targeted to their informational and cultural needs at welcoming public libraries;
- older adults who rely on their library as a vital center of continued learning and engagement; and
- every Connecticut resident accessing the resources of all libraries in the state through the statewide library catalog and delivery system.

II. Overall report of results in achieving goals and objectives based on 5-Year Plan.

Goal I: Provide the citizens of Connecticut access to essential information and education resources.

Activity/Target 1: Support continued development of iCONN, including the statewide catalog and inter-library loan.

Progress towards goal:
☑ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Results:
Administered by the Connecticut State Library in conjunction with the Department of Higher Education, iCONN (www.iconn.org) provides all students, faculty and residents with online access to essential library and information resources. Through iCONN a core level of information resources, including secured access to licensed databases, a statewide library catalog, a statewide interlibrary loan system, and the electronic delivery of resources, is made available to every citizen in Connecticut. In addition, specialized research information is made available to college students and faculty. Residents can access iCONN through their public library, school, college, and from home.

iCONN has continually developed over the five-year time frame of 2002 - 2006; despite level-funding at the state level, iCONN has achieved its goal of universal access to a core level of library and information resources for every resident of Connecticut.

iCONN is the subject of the in-depth evaluation in section three.

Expected Outcomes:

1. **The number of libraries participating in statewide interlibrary loan will increase by 20% by 2007. In 2002, 185 libraries participated.**

As of July 2006, 205 libraries participate in reQuest interlibrary loan, an increase of 11%. This did not meet our target of 20%. However, other indicators of interlibrary loan have increased dramatically. Searches on the statewide catalog, the number of requests and the number of filled ILLs have all increased.

Total Outputs, 2002-2006:
- Number of reQuest statewide library catalog searches in FY 2002 was 921,061. In 2006 it increased to 2,111,533.
- Number of ILL lending requests: 78,037 in 2002 increased to 194,382 in 2006.
- Number of filled ILL lending requests: 48,613 in 2002 increased to 91,920 in 2006.

2. **The number of searches on the iCONN information databases will increase by 10% each year from a base of 4.5 million searches in FY 2001-2002.**

Results on the number of searches on the iCONN information databases far exceeded expectations.

- 2006 - 33.5 million searches
- 2005 – 11.2 million searches
- 2004 – 8.6 million searches
- 2003 – 5.7 million searches
- 2002 – 4.8 million searches

Though the implementation of federated searching in 2005 artificially inflates the total numbers of searches, a correction factor was created to better reflect accurate numbers for the year 2005. 2006 has no adjustment to the raw number of searches conducted. In 2007 a new measure of use by page views will establish a new baseline for comparison.

3. **Statistics on total number of searches will be reported annually to the Connecticut Digital Library Board. Statistics will indicate use by public library patrons, school libraries and colleges.**

Statistics on total number of searches were reported annually to the Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board and differentiated between public, school, and college library patrons and has increased steadily.
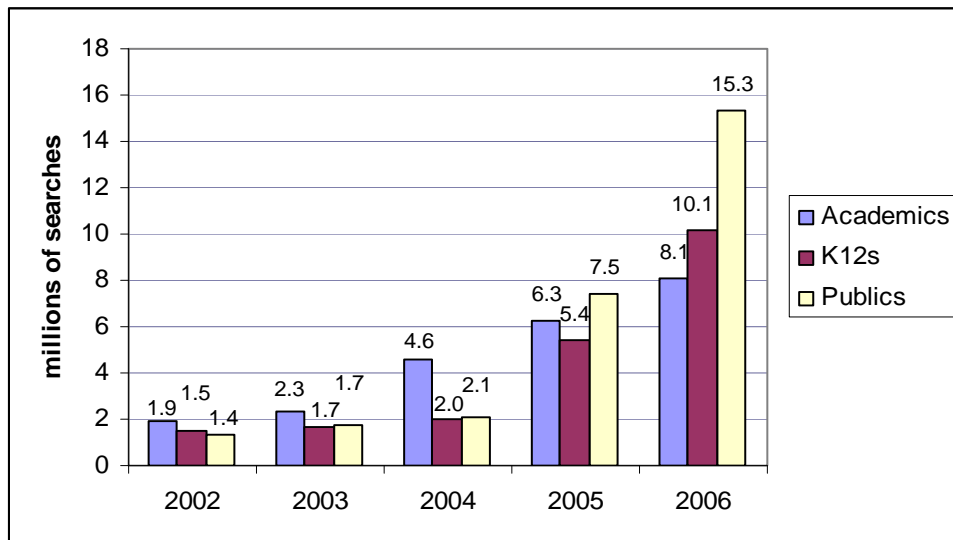
Activity/Target 2: Support a program for statewide coordination of cooperative purchasing of information databases.

Progress towards goal:
☑ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:

1. *Each year at least two additional databases will be available to libraries at a savings of a minimum 15%.*

Prior to 2003, the Connecticut State Library coordinated a statewide discount program that included seven vendors offering discounts ranging from 5% to 25% off list prices. The State Library then transferred the discount program to the Connecticut Library Consortium (www.ctlibrarians.org), a statewide membership collaborative. The Consortium partners with the Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization (www.waldo.org) and leverages the power of the larger consortia to enable deep pricing discounts on databases. This partnership allows Connecticut libraries to obtain discounts that range from 5% to 75% off list prices with 58 vendors on a total of 2,064 databases. Though LSTA funds provided seed money for this program, the project is now self-sufficient.

Examples of subscriptions offered at a 15% or greater discount off list price over the past five years:

- FY 2001/02: Five BigChalk/elibrary products offered at 25% discount
- **FY 2002/03: EBSCO offers four full text databases at up to a 50% discount.**
- FY 2003/04: Congressional Quarterly offers 20% discount on CQ Researcher; Classical Online Service offers a 15% discount.
- **FY 2004/05: ABC-Clio offers a 20% discount on six history databases; CountryWatch offers 50% discount on its Premium Package.**
- **FY 2005/06: Facts on File offers 20% discount on the Curriculum Resource Center; ProQuest offers 25% discount to Ancestry Library Edition; Proquest offers 70% discount on Historical Hartford Courant, 1923-1984.**

In 2007, LSTA funds support Connecticut's InfoAnytime 24/7 reference service. 158 (131 public and 27 academic) libraries are taking advantage of cost savings that, in some cases, allow a library to pay 2.25% of the service's list price.

Activity/Target 3: Establish a grant program for libraries to automate their catalogs in order to enhance their resource sharing capabilities by contributing records to reQuest.

Progress towards goal:
☑ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Resource Sharing Grants helped libraries lacking an automated circulation system make their catalogs visible and accessible via reQuest. Grant funds enabled the purchase of computer equipment, software, and/or membership fees to make a library's collection accessible for resource sharing. Membership fees could include the cost of joining reQuest (including cataloging), one of Connecticut's regional systems, or OCLC/NELINET. Awardees were required to participate in and contribute to the reQuest statewide library catalog as well as reQuest's interlibrary loan component.

Four libraries received a total of $29,578 in grant funds to accomplish catalog automation and make materials holdings visible and accessible:

Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School, Canterbury: $8,432
New Haven Hebrew Day School, Orange: $10,000
Sprague Public Library: $3,000
Preston Elementary School: $8,146

Expected Outcomes:

1. *25% of high school libraries in Connecticut will be accessible to citizens through the statewide catalog by 2007. In 2002, 9% of high school libraries were so accessible.*

Of the 280 high schools in Connecticut (168 public, 93 private, and 19 technical), 96 or 34% have holdings in either the Main or Serials catalog. 71 or 25% have holdings in only the reQuest Main Catalog; and 67 have holdings in the reQuest Serials catalog. This progress, however, was made mostly with the use of state funds.

2. **90% of academic and public libraries in Connecticut will be accessible to citizens through the statewide catalog by 2007. In 2002, 83% were so accessible.**

93% (43 out of 46) of academic libraries have holdings in reQuest Main Catalog. Access to the remaining four (Yale, Connecticut College, Trinity, and Wesleyan) is gained through z39.50, and are searchable through the iCONN federated search.

95%, 156 of 164 of principal public libraries have holdings in reQuest Main Catalog; 87% or 142 have holdings in reQuest Serials Catalog.

In total, 423 libraries contribute their holdings to the Main Catalog, a 15% increase from 361 libraries in 2002.

ReQuest Main Catalog

FY 2002	361 libraries	3,654,054 records	17,793,512 holdings
FY 2003	381 libraries	3,804,345 records	17,844,954 holdings
FY 2004	399 libraries	4,108,771 records	18,775,246 holdings
FY 2005	414 libraries	4,228,919 records	20,267,578 holdings
FY 2006	423 libraries	4,384,257 records	21,047,467 holdings

ReQuest Serials Catalog

FY 2002	465 libraries	67,216 records	180,892 holdings
FY 2003	436 libraries	70,214 records	194,919 holdings
FY 2004	410 libraries	69,195 records	195,270 holdings
FY 2005	411 libraries	70,201 records	187,918 holdings
FY 2006	411 libraries	70,562 records	187,873 holdings

Activity/Target 4: Support and enhance the Connecticar delivery system in order to ensure timely access to library materials to all Connecticut citizens.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal

□ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
□ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:

- *By 2007, 90% of all materials placed on Connecticar will be delivered by the next business day based on a sampling survey conducted biennially beginning in 2004.*

Connecticar, Connecticut's statewide library delivery service, enables resource sharing among public and academic libraries and allows patrons to enjoy reciprocal borrowing arrangements between public libraries. Items borrowed from any public or academic library may be dropped off at any other library; the Connecticar system returns the item to the owning library. In addition, the service supports statewide interlibrary loan as user-requested materials are sent to the user's local library.

Connecticar delivers to 224 total libraries, providing 1,022 stops per week (about 4.6 stops per week per library), and handles over three and a half million items each year (based on a 2006 survey).

The Connecticut State Library reorganized its method of providing this service in June of 2003 by partnering with a private vendor. The vendor provides service to 118 libraries while the Connecticar staff provides service to the remaining 102 libraries.

The interlibrary loan process continually shows modest improvements such as the slight increase in percentage of libraries reporting delivery materials in 4 days or less indicated on the 2004-2005 annual survey (See report at: http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=11439).

A three-week survey conducted in February and March of 2006 determined that actual delivery time (from when items are placed for pick-up until delivery to destination) for items sent through Connecticar averaged 4.9 days. Though short of the next-day service goal, some libraries averaged 1.4 and 1.9 days and the average turnaround time for the time period after March 10th was 2.92 days. The State Library changed vendors in July 2006 and service has improved dramatically based on anecdotal evidence. A monitoring of the "days to receive" in the reQuest ILL system dropped from 9.79 calendar days in 2002 to 6.2 in the first months of 2007. This statistics measures the time between an ILL borrowing request being updated to "Approve/Send" by the borrowing library and being updated to "Received" by the borrowing library so includes more than strict delivery time. However, it indicates an improvement in delivery time.

Goal IIA: Increase the number of children's librarians in Connecticut who employ research-based strategies in programming for preschool children.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcomes:

1. *120 children's librarians receiving training will increase their use of research based activities in their pre-school programming by an average of 25% above pre-training survey baseline by the end of 2003.*

2. **120 children's librarians will increase their knowledge of research-based activities to support emergent literacy by an average of 50% above pre-training survey baseline.**

This target was addressed by the Division's *Connecticut Libraries…It's Never Too Early* (INTE) initiative, which communicated to families, stakeholders, and policy makers the critical role that public libraries play in developing emergent literacy skills in Connecticut's young children. Activities completed from 2002-2006 included three workshop series, development of four early literacy information brochures for parents, caregivers, and library literacy partners, development of publicity materials promoting libraries as a key community resource for early literacy information, and development of a webpage of early literacy resources to support public library early literacy programming http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=13831

Three trainings were offered to Connecticut libraries.

A Research-Based Approach to Supporting Preschool Language and Literacy in Public Libraries was offered five times throughout February, March and May of 2003. 171 children's librarians from 117 libraries across the state attended training to help them to identify what preschoolers need to know to become successful readers, to develop and monitor research-based strategies for story hours, to model early literacy strategies to parents and care-givers, and to communicate the value of library preschool programs to administrators, town officials and educators.

Connecticut Libraries…It's Never too Early! PR Workshop
Three sessions of this training were attended by 58 librarians from 50 libraries in November and December of 2004. Attendees developed strategies to keep this message: "the public library is the key community resource for emergent literacy" on the minds of patrons and professional peers (teachers, board members, town officials, early childhood educators, etc.) and to learn creative ways to use the items in the PR kit.

Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library
The Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Service to Children provided training for public libraries on how to bring "best practices" techniques for early literacy to parents and caregivers. Two sessions of *Every Child Ready to Read @ Your*

Library were presented by PLA trainer Saroj Ghoting in February of 2005 and attended by a total of 76 librarians from 57 different libraries. Links to all of the training scripts and handouts are provided on the Ct.WebJunction website (http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=13933).

Outputs:

10 workshops held (5 *Research-Based…*, 3 *It's Never Too Early!* and 2 *PLA Every Child Ready to Read*). The total attendance was 305; 171 at *Research- Based* training. The following material was distributed to libraries free of charge.
13,000 brochures explaining literacy activities parents can do with their children distributed
8,000 brochures aimed at literacy partners distributed
250 posters distributed
70,000 bookmarks distributed

Outcome-Based Evaluation surveys of children's librarians recorded positive changes in attendee knowledge of model/best practices for emergent literacy techniques as applied in children's story-hour programming and its implications for pre-school programming with children and their caregivers.

- 52% of children's librarians receiving emergent literacy training increased their use of research-based activities in pre-school programming by an average of 17% above pre-training survey levels. This 17% average increase spikes to 33% in those selective instances when the best practice was previously rarely or never used.

Among specifically measured baseline criteria, children's librarians receiving training:
- Increased the frequency with which they call attention to the syllables in words by 33%;
- Increased the frequency with which they encourage children to retell the story themselves by over 23%;
- Increased the frequency with which they emphasize alliterative sounds in stories by 22% over pre-training levels;
- Increased the frequency with which they encourage children to re-enact stories read to them by more than 23%; and
- Increased the frequency with which they encourage children to use selected language from stories by over 30%.

Activity/Target 2: Develop an evaluation methodology to document efficacy of employing research-based activities in library pre-school programs by 2005.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **An evaluation methodology will be available for use by public libraries by 2005. At least two libraries will use this methodology to document outcomes from their pre-school programs by 2006**

The Connecticut State Library provided training sessions on evaluation methods for Connecticut librarians and evaluated changes in participants' knowledge base, encouraging subgrantees to do similarly for their projects.

The training, *A Research-Based Approach to Supporting Preschool Language and Literacy in Public Libraries* described above served as a model for evaluation, though only implicitly. Participants were taught how to use evaluative checklists to determine if their story hour program included the research based techniques that they were learning during the training. They were encouraged to act as observers and evaluators at each others programs. Post-training surveys of attendees measured change in their knowledge of best practices for emergent literacy techniques as applied in children's story-hour programming and its implications for pre-school programming with children and their caregivers. This training (along with the "Every Child ready to Read@Your Library Training) has significantly increased the amount of experience children in these story program have with the specific skills and abilities that predict reading success:

- Oral language - listening comprehension, oral language vocabulary
- Alphabetic Code - alphabet knowledge, phonological/phonemic awareness (the ability to discriminate sounds in words), invented spelling
- Print Knowledge/Concepts - environmental print, concepts about print
- Emphasize alliterative sounds in the story - for example the "Luh" sounds in "Slowly, slowly, said the sloth."

The Division also offered Outcome-Based Evaluation training in 2004, when 5 sessions of *Are We Making a Difference? Using Outcome Based Evaluation* were presented by Rhea Joyce Rubin, the Connecticut State Library has offered training on outcome based evaluation for LSTA grant applicants; 161 people were trained through those workshops. Beginning in the fall of 2005, outcome based evaluation was incorporated into LSTA workshop training which Connecticut State Library staff offered to 57 training attendees.

Activity/Target 3: Develop supporting mechanisms for emergent literacy activities including programming packets for loan to public libraries, a website for recommended materials, online training, and sub-grants to local libraries to implement emergent literacy programs.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

The main page for Children and Youth Services librarians on WebJunction Connecticut provides links specifically supporting the **It's Never Too Early!** *initiative including information from the workshops, and links to early literacy sites. Four early literacy information brochures for parents, caregivers, and library literacy partners were developed and distributed to public libraries. These brochures, along with bookmarks, book bags, and posters, promote libraries as a key community resource for early literacy information and are also available through the website at http://ct.webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=5996. The site also provides information on children's and young adult book awards, information regarding children*

and the Internet, other organizations serving children and young adults, and information on local, state, and national reading initiatives. The website also provides information on the Collection Development Resources developed to assist libraries in development of children's and young adult library collections and Summer Reading Programs. Other support includes two statewide listservs for library staff serving children (Goodnightmoon) and young adults (Speak).

The State Library also offered three *Mother Goose Programs*, developed by the Vermont Center for the Book. These research-based, family literacy programs use children's literature to create avenues for parent/child interaction and discussion points for stories about math and science. The Willimantic Library Service Center purchased multiple sets of five programs: *Beginning with Mother Goose* which focuses on reading to babies and toddlers; *Growing with Mother Goose*, which focuses on reading to preschoolers; *Mother Goose Meets Mother Nature*, focusing on the environment; *You Can Count on Mother Goose,* focusing on math; and *Mother Goose Asks "Why,"* which focuses on science.

Subgrants were offered in three categories: Collaborations to Support Children's Literacy, Outreach Programs for Children, and Programs for Children in Poverty. In 2007 this latter category was changed to Program for Children and Young Adults in Poverty. A description of the 17 grants awarded is listed together at the end of Section IIB since the goals of the grant projects overlap between literacy, poverty and outreach.

Expected Outcome:
- **At least 20 libraries in Connecticut will utilize research-based activities in their pre-school programming by 2004, 40 by 2005 and 60 by 2006.**

In early 2007, Connecticut children's services librarians were re-surveyed to determine how often they used specific researched based activities in their story hour programs. Seven out of ten activities were used by 60 or more librarians between 2 and 4 times per month. Figures show numbers and percentage of those answering from 49 libraries. Always or Often (often = every other week)
- Encourage children to guess the rhymes when reading a rhyming story or sharing a finger play. 126 (89%)
- Read an alphabet story and point out each letter. Encourage the children to name the letters in the book. 101 (71%)
- Encourage children to retell the story themselves using props like puppets, a flannel board or story cards. 57 (43%)
- Emphasize alliterative sounds in story. 94 (67%)
- Ask open-ended questions about a story to encourage children to talk. 133 (95%)
- Pick out one or two words in a story and talk with the children about what they mean. Encourage children to use these words in conversation or as part of a made up story. 79 (59%)
- Deliberately use conversation to support and extend a child's oral language development. 118 (85%)
- Read a story and then have the children reenact it in some way. 52 (37%)
- Do a simple alphabet activity. 66 (48%)

> **Goal IIB: Improve library service to children (birth to 17) in poverty or having difficulty using the library.**

Activity/Target 1: Establish grant programs for libraries addressing the special needs of children in poverty. Priority will be given to programs that foster collaboration with other agencies serving youth.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **Grant recipients will be required to identify and address the need of children in poverty in their community and evaluate the effectiveness of their projects in meeting the objectives established in the application. Measurable objectives are required for a grant award. Training on outcome-based evaluation (OBE) will be given to all applicants beginning with awards given in 2003. OBE will be required where appropriate.**

Since 2004, 5 sessions (161 attendees) of *Are We Making a Difference? Using Outcome Based Evaluation* were presented by Rhea Joyce Rubin. Beginning in the fall of 2005, outcome based evaluation was incorporated into the mandatory LSTA workshop training given by Connecticut State Library staff. The LSTA grant applications were revised to incorporate outcome based evaluation and reporting. All recipients documented and concentrated on the needs of the children in poverty in their communities; each project measured its effectiveness in formal reports. Outcome based evaluation has been a requirement for all subgrants since 2002.

Activity/Target 2: Establish grant programs for outreach programs for children. Priority will be given to programs that foster collaboration with other agencies serving youth.

Progress towards goal:
☑ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected outcome:
- **Grant recipients will develop an outreach program, which will address the needs of children in their community and will evaluate the effectiveness of their projects in meeting the objectives established in the application. Measurable objectives are required for a grant award. Training on outcome-based evaluation will be given to all applicants beginning with awards given in 2003. OBE will be required where appropriate.**
See response in I.B.1.

Activity/Target 3: Identify or create exemplary model programs for children in poverty and outreach to children for replication. Information on such projects will be shared with the Connecticut library community. Conduct workshops, publicize descriptions

of successful programs and develop directed grants for libraries to implement these model programs.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **At least two libraries each year will receive grants to replicate successful model programs, identified by the Division of Library Development, to address the needs of children in poverty and/or outreach programs to children by the year 2004-2007. OBE will be developed for model programs where appropriate.**

Though it was envisioned at the outset that these model programs would take the form of directed, repeatable grants, the fact that real-life needs differ widely from community to community determined that what worked in one may not be appropriate for another. A total of 17 children's subgrant programs were developed, each uniquely meeting its community's needs while offering lessons learned for other projects. Successful projects that could serve as models for other communities were profiled in the **Connecticut Libraries** *newsletter and elsewhere. State Library children's consultants also advocated and trained on two best practice programs. One was the* **Mother Goose** *and PLA program described in section II A 3.*

Model programs were highlighted in the Connecticut Libraries newsletter as well as on WebJunction Connecticut to show best practices, lessons learned, and indicate directions.

Canterbury Public Library's Ladder to Learning at
http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=13284
New Britain Public Library's Ready, Set, Read! at
http://www.ctlibraryassociation.org/Newsletters/2006/mar2006.pdf
Thompson Public Library's Family Literacy & Playgroup Cooperative Project at
http://www.ctlibraryassociation.org/Newsletters/2005/sep2005.pdf
The Wilton Library Association's Parent/Teacher Resource Center at
http://www.ctlibraryassociation.org/Newsletters/2006/jan2006.pdf

Children's Services Grants Awarded

Fiscal Year 2006 -7:

Collaborations to Support Children's Literacy
Enfield Public Library, $13,981. This grant developed an early literacy collection and with a series of early literacy parenting workshops for families aimed at increasing the pre-literacy skills of children aged 0-6.

Hartford Public Library, $23,850. The *Teen Access Collaborative* project provided materials and programs to teens in juvenile detention centers and alternative education programs.

Stratford Library Association, $25,000
Leading to Reading presented model literacy methods to parents and caregivers to benefit preschoolers. Themed literacy kits, book and audio sets and other materials complemented outreach sessions to parents and caregivers.

Programs for Children and Young Adults in Poverty
The Hartford Public Library, $25,000. *Community Matters* engaged Hartford youth in positive learning experiences tied to hometown landmarks. 180 students in fifth through eighth grade worked in teams to identify, research, and visit sites of interest and record their impressions through journals, maps, digital photography, and audio recordings. The students then used the resources in the Central Library's Learning Lab to refine those impressions and post them to a blog. Participants improved their perceptions of the city, their skill as team members, and their technology and communication skills.

Fiscal Year 2005-6:

Collaborations to Support Children's Literacy
Canterbury Public Library: $19,552. The *Ladder to Literacy* program immersed 4- and 5-year-olds and their parents in a variety of workshops, programs, and learning experiences designed to enhance early literacy skills.

Coventry, Booth & Dimock Memorial Library: $11,088. *Raising a Reader* was a book bag program for children aged 0-5 that promoted reading aloud in the home, provided training for childcare providers and parents for enhanced literacy development, and created an early literacy space in the library.

East Hampton Public Library: $7,844. The library developed a summer reading outreach program designed for children in grades K to 6.

Hartford Public Library: $20,000: The library partnered with the city's Early Learning Centers to enhance the early literacy skills of 267 preschool and Kindergarten children. Along with materials, this program taught primary caregivers, teachers, and librarians specific practices that provide children with key early literacy skills.

The New Britain Public Library: $20,000. Collaborating with four area agencies, the library provided books, read-aloud experiences, and other emergent literacy activities for local impoverished preschool children so that they would enter school ready to learn.

Fiscal Year 2004-5:

Outreach Programs for Children
Bridgeport Public Library, $20,000: The library helped children in grades 5 and 6 become better science students with materials, training workshops, and research seminars for students, teachers, and families.

Danbury Public Library: $11,752. The library partnered with EvenStart of Danbury to support the scholastic achievement and parenting skills of local teenaged mothers. This literacy based program both educated and empowered teenage mothers in being their child's first teacher.

The Ferguson Library, Stamford: $17,089. This project empowered the library's Special Needs Center (serving parents of children with special needs) to provide training, storytimes, a wide range of adaptive hardware and software, and a series of outreach and in-house programs all to benefit children with special needs.

Killingly Public Library: $8,760. The library connected children, parents, caregivers and books in an outreach effort that focused on enhancing both early and emergent literacy activity.

Thompson Public Library: $3,000. In partnership with the local family resource center, the library provided family literacy materials and programming to populations unfamiliar with the library.

Willimantic Public Library, $19,833: The library partnered in the *Joy of Reading* program, which pairs fifth grade students with preschoolers and Head Start children, with collections, transportation, and family literacy events.

Children in Poverty
The Connecticut Humanities Council's Book Voyagers program encouraged children aged six to twelve to read for both meaning and pleasure and promoted reading as a lifelong activity. A total of 789 people attended 39 sessions of theme-based book discussions where facilitators challenged children to connect what they read to their lives and modeled ways for parents to share books and make reading an integral part of family life. Programs were held after school in the public libraries of four towns (Bristol, Bloomfield, Bridgeport, and Meriden) with at-risk populations.

Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

Outreach Programs for Children
New Haven Free Public Library, $ 11,640. The library's bookmobile provided read-aloud programs, songs, puppets, and crafts in the *Reading on the Road* project. Funding provided an abundance of children's picture books and folktales, resources for caregivers, parents, and teachers, story time kits, and opportunities for caregivers to access early childhood resource tools.

Activity/Target 4: To promote and develop collections at the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers to support emergent literacy and outreach programs to children.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **Circulation of materials to support emergent literacy and outreach programs to children will increase by 5% each year based on the 2002 baseline.**

Total juvenile and young adult acquisitions from 2002 to 2006 totaled 22,603 items. Circulation totaled 198,808. The goal of a 5% increase in each year was not met.

Federal Fiscal Year	Circulation	% change	% change from baseline
2002	41,376	N/A	N/A
2003	38,061	- 8%	- 8%
2004	37,849	- 1%	- 9%
2005	40,331	+ 7%	- 2.5%
2006	41,191	+ 2%	- 0.4%

The Children's Outreach collections at the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers are integral to implementing the vision of the State Library's Division of Library Development. By offering supplemental materials and model print collections, the collection enhances the ability of almost 200 public and over 900 school media center libraries in Connecticut to deliver high quality library materials to their communities.

The collection is continually developing, especially in areas of high use (indicated by circulation and reference statistics). Multiple copies of particular titles and materials that support programming respond to the needs of the library community. Multiple recommendations from review sources, seasonal titles with probable high circulation, and titles useful for programming are primary considerations for purchase. The collections are also developed with an eye toward acquiring sturdy, developmentally appropriate board books, paperback versions of young adult fiction and juvenile book discussion titles, and Nutmeg Children's Book Award titles. Curriculum support for school library media centers is provided by supplementing summer reading lists and those titles on high school reading lists. Materials supporting emergent literacy and outreach programs include: picture books, board books for infants, and sets of board books for parents in baby story programs.

> **Goal IIIA: Improve the skills sets related to identified competencies of library staff, trustees and friends that are essential to meet the library service needs of Connecticut residents.**

Activity/Target 1: The Statewide Continuing Education Planning Committee will establish priorities for continuing education on an annual basis for each coming year based on core competencies and programmatic needs of library staff, trustees and friends in Connecticut. The Committee will offer continuing education opportunities based on these priorities.

Progress towards goal:
☑ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:

- **A minimum of 90 workshops will be offered to Connecticut library staff. Each workshop participant will be expected to complete a standard workshop evaluation form. OBE will be developed for selected workshops to assess achievement of learning objectives.**

	# workshops	# attendees
Federal FY 06	99 (Oct-Dec)	1,559
Federal FY 05	167	2,091
Federal FY 04	104	1,632
Federal FY 03	102	1,459
Federal FY 02	145	2,365
Total	617	9,106

A statewide Continuing Education Committee with representatives of the State Library, the Connecticut Library Consortium, the Connecticut Library Association (CLA), the Library Technical Assistant programs at the community colleges, and the Connecticut Educational Media Association was formed. They meet periodically to discuss training needs in Connecticut libraries. They have not, however, determined core competencies other than for children's librarians. The Association of Librarians Service Children division of the American Library Associations' *Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries* was adopted by the State Library and CLA children's section and is used as a guide for training. The State Library's Continuing Education Coordinator conducts annual surveys to determine training priorities. In addition, each workshop participant is encouraged to complete an evaluation of the course in order to assess the training's efficacy and to solicit ideas on other training that might be needed in the library community. Evaluations consider the instructor, the content, the training location, and any handouts provided.

To ensure continual development of the skills needed to service growing client demands, the State Library developed a Continuing Library Education Certificate (CLEC) program to encourage and acknowledge professional development as an essential component of high quality library service. The program set standards for a minimum level of

continuing education and awards CLEC credit when candidates complete continuing education opportunities meeting quality criteria and which improve the skills, knowledge, and abilities of library staff.

Training sessions in non-technical topics included: emergent literacy, library space planning, library buildings, trustee leadership, Friends development, grant writing, disaster planning, best practices regarding library architectural planning, services to older adults, a workshop specifically for new directors of libraries, book discussion workshops for children's librarians, outcome based evaluation training, roundtable discussions of library services to speakers of languages other than English, construction grant workshops, and planning and marketing multicultural library services, introduction to OBE, ADA plan writing, and readers advisory.

Moving beyond physical classes, the Division offers over 100 free, self-paced online courses to Connecticut library staff via WebJunction Connecticut; an average of 30 classes are used each month. Course offerings range from the very technical to library service concerns. Topics included Microsoft Office applications and troubleshooting pcs problems to learning about fundraising, customer service, and outreach. WebJunction also provides an E-Learning clearinghouse for online education programs and courses for library staff and information professionals offered by ALA-accredited graduate schools, undergraduate schools, community colleges, regional library networks, and WebJunction.

Pursuant to moving towards comprehensive outcome-based evaluation (OBE), participants in select courses were surveyed to measure their degree of learning on a scale of 1 to 5; self-report data were collected and show an average increase in knowledge of 54%, with a high of 73%.

OBE results of 31 classes in which attendees were asked to rate their degree of learning:

Course/Topic	% increase in participant knowledge
XML/XSLT	32%
Technologies on the Internet	47%
Cyber Security	40%
Blogs, RSS feeds and more	55%
Disaster Planning	58%
Introduction to Cascading Style Sheets	50%
Getting Started with Digital Collections	54%
DreamWeaver MX	48%
Exploring the Wiki: Creating a Collaborative Website	62%
Introduction To Dreamweaver MX	60%
Cyber Security	40%
Retouching and Adobe	38%
Java & Javascript for Non-Programmers	41%
Finding Information in the 2000 Census	58%
Introduction To Dreamweaver MX	38%
Effective Reference Performance	73%
Social Networking Tools: IM, Podcasting, VOIP, and Beyond	64%

Getting the 411 New Technologies: Blogs, Wikis, Mobile Devices & Wireless Access in the Library	53%
Introduction to MS Publisher	65%
Introduction to Front Page	62%
iCONN Public Libraries	55%
iCONN Children's Databases	34%
iCONN Children's Databases	60%
iCONN Public Libraries	65%
Introduction to Web 2.0	44%
Introduction to Web 2.0	32%
iCONN Public Databases	60%
iCONN Children's Databases	42%
Introduction to MS Publisher	62%
Ebsco History	52%
Word: Beyond the Basics	54%
Advanced Excel	71%
Average	**54%**

Activity/Target 2: Support professional development and training materials for library staff, trustees, and Friends at the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **Circulation of professional development training materials will increase by 5% each year from the 2002 baseline.**

Fiscal Year	Collection circulation	% change	% change from 2002 baseline
2002	4,799		
2003	3,737	-22.1%	- 22.1%
2004	3,371	-9.7%	- 29.7%
2005	2,941	-12.7%	- 38.7%
2006	2,779	-5.5%	- 42.1%

The two service centers provide all public libraries and school media centers in Connecticut with access to essential library resources. This includes consulting, professional development materials and workshops, and library programming support. They host the majority of continuing education classes offered by the Division.

By providing professional materials for use, the Service Centers spare libraries the expense of purchasing this material and gives Service Center staff the resources to assist librarians with their library-related questions. Some common topics researched include: sample

policies, summer reading programs, automating libraries, self-help for computer programs, internet searching, technology planning, readers' advisory, library director searches, library Friends and trustee information, cataloging and classification rules, public library administration, staff development, long-range planning, and emerging literacy.

The service centers have the premier collection of library professional development materials in Connecticut, including the Neal-Schuman "How-To" series, most American Library Association publications, all Wilson Library catalogs, professional journals, and a vertical file of sample library policies and job descriptions The collections are in a variety of formats, including print, DVD's, videos, and online.

Extensive professional development materials are also now available on WebJunction Connecticut, including sample policies and job descriptions, collection weeding, searching for a new library director, and Friends group development. Being able to offer so much online has meant that the circulation out of the regular collection has declined.

Goal III B: Increase technology skills for the purpose of increasing access to electronic information, resource sharing and efficiency.

Activity/Target 1: Increase technology training opportunities for library staff by developing options for providing additional computer training sites for librarians and for public access computing through such means as computer training labs in public libraries, mobile training labs and cooperative arrangements between schools and public libraries.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☒ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcomes:
- **Development of two additional library technology training sites. Increase the number of technology training opportunities by 5% each year over the 2001 baseline of 92. Pre and post surveys of attendees at selected training will demonstrate an achievement of learning goals. These surveys will demonstrate that 90% of attendees will show a 50% improvement in targeted skills.**

The grant cycle featured development and installation of a complete, 17-station computer lab at the Willimantic Library Service Center with state funds. The lab features a complete software package including Microsoft Office XP, Publisher, Adobe Photodeluxe, Paintshop Pro, and Dreamweaver. Workstations are connected to the Internet via a T-1. A similar 11 station training lab was established at the State Library's Van Block facility using state funds.   The State Library has also used technology labs at the Bridgeport, Darien, New Haven, and Waterbury libraries for training; a mobile training lab was not attempted. From 2002 through 2006, 456 technical programs with a combined total of

5,969 attendees were held. In addition, in 2004, the State Library partnered with WebJunction to offer free online courses and technical support to libraries.

This grid shows the Outcome Based Evaluation results of a random sample of 29 technical continuing education classes in which attendees were asked to rate their degree of learning:

Course/Topic	% increase in participant knowledge
XML/XSLT	32%
Technologies on the Internet	47%
Cyber Security	40%
Blogs, RSS feeds and more	55%
Introduction to Cascading Style Sheets	50%
Getting Started with Digital Collections	54%
DreamWeaver MX	48%
Exploring the Wiki: Creating a Collaborative Website	62%
Introduction To Dreamweaver MX	60%
Cyber Security	40%
Retouching and Adobe	38%
Java & Javascript for Non-Programmers	41%
Finding Information in the 2000 Census	58%
Introduction To Dreamweaver MX	38%
Social Networking Tools: IM, Podcasting, VOIP, and Beyond	64%
Getting the 411 New Technologies: Blogs, Wikis, Mobile Devices & Wireless Access in the Library	53%
Introduction to MS Publisher	65%
Introduction to Front Page	62%
ICONN Public Libraries	55%
ICONN Children's Databases	34%
ICONN Children's Databases	60%
ICONN Public Libraries	65%
Introduction to Web 2.0	44%
Introduction to Web 2.0	32%
ICONN Public Databases	60%
ICONN Children's Databases	42%
Introduction to MS Publisher	62%
Ebsco History	52%
Word: Beyond the Basics	54%
Advanced Excel	71%
Average	**53%**

Activity/Target 2. Provide additional resources to supplement the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grants for training labs by providing additional resources for workstations, chairs, wiring and training.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☒ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:

- *Two libraries will offer at least two training sessions for their staff in their training labs by 2004.*

The New Britain Public Library received state construction grant funds for wiring, enclosing and painting their Gates Training Lab. Wiring was added to those areas that required expanded technology to enable greater numbers of online public access catalog terminals and also to allow for greater numbers and use of internet computers for patrons. The State Library has used this location for training in addition to labs in Waterbury, New Haven, Bridgeport and Darien. Additional labs were not funded by LSTA funds.

Goal IV A: Expand local library services to individuals with disabilities.

Activity/Target 1: Offer a grant program for libraries to purchase adaptive and assistive technologies.

Progress towards goal:
☒ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected outcome:
- **Ten libraries will install adaptive or assistive technology by 2007. Libraries will track the number of new users and patterns of use.**

Adaptive Technology grants were offered from 2002 through 2004. In 2005, this category was modified to *Programs for Individuals with Disabilities*. A total of twenty-one public, school, special, and academic libraries received grants in these categories.

Fiscal Year 2005
Wilton Library Association, $7,509. This project served families of special needs children by establishing a Parent/Teacher Resource Center which included two library-funded computers and related adaptive technology.

Hartford Public Library, $8,585. The library installed hypersonic sound technology, an array of pointing devices, adaptive keyboards, software for one-handed typing, and adjustable height furniture.

Russell Library, Middletown, $10,000. The library installed specialized equipment to meet needs of patrons with mobility, visual, or hearing impairments.

Fiscal Year 2004

American School for the Deaf, West Hartford, $3,112. The library installed the Casablanca Student Prestige System, which assists teachers in making abstract concepts more understandable to deaf students, and a portable desk.

Asnuntuck Community College, Enfield, $9,293. Funds provided a computer workstation, a printer, scanner, hands-free mouse, the Kurzweil software package, voice recognition software, a text magnifier, a screen reader, and various other adaptive equipment.

J. Eugene Smith Library, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, $5,424. Funding provided scanners, literacy software packages, a JAWS screen reader software package, and two multimedia workstations.

Lucy Robbins Welles Library, Newington, $3,067. The library installed an FM assisted listening system and a portable transmitter, two types of headphones and loops, and two compliance signage kits.

Preston Public Library, $6,459. The library purchased a video magnifier, screen magnification software, a handheld closed circuit television enlarger, a projection unit to use as a computer-aided note-taking machine, voice recognition software, large print plus Braille keyboards and a keyless keyboard, and a flatbed scanner.

Stonington Free Library, $4,032. The library installed an electronic video monitor, computer screen magnification software, a large print computer screen, a wheelchair accessible workstation, a portable CCTV, an adaptive keyboard, and screen magnification software.

The Brookfield Library, $3,264. Funds provided a video magnifier, a height-adjustable, wheelchair accessible workstation, and an adjustable chair.

Wintergreen Inter-district Magnet School, Hamden, $6,100. The library installed a 15-seat site license for the WYNN 3.5 computer program, a 'scan and read' WYNN Wizzard, and a scanner with optical character recognition and automatic document feeder.

Fiscal Year 2003

Douglas Library, Hebron, $3,295. The library installed an Optelec reader and a Berwyn seating carrel.

Willis Royle Library, Connecticut Valley Hospital, Middletown, $5,200. Funds were used for a Lo Vision Speech computer, IntelliKeys keyboard, a printer, scanner, book reading software, and a text magnifier.

New Haven Free Public Library, $9,987. Funds were used for a black and white video magnifier, a screen reader, a screen magnifier, a 21" monitor, 5 large character keyboards, and 6 folder lighting magnifiers and a computer with 19" monitor and a voice output reading machine.

Windsor Public Library, $3,600. Funds provided a magnifier reader, screen reading software, and a wheelchair accessible desk to hold the equipment.

Fiscal Year 2002

Hagaman Memorial Library, East Haven, $3,728. The library installed a print enlarger, a wheelchair accessible workstation, and 4 low-backed chairs to assist users with low vision to access print and electronic resources.

Samuel Staples Elementary School, Easton, $3,284. The media center created an adjustable workstation with furniture, a touch screen monitor, a variety of software, and an alternative mouse.

Fairfield Public Library, $5,885. Computers featuring large screen monitors, keyboards with large print lettering, a screen reader and text enlarger, screen reading software, and headphones were installed on adjustable height tables.

Shelton Board of Education, Mohegan School, $3,266. The media center created an inclusive environment for the more than 70 local children with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, hearing impairments and speech and language impairments. These children benefit from a computer, printer, scanner, software, and appropriate furniture.

Cragin Memorial Library, Colchester, $3,216. The Liberty Plus Print Magnifier portable magnifying device enabled patrons with low vision to view any type of print material.

East Hartford Public Library, $7,200. The Library System installed four Smartview TX Reader and four TDD/TTY Phones.

Goal IV B: Expand local library services to older adults having difficulty using the library.

Activity/Target 1: Establish a grant program for outreach programs to older adults having difficulty accessing library services.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcomes:
- **Grant recipients will be required to identify and address the needs of older adults in their community and evaluate the effectiveness of their projects in meeting the objectives established in the application. Measurable objectives are required for a grant award. Training on outcome-based evaluation (OBE) will be given to all applicants beginning with awards given in 2003. OBE will be required where appropriate.**

See information on OBE training and requirements under section II B 1.

Ten libraries were awarded grants for Programs for Older Adults. Each recipient determined and noted the needs of the older adults in their communities and devised sound methodologies for serving them; each project measured its effectiveness in formal reports. All post-2002 applicants used outcome based evaluation to measure the success of projects.

FY 2005

Mansfield Public Library, $11,800. The library provided tailored programming services to three senior communities and developed deposit collections for each.

Russell Library, Middletown, $19,772. This project expanded services to confined elderly, addressed the programming needs of those age 65 and older, who can visit the library.

FY 2004

New Haven Free Public Library, $20,000. Funding initiated the *50+ Transitions Center* which functions as a collection, a venue for programs, an informal meeting space, and as a vehicle toward meaningful civic engagement all emphasizing older adult interests.

Russell Library, Middletown, $19,965. The *Reach out and Draw in the Elderly* program developed deposit collections and delivered library materials to older adults in their homes and in care facilities. An Elderly Services Librarian did programming, presentations, and home deliveries as well as the preparation, distribution and promotion of the deposit collections for patrons.

Fiscal Year 2002

Saxton B. Little Free Library, Columbia, $ 3,000. The *Book Buddy* Outreach Program for Older Adults provided door-to-door delivery service to patrons aged 55+ who had difficulty using the library. While volunteers delivered materials to the homebound, Dial-A-Ride service was also available for those wanting to attend monthly book discussions.

The Hagaman Memorial Library, East Haven, $10,000. This outreach program served residents of an assisted living facility and the residents of two senior housing facilities. An employee made monthly visits with a "Traveling Collection" of 650 materials, also handling book talks, read alouds, a reader's roundtable discussion group, and a homebound delivery service.

Essex Library Association, $4,844. Collections, delivery services, and technology training programs were developed by the library based on survey feedback from community members aged 55+.

Ledyard Public Libraries, $11,000. By partnering with area health and aging agencies for delivery of materials to patrons, including those in nursing homes and rehabilitation centers, this project provided library materials and playback equipment to elderly homebound.

The Ferguson Library, Stamford, $ 5,000. Partnering with local senior citizen facilities, the library provided a "visiting collection" of entertaining and educational materials and reader's advisory services for older residents, shut-ins, and those at assisted living facilities and senior citizen apartment buildings.

Granby Public Library ($436 rollover from FY 01/02): The library established collections at four town facilities where seniors live and meet, also offering book talks, discussions, and programs that encouraged a social environment.

Activity/Target 2. Identify and develop model programs for effective services to older adults having difficulty using the library, including the homebound and those in senior housing.

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Three grant projects were singled out for profile in the *Connecticut Libraries* newsletter: the Ledyard, Russell and New Haven projects.   As part of an effort to encourage and advocate for effective, model programs, a State Library consultant chairs the Connecticut Library Consortium's Services to Older Adults Roundtable. Through SOAR, a variety of continuing education and sharing opportunities have been made available. He also moderates a national discussion on WebJunction concerning the programs, challenges and solutions in accommodating the growing retiree population and an ongoing need for adult education.

Goal IV C: Expand existing statewide library services to individuals with disabilities.

Activity/Target 1: Support collections of audio, large print or other specialized media for persons with disabilities at the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers.

Expected Outcome:
- **The number of audio, large print or other specialized media circulated will increase by 5% per year over the 2001 baseline.**

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Fiscal Year	Audio	% change	% change from baseline
2002	23,592	N/A	
2003	23,039	- 2%	- 2%
2004	21,328	-7 %	- 10%
2005	21,446	+ 1%	- 9%
2006	22,066	+ 3%	- 6%

Fiscal Year	Large print	% change	% change from baseline
2002	13,802	N/A	
2003	12,247	- 11%	- 11%
2004	12,932	+ 6%	- 6%
2005	14,031	+ 8%	+ 2%
2006	13,660	- 3%	-1.0%

Although they did not make the target for circulation, both Service Centers maintain extensive collections of large print books and audio-books in multiple formats (cassette, compact disc, and MP3); these enable and enhance the abilities of libraries (public, school, and institutional) to provide materials to those who prefer or require alternate formats. These libraries often lack the financial support as well as the physical space required to acquire, maintain, and house non-print collections. The collection, split between the two centers, serves as a cost-effective alternative that most frequently aids small- and medium-sized public libraries in meeting demand for popular non-print materials. The change in format from audio tapes to CDs accounted for much of the decline in circulation of audio materials from 2002 to 2004. The popularity of tapes declined very quickly and it took a couple of years of collection funds to develop a large enough CD collection to satisfy user demand.

 Purchase criteria are highly selective and include high literary value and high construction quality. These loans are important to readers with disabilities who borrow from constituent libraries and in alternative home settings (e.g., assisted living, nursing homes) served by libraries.

The State Library also partnered with the Connecticut Library Association's Americans with Disabilities committee to provide training and resources to librarians on serving customers with disabilities. In April and July of 2006 we presented a 2 part workshop on planning services to people with disabilities entitled *Nothing About Me Without Me*. Materials on disability awareness have also been purchased for the service center collections.

Activity/Target 2: Support services through the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH).

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☑ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

LBPH administers a free library program of Braille and audio materials for eligible patrons. Part of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress (LC/NLS), LBPH is a member of a network of cooperating libraries that provides alternative format books and magazines to meet the recreational, educational and informational needs of persons who have difficulty with print media. Qualified patrons (those who are legally blind as well as people who cannot physically handle print books) receive Talking Books free of charge. Many are elderly; much of the rest are children with reading disabilities. All patrons are offered readers' advisory service and receive bimonthly listings of new titles in their choice of format (print, cassette, floppy disk, or via the web).

Because no Connecticut library can afford to duplicate the 50,000 plus titles of the Talking Books program, nor do any have the staff, space, and equipment, to shelve, package, mail, inspect, and provide advisory services to large numbers of blind and handicapped patrons, LBPH is an effective and efficient supplementation of local public library service for its constituents.

Recorded and Braille books, magazines, and necessary playback equipment are all mailed to eligible patrons, and patrons are provided with personalized readers advisory. Digital recordings, targeted for release by LC/NLS in 2008, will give users a number of new tools like electronic bookmarks, word searches, and the audible spelling out of words upon request. The National Library Service chose LBPH for participation in the third round of usability testing for the new proposed digital talking books machines in 2006.

Circulation figures show a steady and brisk use of the collection.
Total: 1,105,873
2002: 214,222
2003: 223,997
2004: 227,199
2005: 226,173
2006: 214,282

Activity/Target 3: Develop outreach programs to libraries and target populations to increase awareness of LBPH services to people with disabilities.

Expected outcome:
- **The number of registered patrons with LBPH will increase by 2% each year over a baseline of 10,493 in 2001.**

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Fiscal Year	# patrons	vs. last	vs. base
2001	10,493	-	-
2002	10,763	+2.5%	+2.5%
2003	10,245	-5.06%	-2.42%
2004	10,398	+1.47%	-.913%
2005	10,578	+1.70%	-.80%
2006	9,871	-7.16%	-6.30%

Many factors influenced the fluctuations in these data, resulting in a mismatch between expectations and actual results. The target population probably did not grow as anticipated; a 2% increase in the number of registered borrowers each year was overly optimistic. LBPH also continually reconciles patron status (reflecting deaths, inactivity, and transfers). Key to the success of LBPH is continuous outreach to the public and to public and special libraries; this helps ensure eligible members receive reading materials and services.

Outreach activities included presentations to healthcare facilities, retirement villages, senior centers, and to professional and support groups introducing or updating staff, residents and program participants on the service. LBPH also exhibits at senior fairs, legislative awareness days and professional conferences of eye physicians such as the Annual Conference of the Connecticut Optometric Association. The library hosts open houses and tours for support groups and senior centers around the state. From time to time, groups like the Lions Club and the 140 attendees of a 2002 Eagle Scout Honor Ceremony hold meetings at the library. The Director speaks at events and presents at conferences. A Board member of the Connecticut Radio Information Service, LBPH's Director partners with other agencies by being a member of various organizations, including the Connecticut Library Association's ADA Committee and the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic Council.

LBPH is often featured on radio programs and members of LBPH's Advisory Committee continually inform those eligible persons they meet about the service; the library continues to work with the Advisory Committee to develop a "Friends of Connecticut LBPH" group.

The *Connecticut Cassettes* catalog, detailing publications of interest to Connecticut residents, was produced in large print for patrons and is available through links on the LBPH website, and LBPH supports free passes to the Mystic Seaport for constituents. Additionally, a flyer on "Getting to Know Your Library" has been produced in accessible format for all new and current patrons.

Goal V: Increase access to library materials and services for populations in economically distressed communities and underserved populations.

Activity/Target 1: Provide grants for innovative projects to target economically distressed and culturally diverse communities. The State Library will identify or create exemplary model programs for replication, publicize descriptions of such programs and develop directed grants for libraries to implement.

Progress towards goal:
☑ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☐ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **Grant recipients will be required to address a need in their community and evaluate the effectiveness of their project in meeting the objectives established in the application. Measurable objectives are required for a grant award. Training on outcome-based evaluation (OBE) will be given to all applicants beginning with awards given in 2003. OBE will be required where appropriate.**

See information on OBE training and requirements under section II B 1.

Activity centered on two areas: English as a Second Language and Children in Poverty. Information on grants to children in poverty is described in section II B. To support Connecticut libraries that provide services to non-English speaking populations, the State Library created the *Welcome: Connecticut Library Services to Non-English Speaking Populations* forum. Library staff from multicultural and multilingual communities meet to discuss services, collections and programs they offer to these communities and to take advantage of State Library training in this area. The State Library also initiated the *Welcome* e-mail discussion list for library staff serving multilingual populations. The list fosters discussion and the sharing of ideas, resources, and programs among library staff trying to reach non-English speakers in their communities.

The Connecticut State Library partnered with WebJunction in a Spanish Language Outreach Program funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Using a training of the trainers model, local libraries learned how to better reach out to Spanish speakers in their local communities and were provided information about marketing techniques, understanding cultural differences, providing technology training, and partnering with local community organizations serving Spanish speakers.

In May of 2005, the Connecticut State Library sponsored two full-day training seminars: *Planning Library Services for Culturally Diverse Communities* and *Marketing Library Services in Culturally Diverse Communities*. These workshops designed to help library staff develop an awareness of the major issues in working with diverse communities and to develop their skills in planning and marketing library services in diverse communities.

Articles in the *Connecticut Libraries* newsletter as well as on WebJunction Connecticut highlight best practices, lessons learned, and innovative directions for service to the economically distressed and underserved populations.

Hartford Es Su Hogar, October 2005 at
http://cla.uconn.edu/Newsletters/2005/oct2005.pdf;

A Model ESL Program At Danbury Public Library in January, 2004 at
http://cla.uconn.edu/Newsletters/2004/jan2004.pdf

Serving Multicultural Communities: The State of the Art in Connecticut, November, 2004 at
http://cla.uconn.edu/Newsletters/2004/nov2004.pdf.

Hartford Public Library's *The American Place* program at
http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=11798

The Danbury Public Library's ESL project at
http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=10911

In addition to the two Children In Poverty grants described in section IIB, which served impoverished children, 18 grants to Non-English Speaking were provided.

Fiscal Year 2005:
Danbury Public Library, $19,574. The project provided weekly conversational groups where new speakers practiced listening and speaking in English, a variety of computer classes, a small Hindi language book collection, and a foreign film collection with English subtitles.

Stamford High School Library Media Center, $15,000. This program increased the reading proficiency of English Language Learners by providing collections in students' native language.

Stamford's Ferguson Library, $20,000. The library provided multilingual informational and cultural sessions, ESL classes, and English conversation groups as well as collections for Spanish- and Russian-speaking immigrants.

Stratford Library, $20,000. Serving the needs of twenty-three different language backgrounds, the library enhanced the Learn English collection, provided staff training, and celebrated the community's diversity of cultures and nationalities with a Family Learning Day.

Simsbury, Canton, Avon, Farmington, $20,000. These four libraries shared OCLC Foreign Language Sets in Russian, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean. Each library offered a film night to promote these collections.

Hartford Public Library, $19,998. The library provided clients of Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services with live and software-based ESOL instruction, a core collection of basic level ESOL materials for populations with limited or zero literacy skills in the native language, and programming to address the trauma experienced by many refugees.

Fiscal Year 2004:
New Britain Public Library, $15,300. This project broadened collections to benefit recent immigrants and speakers of other languages, focusing especially on Spanish and Polish. Programs and training sessions, especially to ESL classes at the New Britain High School, highlighted the new resources.

Silas Bronson Library, $20,000. Waterbury expanded opportunities for area patrons learning English by providing specialized software and a bilingual classroom assistant in their computer lab. Patrons improved reading, listening comprehension, speaking, writing, and computer literacy skills.

Tunxis Community College Library, $15,973. The library established a collection and extended reference services to ESL students and local learners of English in order to enhance their written and oral English language skills

Stratford Library Association, $8,000. The library provided family literacy materials and programming for a target population including Spanish-speaking, Asian, Middle Eastern, North African, and Pakistani cultures wishing to learn English.

Edwin O. Smith High School, $5,140. The library provided PC's with software designed to aid writing skills and vocabulary building, complementing this with test-preparation materials and free-choice reading selections in an effort to improve the English vocabulary and writing skill levels of its ESL students.

West Hartford Schools, $20,000. The LIBROS project helped close the gap in educational achievement experienced by West Hartford elementary school students (grades K through 5) whose native language is Spanish. In an effort to improve overall family literacy, LIBROS encouraged bilingual parents to read to their children in either English or Spanish. The program provided a variety materials in both languages as well as newsletters, brochures, parenting materials, easy adult readers, and information on community activities and services.

Canton, Farmington, Avon, and Burlington, $10,000. Four libraries established collections and an outreach program that served non-English speakers from 35 different countries enrolled in the region's Adult Education classes. Staff also led computer classes on specific pronunciation software and the internet.

Hartford Public Library, $12,290. Hartford Es Su Hogar aided a city-wide initiative to increase homeownership in the city by targeting Spanish-speaking and bilingual populations. The library made available information and resources in both Spanish and English, with new collections on homeownership at all eleven library locations along with bilingual workshops and information sessions.

Danbury Public Library, $19,621. The library developed drop-in conversational groups, a series of informational and cultural programs, basic computer instruction workshops in Spanish and Portuguese, and a full-day employee seminar focused on improving customer service to target populations.

Fiscal Year 2003:
Faxon Branch of the West Hartford Public Library, $14,601. The library created a "Welcome Center" in four languages: Vietnamese, Spanish, Chinese, and Portuguese. ESOL collections, programs, a weekly English conversational group, and staff training were all provided.

Russell Library, $17,550. The library started a *Reach Out & Draw In New Immigrants* program that initiated an information awareness campaign for Middletown's speakers of other languages including library orientations, translation within the library, Spanish materials, Library Guides to directly interact with Spanish-speaking patrons new to the library and bi-lingual story hours.

Hartford Public Library, $14,217. The library's *Anytime, Anywhere, Learning to Write* program used tutors to improve the writing skills of ESOL students and other literacy patrons using AlphaSmart technology.

<u>**Activity/Target 2**</u>**: Provide a range of professional consulting services to library staff, trustees, and Friends, especially those in target areas, to help them determine and respond to evolving information needs of their constituents.**

<u>Progress towards goal</u>:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **75% of librarians receiving consulting assistance will express satisfaction in an annual survey of randomly selected libraries receiving assistance.**

Concerned as it is with enhancing local libraries' abilities to deliver high quality library service to their communities, the Division's thirteen professional staff meet with and advice staff, trustees, and Friends on a variety of policy and management issues. Consultants focused on providing best practices advice and expertise in subject areas and also provided print- and web-based resources. Divisional staff hosted and spoke at workshops, conferences, meetings, roundtables, and training events. Consultants also aided in managing sub-grants, coordinated continuing education, and reported on public library statistics. Targeted consulting is made available in statistics, library space planning, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, interlibrary loan, governance and Friends development, policy development, children's services, emergent literacy, CIPA compliance, e-rate discounts, the LSTA process, and small library automation. Consultants operate through face-to-face, individualized interaction, through resources on homepage, through training, site visits, and via the professional collections at the service centers.

In addition special consulting sessions were also held on disaster planning, grant writing, library architectural planning, services to older adults, a workshop specifically for new directors of libraries, book discussion workshops for children's librarians, outcome based evaluation training, roundtable discussions of library services to speakers of languages other than English, construction grant workshops, and planning and marketing multicultural library services.

For fiscal years 2002 - 2006
- 96 formal consulting workshops provided
- 2,212 attendees from the library community
- 586 total continuing education classes coordinated
- 7,763 total attendees to continuing education classes
- 114 grant applications reviewed by Divisional staff
- 79 grants awarded

Awards of long-range planning grants particularly aid communities in economic distress because these activities are typically beyond the means of towns focused on realizing

short-term goals. Libraries with little town support are thus able to determine and respond to patrons' evolving needs. Therefore, long range planning grants were made available to seventeen libraries to help them determine and respond to their evolving communities. The libraries in Brooklyn, Columbia, Ellington, Enfield, Madison, Mansfield, Marlborough, Middlebury, Newtown, Oxford, Portland, Ridgefield, Salisbury, Sprague, Westbrook, West Hartford, and Windsor received grants and completed long range plans.

The Connecticut State Library has designated a staff liaison to library Friends groups to provide consulting expertise; the liaison also supports the Friends of Connecticut Libraries in all their activities. In 2006, LSTA funded the research, development, and writing of the Friends of Connecticut Libraries Handbook. The handbook will be distributed to all Connecticut Friends groups and will be available on the Friends of Connecticut Libraries web page. The State Library also supports the Friends through annual workshops at the Connecticut Library Association conference.

Since 2003, the Division of Library Development has annually invited newly appointed public library directors to a workshop introducing them to the services and resources of the State Library and Connecticut Library Consortium; 77 new library directors have been trained since 2003 in addition to the half-day workshop. Each new director is given a notebook of in-depth information on State Library services.

Since 2002, the State Library has partnered with the Association of Connecticut Library Boards to present an annual Leadership conference for library trustees. The State Library also supports the trustees through annual workshops at the Connecticut Library Association conference and through direct consulting with board members.

Activity/Target 3: **Support staff and services at the Willimantic and Middletown Library Service Centers.**

Progress towards goal:
☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☑ Made progress towards this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Expected Outcome:
- **Evaluation will be based on the number of libraries from economically distressed communities using the services at the service centers. The goals will be to [sic] use of the service centers by 5% by 2005. In the twelve months preceding June 1, 2002 the circulation totaled 83,548.**

  75% of libraries receiving collection support will express satisfaction with collections and support, based on a biannual sampling survey.

'Economically distressed community,' defined as the bottom 25% of towns on the Connecticut Adjusted Equalized Net General List per Capital (AENGLC) ranking, comprised 42 municipalities. Both the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers loaned items to all the libraries in this category.

The number of items loaned to economically distressed communities in 2002 was 27,287. This represents 31% of total circulation. In 2006, the number of items loaned to

economically distressed communities was 26,877, or 34% of total circulation. Overall, the number of items circulated to economically distressed towns declined by 1% from 2002 – 2006. A satisfaction survey was not conducted.

Results of In-Depth Evaluation of iCONN, Connecticut's Research Engine

Assessing iCONN: Patrons' Uses, Perceptions, and Recommendations

Commissioned by the Connecticut State Library

Prepared by The Center for Public Policy and Social Research
Central Connecticut State University
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Principal Investigator:
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Executive Summary

In an effort to gauge citizen use, perception, and satisfaction with the Connecticut State Library's iCONN search engine, two focus groups were conducted in December of 2006. One focus group consisted of adult users of iCONN; the second consisted of high school users of iCONN. Additionally, in February and March of 2007, iCONN users were invited to participate in an on-line survey based on their use of the search engine on that particular day.

An examination of the themes that emerged from the focus groups and the responses of patrons on the survey reveal the following major findings:

- An overall general satisfaction and appreciation for the depth, breadth, and utility of information provided (and accessed) by iCONN.

- The use of iCONN generally for educational purposes related to school and/or work.

- The perception of iCONN searches as secure, reliable, and anonymous.

- Some concern with iCONN's log-in process, the speed of the search process, and the presentation of search results, especially when compared to that of Google.

- Some confusion regarding the accuracy and availability of holdings accessed by iCONN.

- Librarians and teachers play an integral role in introducing iCONN to patrons.

- The generally positive experiences patrons have using iCONN results in them publicizing iCONN via word of mouth.

Purpose and Procedures

In September, 2006, the Connecticut State Library entered into agreement with the Center for Public Policy and Social Research to conduct focus groups and an on-line

survey in an effort to assess citizens' uses, perceptions, and satisfaction with the iCONN library search engine.

A total of two (2) focus groups were held: one on December 5, 2006 from 7:00-8:30 pm. at the Newington Town Library, and the second one on December 12, 2006 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Middletown High School Library. The Connecticut State Library had the responsibility of identifying and inviting guests to attend the scheduled focus groups. A wide variety of users of iCONN participated in these focus groups, ranging from a high school student only recently introduced to the search engine to an adult who had been using it since its inception several years ago.

The focus groups were conducted in a quiet, private room in each setting. Interviewees were invited to candidly respond to the questions that were posed, as well as to raise any additional comments or concerns they wished to share with the group. Their answers were tape recorded with the understanding and assurance that they would not be identified by name in any subsequent report or publication. Similarly, names of Connecticut State Library or specific town library employees mentioned by focus group members have not been singled out or identified in the discussion of findings.

In addition to the focus groups, an on-line survey of iCONN users was created and posted to the iCONN website for a two-week period in March, 2007. It consisted of several closed-ended questions intended to gauge patron uses of iCONN, their satisfaction with it, and their introduction to the site. While a number of patrons responded to the survey, the sample size was relatively low (N=94). Hence, it is impossible to discern how representative their responses are to the larger population of all iCONN users. The survey results, then, are exploratory in nature and should not be interpreted as generalizable of all iCONN users.

Results and Findings: Focus Groups

In the focus groups, participants were asked a variety of open-ended questions, including: how they search for information in general; how they use iCONN specifically; which resources provided by iCONN they accessed; their perceptions of the overall strengths and weaknesses of iCONN; their introduction to iCONN; and finally, ideas for better promoting iCONN to state residents. The principal investigator crafted a preliminary set of questions to guide the discussions but invited participants to raise whatever issues they cared to address at any time. Participants were also invited to contact the principal investigator should they have additional comments to add at a later date.

Before delving into the specific findings, it must be noted that several of the interviewees commented on how impressed they were that the Connecticut State Library had commissioned this study. They commended the use of focus groups and claimed that this initiative signaled to them that the Connecticut State Library system was genuinely concerned with better meeting the needs and addressing the concerns of their constituents.

After conducting the focus groups and survey, and poring over the interviewees' and survey participants' responses, several strong patterns of responses emerged which may be of significant use to the Connecticut State Library. A discussion of each is in order.

1) Resources Accessed via iCONN

When asked about the types of resources they accessed using iCONN, focus group members' responses centered on a few resources and databases they found particularly useful. They included:

Newspapers and Magazines

Adult focus group members expressed their general satisfaction with sources such as ProQuest (for newspapers) and InfoTrac (for magazines). While immediate access to that day's full newspaper would be desirable, respondents seemed to understand the slight delay, especially for out-of-town newspapers. Some mentioned a desire for an expanded selection of newspapers, especially smaller daily and weekly newspapers from around the state of Connecticut (e.g., *New Britain Herald, Waterbury Republican, West Hartford News*, etc.). Some smaller out-of-state city newspapers were also mentioned for possible inclusion (e.g., Syracuse, NY), though patrons questioned how much interest-- outside their own-- such access would garner among state residents. Even with newspapers accessed by iCONN, such as the *Hartford Courant*, patrons mentioned a desire to access different editions of these newspapers. For example, a patron noted that the *Hartford Courant* has several different local editions. Another noted that she would like to be able to have access to the entire production run of the *Hartford Courant,* and not just limited years. Despite some rather specialized articulated desires, patrons seemed generally satisfied with the timeliness and breadth of newspapers and magazines offered via iCONN.

Academic/Research Journals

Another area mentioned by focus group members as being particularly useful was access to scholarly academic journals. For example, a graduate student participant with two young children noted how accessing journals on-line from home was "quite convenient." She explained that while access to abstracts of articles was "o.k.", she would much rather have access to full-text articles even more. However, as she and the others also noted, it may be difficult and expensive for the Connecticut State Library system to provide full-text access to thousands of journals. Nonetheless, this is a resource they seem to enjoy and would like to see expanded in the future.

Children's Resources

There was some concern expressed by a couple of focus group members that there were limited materials for younger children and that those available are not "attractive" enough to "hook" young children into using iCONN. For example, one participant mentioned the database, "What Do I Read Next?" and her students' frustration in navigating it, indicating that the children were "overwhelmed" with the number of boxes to check, windows to navigate, and choices to make. Some focus group members believed it to be important to draw young users to iCONN but felt that the resources currently provided do not do that. They noted that iCONN's long-term success and utility is integrally tied into attracting users at a young age and then constantly adapting iCONN to grow with their needs.

Other Desired Resources

A couple of patrons expressed a desire for access to such media as downloadable music, downloadable e-books, and audio books. High school students were particularly

interested in iCONN's ability to help them research music. As one student mentioned, "I'd like to be able to type in bands and artists and then have it (iCONN) find articles on those bands I like and recommend other bands similar to them… it would be great if iCONN could serve as a clearinghouse for music: biographies, upcoming tour dates, discography…" However, she and another high school student were skeptical that this would ever happen, as they imagined that teachers would view provision of such resources as a "distraction" to the learning process.

Another focus group participant mentioned a desire to be able to conduct nation-wide obituary searches. In general, however, participants were hard-pressed to identify other resources not provided by iCONN that they would like to see offered. They generally believed iCONN to be comprehensive as is.

Resources Provided That Are Not Accessed As Much

There were a few sources and databases that focus group participants identified as not being particularly useful to them. The Associated Press Photo Archive was one of them. Another was Heritage Quest, which one participant summarized as being "a bit disappointing" and "not as comprehensive as the website Ancestor.com." A couple of interviewees claimed that the Business and Company Resource Center was "slow and inconsistent with timeliness and completeness" when it came to the information it provided. As one member stated, "I now go to Yahoo Finance or Investor Services for annual reports that I am looking for."

2) Interface, Design, and Access Issues

A second area of discussion centered on iCONN's design and the mechanics of using iCONN. An area of major concern expressed by focus group participants was iCONN's interface with the end user. The first specific area of concern was the actual logging in process, especially from home computers. Several mentioned that they had to type their library card number or username several times in one sitting to access various databases. As one commented, "It's like each door to information is locked."   Patrons were uniform in their desire to obtain access to all sites with one password/log-in procedure.

Once in iCONN, several mentioned that trying to navigate through the site was counter-intuitive and that they tended to "overwhelmed" and "intimidated" by the number of links and subcategories presented to them on any given search. And as they pointed out, many in the focus groups tended to be either younger or frequent users of iCONN. Several indicated they "could not imagine" what it must be like for an elderly user or someone new to iCONN. They surmised that the interface most likely was a "huge barrier" to attracting new users and probably resulted in discouraging potential users. With that said, more familiar users cautioned about changing the design and output of iCONN too frequently. As one participant succinctly concluded:

> "They (Connecticut State Library) need to find an interface that works and stick with it. They shouldn't change it all the time. Familiarity is important. I don't want to have to re-learn how to use iCONN every time I log on. I want to be able to recall where the buttons and icons are… I guess what I am saying is that it needs to be intuitive and then consistent."

Repeatedly, iCONN was being compared to another search engine: Google. This comparison is the focus of the next section of findings, for which we will now turn.

3) Google vs. iCONN

In examining focus group responses, it was clear that the perceived strength of iCONN is also its perceived weakness. For example, patrons noted that searching a topic using iCONN is much more discriminating. Search results are limited to published material in "reputable sources" and iCONN sorts the search results into the various database categories and provides the number of articles/sources for that search term in each database. Google, on the other hand, provides a two or three sentence description underneath the various website links identified in which the search term appears. These websites tend to be listed in hierarchical relevance to the search term provided by the patron, but are not categorized at all.

Interviewees indicated that they found Google and its web design to be much more desirable when compared to that of iCONN. They repeatedly described Google as being "more intuitive", "user friendly", "simple", "easy", and "clean" in its design, organization, and presentation of information. They greatly preferred its provision of a brief description of the search finding so that they could quickly discern its utility to them. iCONN's categorization of information was perceived to be "too diffuse", "vague", and "overwhelming" in its presentation. With that said, however, patrons seemed to appreciate it discriminating quality which limited findings to what they referred to as "reputable sources."

High school student focus group members were particularly concerned about iCONN's presentation of search results. They noted that they often feel "paralyzed" as to where to go next after the initial search term is submitted and results are presented. As one student stated:

"There are too many sub-categories presented when the search results are presented…. I'm not sure which area to go to, or which one is going to be most relevant. iCONN does not give titles, context, or any other information on that initial screen following the search."

While this was problematic for some students, others noted that they generally liked the presentation of search results placed in the larger categories. However, all agreed that it made little sense to include sub-categories and databases, especially when there were no results in those categories or databases. As one exasperated student exclaimed, "Why do they have to include all those categories with zeroes!?"

Another distinction between iCONN and Google that focus group participants mentioned was search speed. They found iCONN to be significantly slower in providing search results as compared to Google, but acknowledged that search speeds using iCONN at a town library was faster than those speeds experienced while accessing iCONN in their homes or places of employment.

One particular area of concern regarding iCONN's design and architecture was the remote log-on process and necessity of navigating several windows before one could conduct a search and access findings. Several participants also mentioned their

displeasure with having to enter their password several times when conducting particular searches from home.

In sum, while there clearly were some issues with the design and log-in process associated with iCONN, many participants indicated that they, nonetheless, end up using both search engines for finding information. They typically use Google first to gauge the scope/breadth of material available or attain a "quick" or "timely" answer to a query. To acquire more "in-depth" or "serious" information on that same topic, they then will navigate iCONN's databases.

4) Breadth, Accuracy, and Timeliness of Holdings: iCONN vs. Individual Libraries

Another issue raised by some patrons centered on their perceptions of iCONN's ability to access library holdings. They expressed a degree of doubt in iCONN's ability to access all holdings in the participating town libraries via reQuest. They also believed that iCONN was slower than individual libraries in updating information on materials that had been loaned out or returned. The perceived lag time in updating information had the unintended consequence of citizens preferring to travel to individual libraries to search for the availability of a book they desired, rather than requesting it via inter-library loan on iCONN.

Related to this topic was an articulated belief that there also may be "territoriality issues" at play when it comes to iCONN. A couple of patrons believed that there needed to be better coordination between individual libraries and iCONN, with more integration and sharing of information on resources. As one focus group member succinctly stated: "There needs to be a little less kingdom and a little more community." While the veracity of these perceived relationships among various libraries is beyond the scope of this report, awareness of such perceptions may be beneficial in future marketing efforts for the Connecticut State Library system.

5) Spreading the Word: Promoting & Marketing the Use of iCONN

When asked how they first heard about or discovered iCONN, patrons noted a variety of different sources. In their responses, it was evident that there were both formal and informal mechanisms in place for publicizing its use.

Formal Mechanisms
•**Teachers and school library staff.** Some student focus group participants noted how various teachers incorporated its use in their classroom and the kinds of assignments they would require of students. Teachers whose courses stressed student research projects were particularly likely to expose students to iCONN. Other students cited school librarian staff as introducing them to iCONN, especially during a freshman orientation tour of the library.

•**Library Advertising.** Adult focus group participants, while also noting the role that town librarians played in publicizing iCONN, additionally cited the effects of advertising at the library itself. Examples of effective advertisements included iCONN ads on the desktop screen of a library computer; large "advertising cards" posted on display at the library; and pamphlets, cards, and/or brochures handed out at their home

library. Still others were introduced through library forums (e.g., meeting held by the Friends of the Library).

While formal mechanisms were clearly a source of exposure, it was also evident that informal mechanisms were used to publicize and introduce iCONN to potential new users.

Informal Mechanisms

•**Word of mouth from student peers/ peer counseling.** In this mechanism, older students responsible for orienting and socializing younger students inform them that using iCONN "looks good" to their teachers when writing papers for classes. Hence, it is being used by students as a way to manage impressions of them formed by teachers. Use of iCONN is a way for students to signal to teachers that they are "serious", "scholarly", and that they "put in a lot of effort" on their assignments.

•**Word of mouth from workplace colleagues/peers.** A couple of patrons indicated that co-workers and/or friends who had successfully used iCONN informed them of the search engine and encouraged them to try it for themselves. After having had a successful trial use, they became converts to its utility and, in turn, have told others about it.

While these formal and informal mechanisms were effective advertising tools for attracting these particular focus group patrons, there are nonetheless a wide variety of potential mechanisms and strategies for promoting iCONN's use for others. Focus group members identified many other possible means of marketing and promoting iCONN. They included the following suggestions:

•Traditional media (e.g., more television and radio advertising)
•Printed Advertisement accompanying State of Connecticut tax bills that are mailed to each household.
•Middle school and high school media specialists and librarians.
•MySpace.com website profile

The focus group participants viewed school media specialists and librarians as particularly crucial in publicizing iCONN. They believed that if students were exposed to iCONN early on in life, they would embrace it and continue to be users well into their adulthood. A couple of patrons expressed their concerns that it "may be too late" to attract older new users, and that iCONN, like foreign languages, is best introduced at a young age.

Younger focus group participants were enthusiastic about the possibility of iCONN creating a profile on the MySpace.com website and then requesting people add it to their profiles as a "friend". They believed that such requests would compel young users to "check out" who/what this "iCONN person" is requesting their friendship and, hence, gain exposure in this fashion.

While there were a variety of possible avenues for further publicizing iCONN, many of the focus group participants were in agreement that any future marketing campaigns (especially those involving larger sums of money) should be put on hold until the website is redesigned for easier use and navigation. They believed that increasing traffic to iCONN-- via greater advertising today-- would actually be detrimental in the long run, as people would be discouraged by the current complexity of navigating the website.

The last suggestion patrons made concerning advertising and publicizing iCONN was that the Connecticut State Library needs to better publicize the new databases and resources that are added to iCONN periodically. However, there was no consensus on how, exactly, this should be done.

One final note: Focus group members suggested that no matter what advertising vehicle is used, it should emphasize that the sites patrons access via iCONN are secure and reliable and that the user cannot be linked to articles being searched and/or read. They also suggested that the Connecticut State Library emphasize that identity linked to searches will not be saved or archived in some fashion.

6) The Mission of iCONN and its Intended Users

Most telling, perhaps, of all the topics mentioned by focus group participants was an expressed confusion regarding the goals, mission, purpose, and intended audience of iCONN. Some patrons perceived its primary users as educators and students; others believed it was intended for the general public. Some focus group members viewed iCONN as primarily a search engine to direct users to where they could find information; others considered it a primary source of information. In sum, there was no clear consensus regarding the answers to these questions raised by patrons. The breadth of databases and resources available to iCONN users, while impressive, nonetheless left some patrons with a sense of bewilderment. It also led one focus group participant to ask the rhetorical question: "Can iCONN be all things to all people?" and another to reply, "Jack of all trades, master of none."

Results and Findings: On-Line Survey

For a period in February and March of 2007, a survey was posted on the iCONN website. Visitors were invited to take the survey and share their experiences using iCONN on that particular day. The first twenty (20) respondents received a stipend of $25.00 for answering the survey. A total of 94 people participated in the survey during that time period. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1) How satisfied are you with the following aspects of iCONN?				
Dissatisfied	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very
Appearance of search page	47%	27%	13%	13%
Ease of search process	33%	45%	7%	16%
Ability to understand search results	49%	27%	11%	13%

It is apparent that survey respondents were generally satisfied with the appearance, search process, and search results of iCONN. Approximately 74% were either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the appearance, 78% answered similarly regarding the ease of the search process, and 76% of respondents were "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with their ability to understand the search results.

2) How satisfied are you with iCONN 's presentation of search results compared to that of Google?

Prefer iCONN's presentation	Prefer Google's presentation	No preference
28%	39%	33%

Survey respondents indicated that they were somewhat more likely to prefer Google's presentation of search results (39%) compared to that of iCONN (28%). A full third of respondents (33%) expressed no preference for either.

3) How satisfied are you with the information you found in iCONN compared to that of Google?

iCONN information more useful	Google information more useful	No preference
52%	21%	27%

Respondents overwhelmingly found iCONN's information (52%) more useful than that information found using Google (21%). A little over a quarter of the respondents (27%) expressed no preference.

4) How often do you search iCONN for the following purposes?

	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
School/homework assignments	31%	19%	7%	42%
Job/career/workplace	24%	17%	18%	42%
Personal health and wellness	18%	26%	18%	39%
Current events/news	16%	19%	21%	44%

Information on family history	15%	7%	13%
65%			
Other (please specify)			
• Books (12) • Academic articles/research (6) • Film/Audio/Video (3) • History (2)			

In examining the results of the survey, it appears that iCONN is being used most often for educational purposes. Approximately 50% of the respondents indicated that they "frequently" or "sometimes" used iCONN for school and homework assignments. The next most popular reasons for using iCONN were personal health and wellness (44%), job/career/work (41%), and current events/news (35%). Several other reasons were mentioned. Those with multiple answers are listed above, with the number of respondents mentioning them provided in parentheses.

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5) For today, what was/is the main purpose of your search on iCONN?

School/homework assignments	47%
Job/career/workplace	19%
Personal health and wellness	11%
Current events/news	10%
Information on family history	13%
Other (please specify)	

     • Books (8)   • Research (3)
     • Film/Audio/Video (3)

When asked their reason for using iCONN during this particular day, nearly half (47%) indicated it was related to educational purposes. This was by far the most popular response, as indicated above.

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6) For today, have you been able to find the information you were looking for?

Yes, exactly what I was looking for	49%
Not exactly what I was looking for, but something very close	26%
Something related but not very close	7%
No, nothing what I was looking for	12%
Not applicable	6%

Approximately three-quarters (75%) of respondents indicated that they were able to find either the exact information they were searching for, or something at least very close to it.

7) How likely would you be to recommend iCONN to a friend?

Very likely	64%
Somewhat likely	13%
Unsure	10%
Somewhat unlikely	5%
Very unlikely	9%

Over three-quarters (77%) of the survey respondents indicated they were "somewhat likely" or "very likely" to recommend iCONN to a friend. This is a relatively high figure and a good indicator of the general overall satisfaction with iCONN.

8) How did you first learn about iCONN? (Please check one)

Teacher	17%
Word of mouth/friend	6%
Librarian	52%
Advertisement in a newspaper or magazine	3%
Advertisement on the radio	0%
From a link on a webpage	12%
Other (please specify)	10%

• Advertisement in library (2)

It is quite clear that librarians currently are playing an integral role in exposing patrons to iCONN. Over half of the respondents (52%) indicated that a librarian was responsible for their exposure to iCONN, followed by a teacher (17%). The results suggest that, despite traditional advertising and the use of technology such as the Internet, it is via personal contact with fellow human beings that word about iCONN is largely being disseminated.

ON-LINE SURVEY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9) How old are you?

Under 18 years old	15%
18 years old or older	85%

10) Are you currently enrolled as a student?

Yes	38%

No   62%

11) If you answered "yes" to Q9, what best describes the school you are attending?

Elementary/Middle School   20%
High School   20%
2-year or 4-year College   34%
Graduate School   20%
Other (please specify)   6%

• Continuing education (2)

ON-LINE SURVEY QUALITATIVE COMMENTS

12) Any additional comments you would like us to know concerning iCONN?

•iCONN has saved me countless hours of searching the library stacks for the books I want and from driving to many libraries to get what I want. Thanks!

•I very much like the categories of the different search results.

•Would like to view lists of media items with sorting by many options (e.g., DVD, drama, jazz, the year...)

•iCONN is a great resource. I am very, very, very happy that the state provides this. I find the interface complicated and confusing though. I wouldn't necessarily use Google as a model. Academic libraries have interfaces for multiple databases. You should look at those.

•VHS film noir category could be organized better; but it has been a great resource for me!

•As mentioned, I'm usually searching for books and other media that I could request via ILL. I'd love for iCONN to be able to remember "search all ILL libraries" as my default. Searching for book titles tends to generate vast quantities of results. I don't use the newspaper archives or other databases much so I don't have a lot of opinions about that.

•I feel this is a fantastic opportunity to read books I would not be able to acquire through any other means.

•I used to be able to go to census on Heritage Quest and with the new format can't find it.

•Need highlighted keyword in Historical New York Times page find; Need Hartford Courant cover 1922 to present: Need 1930 Census index for other states.

•Thank you. It's a great resource.

•Would like to see more peer reviewed journals.

•Please add more historic newspapers - Chicago, LA, Boston, DC, etc. - they are available through Proquest.

Summary and Recommendations

In taking into account both the focus group members' responses and those of the survey respondents, it is clear that the vast majority of iCONN users appear to be generally satisfied with the resources provided and the databases accessed. They tend to use iCONN for educational purposes related to school and/or work. Respondents generally find what they are searching for, and overwhelmingly perceive iCONN's information to be more useful than that information found using a search engine such as Google. Their perception is that iCONN searches are secure, reliable, and anonymous, providing comfort and peace of mind to remote users and users on-site in libraries.

While there is a great deal of expressed satisfaction overall, there are nonetheless a few areas of concern with which to be aware. A number of users expressed some dissatisfaction with iCONN's log-in process, the speed of the search process, and the presentation of search results, especially when compared to that of Google. Some also

questioned the breadth, accuracy, and timeliness of holdings accessed by iCONN and their availability. Nonetheless, most users would recommend iCONN to others.

In terms of introduction to iCONN, there are several formal and informal mechanisms in place to publicize it. However, it is clearly evident that librarians and teachers play an integral part in introducing it to patrons. Additionally, the generally positive experiences patrons have using iCONN results in them publicizing iCONN via word of mouth.

While it is usually beyond the scope of a third-party evaluator to offer recommendations for change, I nonetheless pose some possible suggestions for the Connecticut State Library's consideration, based on the aforementioned findings. The recommendation include:

Recommendations

•Merge the best of iCONN and Google search techniques, design, and presentation of findings. Limit information to the reputable sources and databases linked to iCONN but present the findings in the style of Google (i.e., with an informative yet succinct 2-3 sentence description). Eliminate the use of zeroes for databases/categories in which no information is found for a particular search. This will eliminate visual clutter and lessen confusion.

•Publicize that updates from each individual library occur in "real time" (if this is the case) on iCONN as well. Let the public know that there is no lag time and that holdings identified by iCONN searches are timely and accurate. Also, emphasize the cooperation, integration, and sharing of all the resources of all the participating libraries.

•Continue to publicize iCONN through formal and informal mechanisms, especially employing the use of librarians and teachers. Expose students to iCONN early in their academic career, and have students and librarians reinforce its use throughout elementary and secondary school.

•More clearly articulate the market i.e., intended user of iCONN's resources. If it is intended for all residents of Connecticut, perhaps create different initial home webpages/portals for users of different age groups. Perhaps limit searches to particular databases depending on age or expertise of user.

•Place a greater emphasis on specialized/tailored searching. Some patrons proposed that iCONN first ask users to provide some basic demographic information on an initial webpage/portal. Then, based on that information, iCONN would offer the patron tailored databases, font sizes, levels of vocabulary, etc. In essence, the "look and feel" of an iCONN search by a 75 year-old interested in the history of quilting techniques would be dramatically different from an iCONN search by a 7 year-old interested in why earthquakes occur.

IV.   Progress in showing results of library initiatives or services.

Since the 2004 cycle, the Connecticut State Library has used outcome based evaluation to assess the value of statewide projects enabled through LSTA funding as well as all LSTA subgrants.

Subgrant projects:

Subgrant applicants receive instruction on outcome based evaluation (OBE) during mandatory training sessions prior to submitting grants. Training includes the principles of OBE, best practices, examples from successful past OBE subgrant projects, discussion of how to approach and perform OBE on projects, and references to other sources of information. Members of the Division make sample OBE work available on the http://CT.WebJunction.org site and provide more specific information tailored to individual applicant needs on request.

Subgrant applications were substantially reconfigured during the 2003 and 2004 cycles in order to clearly measure applicants' proposed outcome based evaluation plans and enable OBE standardization across grant categories.

Since 2004, 101 applicants have been graded on the effectiveness with which they applied OBE measures to their prospective projects; currently 25 of a total of 105 application points are directly related to OBE. During the 2004 cycle, the required OBE training was professionally facilitated by an outcomes consultant. Division of Library Development (DLD) staff were required to attend the training along with prospective grantees in order to further understand OBE and upgrade their ability to mentor subgrantees through OBE matters. Since 2004, Division staff have trained subgrantees on OBE.

Further, upon award, successful subgrant applicants submit more detailed OBE Plans specifying how they intend to measure project outcomes and what results they predict. Divisional staff coach and advise grantees on OBE and indicators throughout the grant cycle with an eye toward both respecting the time of targets and gathering relevant data.

Subgrantees provide detailed results on OBE measures in final project reports. Divisional staff incorporated these results and lessons learned into best practices; in addition to providing direct feedback to subgrantees, this knowledge is fed back into the subgrant OBE process. Considerable Divisional consultant staff time is routinely devoted to coaching grantees with outcome measures throughout the grant cycle. Sample OBE reports and OBE plans document best practices for applicants and are provided to them during training sessions.

Individual subgrantee results: during 2004 to 2006 federal cycles, 32 of 83 (38%) projects have used OBE measures. Examples of the results are included.

Danbury Public Library: Breaking the Cycle of Dependency: Teen Mothers Cooperative Project. This program was designed to assist targets in acquiring the skills and knowledge needed to become more effective parents and lead productive, healthy lives. 100% of targeted

teen mothers reported reading at least one book a week to their children upon completion of the library / EvenStart partnership; 100% visited the library with their children at least once per month in order to use available resources; 100% indicated they recognized the importance of establishing regular family time periods for sharing and bonding with their children upon completion of the project.

Thompson Public Library: Family Literacy & Playgroup Cooperative Project. This was a pre-literacy and family literacy project which achieved several outcomes:

1. 100% of target population reported an increase in their knowledge and comfort level regarding reading and school readiness skills (e.g., sharing books, songs, fingerplays and movement activities) within three months of the program's end.
2. 92% of parent targets reported a 40% or more increase in time they spent reading and engaging in literacy activities each day with their children within three months of the program's end.
3. 93% (14 out of 15) parents surveyed reported that they used developmentally appropriate tools (e.g., pointing to pictures and asking questions, repeating rhymes, and talking about what is happening on the page) while interacting with their children in early literacy activities.

Hartford Public Library: Hartford Es Su Hogar. This project achieved many outcomes in assisting a city-wide initiative to increase Spanish and bilingual homeownership in Hartford.

1. 100% of surveyed workshop participants responded that the information they received in the session affected their actions pursuant to purchasing a home Pre- and post-workshop sampling of at least 20% of the workshop participants via survey and interview methods indicate that targets used the knowledge gained in the workshops in the following ways.
2. 50% of the workshop participants created a personal budget and/or took steps to organize their personal finances pursuant to purchasing a home within three months of participating in the informational workshop.
3. 30% of the workshop participants contracted with a realtor pursuant to purchasing a home within three months of participating in the Fall informational workshop.

Bridgeport Public Library: Invention Convention and Beyond! This program was designed to show students that the library is the best place to receive assistance with science fair projects.

1. In one of the targeted 6th grade classes, 90% of the students received a grade of 'B' or higher within two months of experiencing a class visit / information session.
2. In one of the targeted 5th grade classes, 82% of the students participating in the science fair received a grade of 'B' or higher within two months of experiencing a class visit / information session.
3. 26 of 27 students (96%) in a different targeted 6th grade class received a 'B' or better on their science fair projects within two months of experiencing a class visit / information session.

Statewide OBE measurement: continuing education and children's librarianship

In addition to regular evaluations of continuing education (CE) courses which assess the training's efficacy and solicit ideas on other training that might be needed, the Division performs outcome based evaluation on selected CE offerings. Over 700 CE classes drew 9,865 attendees during the 5-year cycle.

Brief pre- and post-surveys specific to the subject matter assessed attendees' knowledge of the class topics. Pre-surveys generally asked students to rate their knowledge from 1 (low) to 5 (high) of the training topic upon entering the workshop; post-surveys asked individuals to self-assess either the degree of learning or the degree of change in their knowledge that the training effected.

In 2004, respondents reported an aggregate increase in knowledge that showed an average increase of 28.5% in technically oriented classes. Averaged increases were 24.5% for non-technical educational training sessions.

In 2005, the average increase in knowledge for an attendee to a general continuing education course was 161%; respondents in 37 technical continuing education courses sampled reported aggregate increases in knowledge that average 98%. Almost 30% of all technical education classes offered were sampled.

As of March, 2006, outcome based evaluation surveys measured 85 outcomes from 33 sampled technical and general continuing educational training sessions underwritten with LSTA funds. Average improvements in participants' knowledge base and skill level across all types of class averaged 107.4%.

The Division also conducted outcome based evaluation on a continuing education project targeting children's librarians. Surveys measured changes in attendee knowledge of model/best practices for emergent literacy techniques as applied in children's story-hour programming and its implications for pre-school programming with children and their caregivers.

52% of the children's librarians who received emergent literacy training increased their use of research-based activities in the pre-school programming by an average of 17% above pre-training survey levels.

Among specifically measured baseline criteria, the trained children's librarians increased the frequency by which they call attention to the syllables in words by over 33%, encouraged children to retell the story themselves by over 23%, emphasized the alliterative sounds in stories more than 22% of the time, encouraged children to re-enact the story over 23% of the time, and encouraged children to use selected story words over 30% of the time.

This 17% average increase spikes to 33% in those selective instances when the best practice was previously rarely or never used.

V. Lessons Learned

1. **Importance of collaboration**.
Early in the cycle it became apparent that the most successful programs in the Literacy and Outreach Programs for Children category depended on solid, meaningful collaboration with community organizations working with children. Programs lacking collaboration did not demonstrate significant impact on target children and their families – essentially, they "talked" only to those already using the library. The Division thus adapted the subgrant process to require applicants to involve community stakeholders in this category and for other subgrant categories as well. This requirement was particularly important for programs serving immigrant populations. (See lesson 2, below).

2. **State Library support beyond subgrant process**.
Divisional staff worked extensively with libraries receiving subgrants for programs serving non-English speaking communities in order to determine the best way to support them. As individual libraries struggled to partner with out-of-town organizations in support of new immigrants and found collaboration with neighboring libraries helpful, it became clear that the Division could substantially strengthen the LSTA projects, as well as the efforts of libraries generally, by acting as facilitator for a state-wide interest group specific to library programs focusing on new Americans. This group, called 'Welcome,' now meets quarterly, shares successes (in projects often begun with LSTA funding), ideas, challenges, and uses its Division-sponsored listserv frequently. The Division used Welcome as a model for its efforts in facilitating a similar interest group for libraries serving older adults; this includes moderating a national WebJunction forum.

3. **Modifying Adaptive Technology subgrants from 'equipment-only' to program grants**.
While Connecticut's LSTA Plan calls for an Adaptive Technology subgrant category, results from early in the cycle revealed disconnects including isolated and extraneous equipment purchases, equipment that was not integrated into overall library service plans, and unsatisfactory numbers of equipment uses. At the suggestion of the Advisory Council, this category was revised to 'Programs Serving Individuals with Disabilities.' The new category requires applicants to design programs for target audiences yet still enables them to acquire adaptive technology responsive to user needs.

4. **Cost Effectiveness of Statewide Programs**.
The yearly costs for iCONN, Connecticut's statewide database program, are $1.89 million in state funds and $380,000 in federal funds. This expenditure saves Connecticut's libraries over $33 million (the total cost if individual libraries contracted for these resources independently). While no other Connecticut LSTA program is able to document this dramatic a level of cost saving efficiency, all the LSTA statewide programs offer significant cost savings when they are compared to individual libraries purchasing independently.

VI.   Brief description of evaluation process

The Connecticut State Library decided to manage the majority of the LSTA evaluation process with internal staff except for the in-depth evaluation for section III (conducted by an independent consultant) and library community focus groups (led by an outside facilitator).

For section III's in-depth analysis, the State Library contracted with Central Connecticut State University's Center for Public Policy and Social Research to evaluate iCONN, the battery of databases available to Connecticut's public, school and academic libraries. iCONN was chosen for its overall significance in advancing library service in the state. The State Library first met with the Center in the summer of 2006. The Center conducted focus groups with end users in the fall of 2006, performed an online survey of end users in February and March of 2007, and submitted their analysis in March 2007. The cost of for this in-depth evaluation was $20,303.

Section II of the evaluation was managed internally; staff with area responsibility for each of the goals in the Five Year Plan reported progress toward expected outcomes. Data from sub-grants were compiled and all Divisional staff met to assemble and discuss the results. A draft of section II was shared with Divisional staff and the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development's LSTA Planning Committee for feedback and comment. A blog (lstaplan.wordpress.com) was developed by the State Library as another avenue for input from the library community; postings were used in the evaluation and to help develop the new Five Year Plan.

In addition, the Division sponsored two statewide focus groups with key local library staff providing vital feedback. A neutral, third party facilitator was used in order to remove bias while maintaining the meeting's flow; this cost was $1,500. Staff spent approximately 200 hours compiling results and in the evaluation meetings. Another 150 hours of staff time was spent compiling the report.

Timeline:
Planning for evaluation began Spring of 2006
Contract with CCSU Center for Public Policy and Social Research: July 2006
Focus Groups for Section III Evaluation: December 2006
Blog Established: February 1, 2007
Section II compiled: August – December, 2006
Focus Groups with Library Community: February 2007