

The Library of Virginia
Library Services and Technology Act
Evaluation
2003 – 2007



March 2007

Section I: Introductory Statement and Summary of Impact of IMLS Funds to Support State Library Services

The greatest impact of LSTA funds in Virginia focused on the following LSTA purpose:

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with income below the poverty line.

This purpose was addressed by three projects, a family literacy initiative, Find It Virginia database resources, and the Brock papers.

In Virginia, children are the group most likely to live in poverty. It is estimated that children living in poverty is above the national average in 87 out of a total of 135 communities in Virginia. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for 2000, only 14% of children eligible for free or reduced lunches scored at or above proficient compared to 41% of non-eligible students.

Public libraries are in a unique position to help families, especially low-income parents, learn how to fulfill their role as their child's first teacher. LSTA funds have been used to train library staff in family literacy services and developing community partnerships.

In October 2003, a trainer from the Vermont Center for the Book presented two workshops entitled Growing with Books, which focused on developmental literacy of children age's three to five. In April 2004, two workshops entitled "The A-B-C's of Emergent Literacy," which were designed to give background about literacy research and age-appropriate practices.

In 2005, The FUNtastic Family Challenge was a joint project between Virginia and Georgia designed to measure the effectiveness of offering parents/children an opportunity to take part in literacy-building activities during the summer reading program and to assist library staff in building their knowledge of family literacy.

In April 2006, A Growing Readers conference was held for 67 public library youth specialists, covering literacy development and best practices for libraries. A Growing Readers Resource notebook was developed and a copy was provided to each library system. Also, in September a series of four regional workshops, attended by a total of 143 youth specialists, were presented to introduce Every Child Ready to Read @ the Library.

Additionally, two grant writing workshops were offered to help libraries secure funding for new or expanded family literacy services. In March 2003, a grant writing workshop, Kids Books & Bucks was held. Grant writing was also covered at a VLA preconference, Reading Magic: Nurturing Literacy in Families and Communities and at the Virginia Family Literacy Institute.

Section II of the this report provides greater detail about the impact of these trainings and also information on new and expanded family literacy services by several public libraries.

In the report, *Inventing the Future of Public Library Service in Virginia*, Himmel and Wilson state “One bright spot in the equity of access issue is ‘Find It Virginia’”. Using LSTA funds, Find It Virginia provides a core set of databases with full text reference books, magazines, journals and newspapers to all Virginia residents. These resources are available to students in school, and at the public library and at home in the evenings. It provides the student in Big Stone Gap with the same basic set of resources as a student in Arlington.

Additional detail about the impact of Find It Virginia is included in sections II and III of the report.

To expand access to a significant collection of Virginia materials, the Library of Virginia initiated a major reformatting project with the Huntington Library of San Marino, California in 2002. The two libraries embarked on a five-year task to film the Robert Alonzo Brock Collection of more than eight hundred boxes and bound volumes of manuscript materials related to Virginia history, genealogy, and culture. Heretofore, the resource was available only at the Huntington Library (a private library) with limited access for scholars.

For more than eighty years the challenges of distance, the scope and organization of the Brock Collection (much of it only partially cataloged), and the procedures for visiting the Huntington Library combined to create a significant pent-up demand for an additional means of access. Thus in 2002 the Library began the process of microfilming the huge collection. Once each element of the collection is filmed, the Library’s Archival Description Services staff adds highly detailed records for each element of the overall collection, with extensive descriptions and subject listings, to the online catalog. The Library projects that the project, totaling an estimated 450 reels, will be complete in fiscal year 2007.

Section II: Overall Report of Results in Achieving Goals and Objectives Based on Five-Year Plan

Goal

The Library of Virginia will create opportunities for library leaders to build skills and will provide leadership and direct support for planning, evaluation, collaboration, advocacy, and professional development which foster and advance innovative responses from libraries to community needs.

LSTA Purpose

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets

By 2003 present new professional librarian certification model to Library Board for review.

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

The Public Library Development Committee of the Library of Virginia Board met June 16, 2003 and received the two requested certification models. On a 3-2 vote the secondary model, ALA MLS, was sent to the full board for consideration. The *Code of Virginia*, §42.1-15.1 was later modified:

- Qualifications required to hold professional librarian position.
- Public libraries serving a political subdivision or subdivisions having a population greater than 13,000 and libraries operated by the Commonwealth or under its authority shall not employ, in the position of librarian or in any other full-time professional librarian position, a person who does not meet the qualifications established by the State Library Board.

- A professional librarian position as used in this section is one that requires a knowledge of books and of library technique equivalent to that required for graduation from any accredited library school or one that requires graduation from a school of library science accredited by the American Library Association.
- No funds derived from any state aid shall be paid to any person whose employment does not comply with this section.

By 2004 complete revision of *Planning for Library Excellence*. By 2007 at least 50% of libraries engaged in long-range planning will report finding Planning for Library Excellence a useful tool in their planning process.

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

Planning for Library Excellence was revised 2004. Nelson Worley was awarded the George Mason Award by the Virginia Library Association for his work. At this writing, *Planning for Library Excellence* is under review based on the recommendations from the Himmel and Wilson study to update the technology section and to improve the “user friendliness” of the document.

By 2007, complete and disseminate revision of *Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook* to provide guidance in all issues of trustee boardmanship.

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

Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook, Third Edition was distributed to the statewide in Fall 2005. In October, a series of 6 statewide workshops were held to introduce the new handbook. More than 138 trustees representing 46 library systems attended.

Annually review constituent information/assistance requests from all types of libraries to determine patterns and identify topical issues for proper follow-up.

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

Constituent information/assistance request are compiled quarterly. As part of the annual report development, patterns and topical issues are identified. These help guide the topics for director's and trustee meetings as well as continuing education workshop topics in the following year.

By 2007, complete review of all public library long-range plans.

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

Review is still in process. With four vacant positions in the Library Development and Networking Division, the review has not been completed. Recruitment is underway for a Planning and Data Consultant. This person will be responsible for reviewing the remaining plans and helping libraries in drafting new plans as needed.

Annually assist libraries in developing long-range plans. Conduct a minimum of two formal planning workshops per year. Conduct a post-workshop survey/evaluation of workshop participants as to enhanced services resulting from the planning process.

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

Williamsburg Regional Library, York County Library, Roanoke City Library, Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, Augusta County Library, Washington County Public Library were assisted in developing long range plans. Trainings were conducted for the planning committees of each of these libraries. Formal general planning workshops were not conducted due to lack of staff. Recruitment is underway for a Planning and Data Consultant.

As necessary, offer training in outcome based evaluation processes as part of a program of targeted competitive grants.

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

Although competitive grants were not offered, the Library of Virginia offered a series of Outcome Based Evaluation workshops to youth services staff in Spring 2006. 91% of the library systems participated in the training. Since some of the larger systems sent more than 1 staff member, a total of 148 youth services staff participated in the training.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

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

Competitive grants were not offered.

Activities:

- ✓ Update Planning for Library Excellence.
- ✓ Update Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook.
- ✓ Update professional librarian certification program.
- ✓ Monitor E-rate program including review and certification of technology plans.
- ✓ Biennially collect and report on the Acceptable Internet Use policies of the public libraries.
- ✓ Collect and disseminate statistics for use in improving library services.
- ✓ Continue to serve as the "librarian's reference librarian" by answering requests for assistance from users including libraries and citizens.
- ✓ Continue Infopowering and enhance FinditVA.
- ✓ Serve as agent/contact for SOLINET and statewide resource sharing.
- ✓ Continue to review long-range plans from Virginia public libraries.
- ✓ Expand collaboration with all library communities and appropriate agencies, organizations, etc. to achieve progress in all other LSTA goals.

Outcome based evaluation training will be offered throughout the state for sub-grant projects that require such evaluation.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program, for all types of libraries, with priority for projects that foster cooperation and collaboration.

Goal

All Virginians will have improved access to quality library and information resources and services that help develop skills for and provide support for responding to changing needs, opportunities, and environments.

LSTA Purpose

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets

By June 2007, at least 50% of surveyed users of public education materials will indicate the materials were useful to very useful.

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

Survey indicated that 87% of users found the information useful.

Annually monitor impact of use of electronic resources by user group (K-12, distance learner, home schooler, college student, and public library user).

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

Vendors were not able to provide usage data by all the user groups. We lacked a means of distributing surveys by email to user groups.

By 2004, results from surveys, focus groups, and other methods will indicate that at least 50% of the participants from the identified constituent groups will state that the collections were "useful" to "very useful" in supporting their activities.

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

Survey was delayed until 2005. 70% of survey respondents found the databases useful. More detailed information is available in Section III.

By 2005, results of the cost-benefit analysis will indicate that a savings of more than 40% was realized due to the availability of the online collections over the cost of serving the same materials via on-site or surface-mail methods.

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

Work in this area began in 2000 with a grant from the Mellon foundation for a series to digital projects. Plans had been to continue to further analysis on the potential cost savings of digital collections. However, with the loss of digital project staff resulting from the negative impact caused by 9/11/2001 on the Virginia economy, work in this area was halted.

By 2006, results from surveys, focus groups, and other methods will identify and document 3 successful models of partnering/consulting and will assist in developing a formal set of measurement tools to determine the benefits of such arrangements to both the partnering institutions and the Library of Virginia.

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

The Library of Virginia was able to partner with the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to expand an existing contract with SIRS to include all public libraries and K12 schools. Based on their prior experience and working relationship with SIRS, VCCS still handles all the contract negotiations for the SIRS resources. This partnership has been very successful.

The Library of Virginia partnered with the Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS) to help child care providers fulfill their continuing education requirements. LVA, Library Development Division joined with DSS to train child care providers. Youth services staff from 16 libraries throughout Virginia offered 6 to 8 hours of training using the "Mother Goose Cares About the Early Years" training materials developed by the Vermont Center for the Book. The classes were offered free through the DSS Division of Child

Care Licensing to all child care providers in Virginia. Continuing education credits in early education were awarded to participants who completed the classes. Approximately 350 child care staff completed the training. Library youth specialists also benefited from the program. They received a complete set of the program materials and attended a planning session prior to conducting the workshops. In addition, DSS is also purchased copies of 35 titles that support early childhood education and emergent literacy for every library in Virginia (a total of 333 locations). Child care providers, parents, and the public have access to enhanced collections of literacy and child care materials.

Based on success of the child care providers partnership with DSS, the Library of Virginia was invited to participate in the launch of Governor's Warner's Smart Beginnings early learning initiative in the Spring 2005. Virginia's public libraries participated in Book Blitz series of activities occurring between Mothers Day and Fathers Day 2005 to recognize the important role that parents play in the lives of young children and provide them with important information to help them give their children the best start possible. The Library of Virginia and Virginia's public libraries continue to work with DSS and others on ways to implement key components of the plan.

During Read Aloud to a Child Week in October, the Library of Virginia partnered with state affiliates of Reach Out and Read to send posters and parent brochures of reading aloud to over 50 sites throughout Virginia. These sites are pediatricians' offices and hospitals and clinics serving children.

However, we were unsuccessful in developing a formal set of measurement tools to determine the benefits to each partner. It seemed in each situation there were different strengths from the participating partners. It appears that situation would need to be carefully considered.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

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

The Library of Virginia did not offer competitive grants.

Activities:

- ✓ Choose and license comprehensive databases for full-text electronic resources for the residents of Virginia. Continuously review existing database content and prioritize needs for new or different resources.

- ✓ Schedule, publicize, and conduct workshops in effective use of the databases for library staff.

Collaborate with TechRiders to offer public training on the use of electronic resources.

- ✓ Develop public education tools and materials on the effective use of electronic resources.

Implement a series of appropriate measurement activities (such as surveys and focus groups) targeting the Library's diverse constituent groups, such as practicing historians and educators, researchers, library, museum and historical society service providers, and family history practitioners, to assess the impact of availability of digital collections on their activities.

Conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the activities and costs associated with the production and provision of at least 20 digital projects, utilizing historical usage data from date of release of the collections, to assess the unit cost savings associated with serving the collections online vs. more traditional approaches (e.g. on-site and surface-mail) with the same level of use.

Construct and conduct surveys of current and potential partners such as national digital programs, public libraries, museums, historical societies, universities, and other appropriate organizations and institutions, to assess the current and future level of collaborative digitization activity and consulting.

Develop and implement a marketing plan to increase awareness of library and information resources.

Investigate options, plan, and implement competitive grant programs (as funds allow) to continue to improve access to underserved and persons with difficulty using a library, such as, but not limited to disabled, visually handicapped, individuals living below the poverty level, etc.

Goal

All Virginia youth will experience improved traditional and technological library services and programs that are targeted to enhance academic performance and to develop the strong information literacy skills necessary for the digital age.

LSTA Purpose

Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations; targeting library services to persons of diverse geographic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; targeting library and information services

to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets:

During the evaluation period ending June 2007:

Annual statewide summer reading program will expand by developing partnerships with agencies serving children with disabilities and with public schools, especially those with high percentages of children receiving free and reduced price lunches. Participation target of 306,000 children or 1/3 of the total population aged 5-14 will be achieved. Libraries will fill out annual evaluations, and surveys will be obtained from a sample group of participants and their parents.

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

Between 2002 and 2005, more than 527,588 youth ages 5 to 14 participated in the statewide summer reading programs. Summer reading program were promoted through partnerships with health clinics, schools, day care, Head Start programs and others at the state and local level.

Training in providing family literacy services and developing community partnerships will be presented to staff from 75 % of libraries serving populations with 16% or higher poverty levels. Family literacy services provided by libraries will be tracked and participating families will fill out evaluations.

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

03/04

Literacy projects were addressed by providing two workshops (April 2004) entitled "The A-B-C's of Emergent Literacy," which were designed to give background about literacy research and age-appropriate practices. Additional family literacy training was implemented in October 2003 with a trainer from the Vermont Center for the Book, who presented two workshops entitled Growing with Books, which focused on developmental literacy of children age's three to five.

An outcomes survey was distributed to participants of the emergent literacy workshops. Of 54 attendees, 25 surveys or 41% were returned. Of those, 100% reported that their understanding of early childhood literacy concepts increased by at least one point on a five point scale, and six attendees, or 24% reported an increase of at least 2 points. The outcome was the same for a question which required participants to report their understanding of how to share literacy concepts with preschool children and parents. All of the respondents to the survey were able to list the following: at least two ways that librarians can support emergent literacy development, at least two age appropriate activities that parents can do with preschool children to help them acquire literacy skills, and at least two of the six skills required of children for reading readiness.

An outcomes survey was distributed to participants of the Growing with Mother Goose workshops. Of 43 attendees, 19 surveys or 47% were returned. Of those, 95% reported that their understanding of early childhood literacy concepts increased by at least one point on a five point scale, with one attendee reporting an increase of at least 2 points. There was some significant overlap in the individuals attending this workshop and the previous one in the spring, so the difference in outcomes may be that some attendee already felt that they were at a fairly high level of understanding. The outcome for a question which required participants to report their understanding of how to share literacy concepts with preschool children and parents was 16, or 84%, reporting at least a one point increase, and two participants reporting a two point increase. Additional survey questions asking for content such as why it is important to talk with preschool children, and what are two ways that adults can help children learn about sounds, were answered satisfactorily by 100% of the responders.

04/05

The FUNtastic Family Challenge was a joint project between Virginia and Georgia designed to measure the effectiveness of offering parents/children an opportunity to take part in literacy-building activities during the summer reading program and to assist library staff in building their knowledge of family literacy. The FUNtastic Family challenge was piloted in 5 libraries each in Virginia and in Georgia. The 10 libraries agreed to participate by attending an overview and training session on a key element of family literacy—the role of parents as their child’s reading role model and teacher. Libraries agreed to collect both staff/patron surveys in keeping with the evaluation plan/logic model. Families received a FUNtastic Family Challenge Game Card, containing 20 reading/literacy activities. Families choose any nine in order to finish. Additional topical workshops offered throughout the year included the Emergent Literacy Conference, Every Child Ready to Read, Beginning with Mother Goose for child care providers, Reaching Parents, and Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Facility Motherhead program.

FUNtastic Family Challenge Outcome Summary Survey results showed an increase in the ability of parents to knowingly help their child build literacy skills. Parents who were able to identify literacy building activities approached 100%. Using 9 activities as indicator of completion, results show 71% of online respondents and 54% of print survey respondents completed all of the activities. Staff outcomes were successful in that 100% of staff was trained in family literacy concepts and practices.

05/06

Growing Readers supports the efforts of public libraries as they work to increase the reading and literacy achievement of children and families. One goal is for youth services staff to become knowledgeable about the concepts, goals, and practices of family literacy, which includes emergent literacy and reading readiness.

A Growing Readers conference was held in April 2004 for 67 public library youth specialists, covering literacy development and best practices for libraries. A Growing Readers Resource notebook was developed and a copy was provided to each library system.

The notebook assists libraries in determining the level of their response to community needs, and lists specific ways that they can improve their literacy services.

In September a series of four regional workshops, attended by a total of 143 youth specialists, was presented to introduce Every Child Ready to Read @ the Library. This is a national early literacy initiative which prepares librarians to offer parent workshops, so that they have the information and tools that they need to foster their child's literacy development. Many libraries have begun offering Every Child Ready to Read workshops.

A Growing Readers brochure and booklist was produced and sent out to all public libraries in the state. Posters and bookmarks with the six pre-reading skills were also printed and distributed.

A minimum of two grant-writing workshops designed to help libraries with funding for family literacy projects will be offered statewide. Success of attendees in procuring grant money will be tabulated and completed projects will be evaluated.

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

In March 2003, the grant writing workshop, Kids Books & Bucks was held with 57 library staff participating. Grant writing was also covered at a VLA pre-conference, Reading Magic: Nurturing Literacy in Families and Communities and at the Virginia Family Literacy Institute.

Libraries will expand services to children in their community who are living in poverty.

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

Children living in poverty were targeted in the family literacy projects, FUNtastic Reading Challenge and the Once Upon a Time Family Challenge. Two pilot Motherread projects at the Women’s Correctional Center and the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center were conducted in cooperation with the Department of Correctional Education. Also, many public libraries offered expanded services. Those services and programs are reported in the following two targets.

Libraries with significant underserved populations will provide improved services to those groups.

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

Below are descriptions from four public libraries on the programs to provide improved services to underserved families:

- County of Henrico Public Library (suburban library serving 275,100)

We have a Storytime onsite at Hilliard House, a home for women and children who are homeless. They stay at this home for a short time—until they can get back on their feet. They are homeless for a variety of reasons, including domestic abuse. One of our children’s staff goes to Hilliard House once a month for a storytime.

- Northumberland Public Library (rural library serving 12,700)

Actually, our library works VERY closely with the elementary school here in Northumberland County, and we have made changes in our services in several ways. In order to better serve children who are at or below poverty level, and we have significant numbers in these two areas, we have:

1. *Acted as volunteer readers to the children in the elementary school who have been identified as not being read to at home. Both the Library Director, Jayne McQuade, and myself go to the school at least once a week to read to approximately 5 students from the same grade, and then assist each student in filling out a simple book report on the book or story*

that they were read.

- 2. Increased the number and variety of recorded book kits that contain both book and tape/CD for beginning readers, juvenile and young adult audiences, doing so to help children who need to be read to, as well as helping those students who are struggling readers.*
 - 3. Combined our Summer Reading Program with that of the elementary schools, so that students are more likely to continue to read during the summer months, while away from the classroom. Both the school and our library offer rewards for reading to each child who fulfills a certain level of reading.*
 - 4. Offer a Homework and Computer Center for any and all students, grades 3 through 12, who either need assistance with homework, supervision to complete homework, or a quiet, safe, positive and stable environment for students. At the Homework Center, students have access to computers, if necessary, to complete assignments, and students who do not have computers at their homes have the same opportunity for success as students who do have personal computers at home. We also make sure that each student who comes to the Homework Center reads silently for a minimum of 15 minutes each day, upon completion of their other homework assignments.*
 - 5. Insured that we have multiple copies of school-wide reading books available for check-out, in the event that families who cannot afford to buy their own copy can check one out. Additionally, we have made multiple copies of those books available on CD and audio cassette, for those children who are not being read to at home.*
- Pamunkey Regional Library (regional library, mostly rural, serving 132,100)

Last year the Pamunkey Regional Library started a Books for Babies literacy initiative in Goochland, King & Queen, and King William counties. Books for Babies packets (purchased from FOLUSA with Friends of the Library monies) have been distributed through local Health Departments to their clients. Spanish versions were made available where requested as in Goochland County. The packets include a free board book, pamphlet tips for parents on how to read aloud to their children plus a library card application and library storytime information.

We also started Library Lullaby. This is a monthly bedtime storytime. This evening storytime was created for the parents and children who are not able to come to our daytime storytimes due to work/daycare.

Also on the branch level, we had a family literacy workshop and during that month, we displayed artwork from our local Head Start students. A special invitation was extended to our Head Start parents to encourage them to attend the workshop. We had several other parents attend but unfortunately no Head Start parents. Our guest speaker was Michele Surat from the Maggie Walker Governor School. We will try this program again at a later date and maybe do it at a scheduled Head Start meeting or dinner.

*As a system, we have tried to work closely with the Head Start. In the Spring of 2005, we went to several of the schools in Hanover County to do a special storytime and craft with the Head Start students. The students loved the books that we shared and they had fun completing the craft with us. The theme we used for these visits was Silly Monsters. We read, *The Monster Who Loved Books* as one of our read alouds and the craft was a silly monster puppet with mini book cut outs that the monster could eat.*

- Portsmouth Public Library (urban library serving 97,600)

Portsmouth has been providing Babygarten programs for about 18 months now (6 6-week programs in all) and has provided Two-Time for the past year once a month and beginning in January of this year for 6-weeks at a time thanks to funding from Target. Two-Time is designed for 18-36 month olds and combines a storytime and music with activity stations that support the six early literacy skills in PLA's Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library. We have also begun Kid's Book Club for 1st through 3rd graders, with programs in October 2006 and January 2007. For this program, we have combined learning activities (games), crafts, and books to create an environment in which reading is promoted as enjoyable to foster better literacy skills and create lifelong learners.

We also have done Motherread programs in the past in cooperation with an Even Start Program and have provided Every Child Ready to Read programs to both parents and childcare providers.

The library also began an Emergent Literacy Collection for parents and childcare providers with information about why early literacy is important and what adults can do to help children prepare to be ready to read when they enter school.

At our branch library, we work closely with the two Head Start Centers. One facility has approximately 110 3-year-olds. On a monthly basis, I choose 25 picture books (we call it Books-by-the-Box) that include at least one alphabet book, counting book, holiday book (if applicable), and one or more books featuring African-American children. We also try to include books with children from other countries or ethnic backgrounds. This service is provided from September or October through May (Head Start closes down at the end of May through August.) Additionally, I go to the Head Start facility every other month to present a storytime. These children are wonderful as only 3 year olds are! I do

the storytime for the whole assembly--usually at least 100 children and several teachers. It is different from a typical storytime at my branch since I usually have just a few children and they can sit around me and see the pictures easily. Not so easy with 100 children! I've learned that some books work much better than others with this many children. Their favorite part of the visit seems to be the music part when we sing and act out "Stuff It In the Closet," a song on a Hap Palmer CD. I can't seem to get away from that song! The teachers love it, too.

I am amazed at how well-behaved the children are and also how caring the staff is at Airline Head Start. Of course some of the children squirm and a teacher might have to speak to one or more children but out of 100 children, this is very minor. I have also taken storytime to another Head Start facility in the Cavalier Manor section of Portsmouth--a much smaller facility but just as wonderful with a caring staff and great children.

I always love the questions the children ask, "Where are you going now?" or, "Where do you live?" or, "Do you have children?" It is definitely a morale booster.

Underserved families living in poverty will increase their literacy skills.

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

Below are reports from five public libraries on increasing literacy skills of underserved families:

- Campbell County Public Library (rural library serving 50,900)

The Campbell County Public Library secured funding by an Early Learning Opportunities grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services fall of 2005. This grant enabled us to hold a 10 - week kindergarten readiness program for children ages 3 - 5 considered to be "at risk". The library partnered with the Department of Social Services in implementing the Book Mates program for children and their parent/caregivers.

The goals of this program was to encourage and strengthen parental involvement in the learning process of their children by building the parents' basic literacy skills, knowledge of the cognitive needs of their preschool children, providing parents with skills they need to prepared their children for kindergarten, and encouraged parents to use the library on a regular basis.

The objectives of the Book Mates" program were:

- *Improve the oral language, early literacy and social interaction skills of children up to age six so that they could achieve greater success at home, at school, and in the community. Each week, children gathered in the Programming Room, and under the instruction of the Children's Program Manager they learned to listen attentively, identify words, sing songs, cooperate with each other as well as with an authority figure, participate in storytelling, recognize rules and order, respond appropriately to questions about stories, and treat each other with respect.*
- *Strengthen and build the basic literacy skills of parents. One parent in the group admitted that she read at a 5th grade level. Many of our instructors emphasized that parents need not be excellent readers to share books with their children; children respond more to the way in which the story is shared. By the end of the 10 week program, this particular woman who felt uncomfortable reading to her child gained more confidence. Book Mates instructors also encouraged parents to read for their own pleasure as well as set an example for children; if children observe their parents reading, they will be more likely to see reading as a worthwhile way of spending time.*
- *Support and encourage parents' involvement in children's learning process. Through the parenting classes, participants learned how to interact with their children in a way that fosters a strong relationship conducive to learning. While many classes focused on parenting itself, aspects of several classes touched on the parents as people who must deal with harsh realities. By sharing their experiences with instructors and with each other, parents realized that they had a great deal in common and a great deal to offer their children.*
- *Create and enhance community-based partnerships with Department of Social Services and Youth & Adult Services that support the development of language and literacy skills of families. Our partnership with Social Services allowed us to reach out to instructors in the Central Virginia area and request their services for the adult classes of Book Mates. We could not have been successful without this partnership.*
- *A pre and post tests were given to measure the success of the program. At the beginning of the program 50% of the parents had a library card by the end of the program 88% of the parents had obtained a library card. 92% of the parents reported that they enjoyed reading for their own pleasure by the end of the program. 100% of the parents said their children listened to a whole story by the end of the program. At the beginning of the program, only 83% of parents reported that their children ate well-balanced meals. That number rose to 100% by the end of the program.*

We remember fondly the story of a grandfather who came to the library with his grandson who had attended the "Book Mates" program. He couldn't believe the change in his grandson. He said that all his grandson used to talk about was football, football, football until he began coming to the library. And now all he can talk about is when is it library night. This young man was recently in the library and stopped by to see me as he usually does. He began to dig into his backpack looking for something. I thought he wanted to show me some of his school work. Instead he pulled out two colorful pencils and handed them to me with a smile. I said to him, "Tyrees, these are nice pencils you have here". He said, "They are for you". I made a deal with him to only keep one of the pencils as his special "Thank You" to me.

- County of Henrico (suburban library serving 275,100)

Recently initiated a separate collection, aimed at assisting with general parenting issues and beginning literacy. We call it The Parent/Teacher Resource collection. It is housed in a separate area of our Children's Area, right next to public access computers, and right at the entrance to the Children's Area. The collection features books on family literacy, techniques for teaching reading to the very young, books on how to choose materials for different age levels, books on topics of special interest to parents of school-aged and pre-school-aged children (ADD, ADHD, Learning Disabilities, etc.), and many more.

Began a program of monthly off-site visits to area daycares and preschools, bringing to each a package of themed activities, including teaching ideas, crafts, coloring pages, poems, songs and finger plays, and a listing of websites, along with 10-15 books on the theme. We call this program "Library-to-You", and it serves approximately 40-50 children each month.

- Fairfax County Public Library (large suburban library serving 1,035,700)

*Early Literacy Outreach program at Fairfax County, called **Ready to Read**, is based on the PLA "Every Child Ready to Read @ the Library" model. This program won a NaCo award in 2006.*

READY TO READ:

SUMMARY:

In December 2004, the Fairfax County Public Library, located in the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, DC, launched a program to teach early literacy skills to preschoolers and their caregivers who cannot, or do not, visit a library. Early literacy is based on the concept that children need to develop pre-reading skills, such as handling books or recognizing print, before they begin to read and write.

To staff this new Early Literacy Program, a new position was created. The Early Literacy Specialist acts as an outreach extension for each of the library's 20 regular branches. She serves off-site schools, day care centers, community centers, parent groups and teachers. The program is designed to introduce children, their care givers and teachers to the concepts of early literacy, as well as the resources available at their local library branch. The specialist is also training a volunteer corps to increase her reach into the community. In all, almost 6,000 preschoolers and other individuals have been exposed to early literacy concepts in the program's first year.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Early Literacy Outreach Program evolved from two of FCPL's strategic plan initiatives: (1) To encourage lifelong learning and to share the joy of reading by promoting early literacy and reading readiness skills for preschoolers and their caregivers; and (2) to increase awareness and use of FCPL services to both current and potential library customers by expanding marketing, community relations and advocacy.

As a result, in July 2004, the library created and advertised a new full-time position, an Early Literacy Specialist. She would work closely with branch managers to identify preschoolers in each library branch's community who were not being reached by traditional library programs and services. The focus of the Early Literacy Specialist's job would be to present literacy-based programs in locations where children (and their caregivers) gather throughout Fairfax County. The specialist would concentrate on areas in the county where barriers, such as income, transportation or English language skills, prevent children from actually visiting a library branch. She would also train and manage a corps of volunteers to expand her ability to reach out into these communities.

The program had three goals: (1) provide preschoolers and caregivers who could not visit library branches with programs that used the principles of early literacy; (2) model these programs to teachers in preschool settings; and (3) encourage the use of resources in the home or at the library.

After the new Early Literacy Specialist was hired, she met with the branch manager and other staff at each of FCPL's branches to identify possible outreach locations, such as Head Start programs, private daycare centers, community centers, etc. By December, she had made contacts and set up a schedule of visits. At each visit, the Early Literacy Specialist, or one of the volunteers, presents and models a story time, finger play, and encourages caregivers to allow youngsters as young as six months to handle books and be read to. Early literacy experts identify six pre-reading skills that help children start learning even as babies and toddlers: 1) being able to describe things and events and tell stories; (2) being interested and enjoying books; (3) being able to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words; (4) noticing print, knowing how to handle a

book and knowing how to follow the words on a page; (5) knowing letters are different from each other; knowing their names and sounds and recognizing letters everywhere; and (6) knowing the names of things.

The Early Literacy Specialist may visit as many as four locations in one day. Some may have 100 preschoolers or more that she sees in small groups. At each visit, she distributes free picture books to youngsters and their caregivers. The Fairfax County Public Library Foundation, various Friends of the Library groups and private individuals have all donated funds to buy these books. Coloring books with a cover identifying the name of the nearest library branch are also distributed, as well as calendars and other material publicizing library branch events.

After each visit, the specialist reports back to the local library branch manager with the numbers of individuals who attended. She also shares any additional information, such as special community programs where the library might wish to be represented. The specialist acts as “the eyes and ears” for the local FCPL library branch in the community, letting people know the array of programs and services available for preschoolers.

RESULTS:

Between December 2004 and June 30, 2006, the Early Literacy Specialist visited 128 non-library sites such as Headstart classrooms, day care centers, community centers, parent groups and teacher training events. In all, she has brought early literacy concepts to 8,758 children and 2,467 parents/caregivers. She also recruited and trained three volunteers who serve the communities surrounding six library branches. They have made 30 visits to 10 locations, reaching 865 preschoolers. Eventually, the specialist plans to recruit and train enough volunteers so that each library branch will have an early literacy outreach volunteer to serve its community.

The success of the program can also be measured in the comments from groups the specialist has visited. The president of a Mom’s Club wrote: “Thank-you so much for speaking to our group of stay-at-home mothers. As we raise our little ones, we serve as parents and teachers – your information about literacy and county libraries helped us meet our demanding roles.” A library branch manager in a low-income area of the county was thrilled with outreach contacts made: “I just wanted to let you know that your outreach work with Timberlane Elementary School sparked a first-ever request from them to do on-site branch tours with students and parents. We discovered during the tours that many of the parents didn’t know we existed at our location and since many of them spoke Spanish we’re hoping they will come back [the branch offers an extensive Spanish-language collection] ... You were very helpful in bridging our contact with them.”

- Newport News Public Library (urban library serving 180,900)

We offer Motherread™ (a national family literacy) program several times a year in our community working with Head Start agencies and the local schools to partner and recruit families. We have been doing this for 3-4 years now and are pleased with our success.

We have expanded our efforts to reach out to childcare providers, of which there are many in our locale, to both train providers in early literacy skills, and to now offer storytimes at their site. We are currently adding a part-time outreach position to handle just this type of service. We have received grant funds to purchase deposit collections to leave with the centers so that teachers and children have new and different resources available to them on a continuing basis.

We have purchased AWE's early literacy stations for three of our four branches, and are in the process of receiving additional funding to add a second early literacy computer to the three locations and adding one to the fourth branch that previously didn't have one. These have been very popular with neighborhood kids who don't have permission to use internet computers, or who are waiting for a turn at the internet stations. Parents are very pleased with the programs that come on these computers.

Our library system has really stepped up its emphasis on Youth Services, both with the items I have mentioned here, along with supporting the Newport News Keeping Our Kids Safe Initiative, a city wide program focusing on community involvement in protecting, nurturing, serving our young people.

- Portsmouth Public Library (urban library serving 97,600)

Portsmouth has been providing Babygarten programs for about 18 months now (6 6-week programs in all) and has provided Two-Time for the past year once a month and beginning in January of this year for 6-weeks at a time thanks to funding from Target. Two-Time is designed for 18-36 month olds and combines a storytime and music with activity stations that support the six early literacy skills in PLA's Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library. We have also begun Kid's Book Club for 1st through 3rd graders, with programs in October 2006 and January 2007. For this program, we have combined learning activities (games), crafts, and books to create an environment in which reading is promoted as enjoyable to foster better literacy skills and create lifelong learners.

We also have done Motherread programs in the past in cooperation with an Even Start Program and have provided Every Child Ready to Read programs to both parents and childcare providers.

The library also began an Emergent Literacy Collection for parents and childcare providers with information about why early literacy is important and what adults can do to help children prepare to be ready to read when they enter school.

LSTA did not fund any of these programs. Rather LSTA funds were used for the consultant position that arranged for the training and provided the libraries technical assistance and encouragement.

Libraries will improve their ability to respond to community needs in the area of family literacy.

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

This was accomplished by a combination of staff trainings on family literacy and the development of strategic partnerships with the state department of social services previously described in this report

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

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

Competitive grants were not offered. Outcome based evaluation methods were used for three targeted children's and family literacy projects. Growing with Mother Goose, FUNtastic Family Challenge, and Once Upon a Time Family Challenge and for the 2006 summer reading program.

Activities:

- ✓ Offer a statewide summer reading program for children and teens.
- ✓ Improve promotion of statewide summer reading program to underserved groups.
- ✓ Provide training to libraries about family literacy programs and services.
- ✓ Offer workshops to libraries on how to help low literacy parents develop skills for parenting literacy.

- ✓ Assist libraries in partnering with the Family Literacy Consortium for improving patron access to literacy services.
- ✓ Provide information to libraries on how to serve children with disabilities and network with service providers for improved access.
- ✓ Promote reading aloud through statewide celebration of Read Aloud to a Child Week.
- ✓ Provide training to libraries to improve their curriculum support capabilities.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program with priority for collaborative projects.

Goal

Appropriate library staff will have access to training opportunities in order to improve library services, make effective use of new technologies, implement planning and evaluation programs that incorporate leading contemporary methodologies and skills, and create exceptional cutting-edge library services for all Virginians.

LSTA Purpose

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets

Annually at least 10 staff from each of the 6 Virginia Library Association geographic regions will attend relevant topical workshops.

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

In FY2003, seven topical workshops were offered with a total attendance of 660. All VLA regions were represented.

In FY2005, four topical workshops were offered with a total attendance of 584. All VLA regions were represented.

In FY2005, three topical workshops were offered with a total attendance of 407. All VLA regions were represented.

In FY2006, six topical workshops were offered with a total attendance of 692. All VLA regions were represented.

At least 50% of workshop participants will indicate using at least two new skills.

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

Due to lack of staff in LDND, outcome based evaluation and survey priority was given to youth services measures. We do continue to collect evaluations at all workshops that are used to prioritize topics and guide formats.

Annually, at least 50% of the libraries with boards will send a representative to the trustee workshops.

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

In FY2003, 112 trustees representing 45 systems attended. 54% of all library systems with boards.

In FY2004, 128 trustees representing 42 systems attended. 50% of all library systems with boards.

In FY2005, 138 trustees representing 49 systems attended. 59% of all library systems with boards.

In FY2006, 138 trustees representing 46 systems attended. 55% of all library systems with boards.

At least 50% of trustees who attend the training will indicate services to their communities were improved as a result of information gained at the workshop.

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

Due to lack of staff in LDND, outcome based evaluation and survey priority was given to youth services measures. We do continue to collect evaluations at all workshops that are used to prioritize topics and guide formats.

Annually, at least 70% of the directors will attend or send a representative to the directors meeting.

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

In FY2003, 86% of the directors attended the annual directors meeting.

In FY2004, 84% of the directors attended the annual directors meeting.

In FY2005, 74% of the directors attended the annual directors meeting.

In FY2006, 81% of the directors attended the annual directors meeting.

At least 50% of the directors who attend the directors meeting will indicate services to their communities were improved as a result of information gained at the workshop.

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

Due to lack of staff in LDND, outcome based evaluation and survey priority was given to youth services measures.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

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

Competitive grants were not offered.

Activities:

- ✓ Annually offer a minimum of three workshops for public library trustees across the state. Topics will be determined by annual assessment including evaluations from each workshop.
- ✓ Annually sponsor or co-sponsor a topical workshop in each of the 6 VLA regions. Topics will be determined by annual assessment including evaluations from each workshop.
- ✓ Annually sponsor a public library director's meeting to discuss current library issues, provide topical programs, and request feedback on LVA activities including the LSTA program. A pre-meeting survey determines the topics.
- ✓ By 2005, provide regional workshops on the outcome based evaluation process.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program, for all types of libraries, with priority for projects that foster cooperation and collaboration in continuing education.

Section III: Results of In-Depth Evaluations

In the report, *Inventing the Future of Public Library Service in Virginia*, Himmel and Wilson state “One bright spot in the equity of access issue is Find It Virginia”. Using LSTA funds, Find It Virginia provides a core set of databases with full text reference books, magazines, journals and newspapers to all Virginia residents. These resources are available to students in school, and at the public library and at home in the evenings. It provides the student in Big Stone Gap with the same basic set of resources as a student in Arlington.

Find It Virginia went “live” in December 2001. Prior to Find It Virginia, less than 10% of public libraries offered remote access to full text resources. A few public libraries offered cd-rom periodical (magazine and newspaper) databases in the library – patrons were required to physically go to their local library. Implementing remote authentication was costly due to the technical aspects and it remains a cost that smaller and medium sized libraries, usually, can not afford in terms of staff or equipment. Now, these resources are available 24/7 from homes, offices or anywhere residents connect to the internet. These resources also provided increased access to library resources for persons with disabilities. The project was accomplished at a significant cost saving. Initially, \$3 million in resources was purchased for \$1 million. Today savings are estimated to be approximately \$10 million.

In FY2003, Find It Virginia was expanded to include all K12 schools. SIRS databases were added in a cooperative project with the community colleges. Find It Virginia won the Governor’s Technology Award for small state agencies. On January 1, 2003, Find It Virginia was featured in the Richmond Times Dispatch in a job watch section. "If you ever wondered whether your tax dollars work, wonder no more. This is one heck of a ditty and it is yours. Find It Virginia is part of the Infopowering the Commonwealth Initiative, a cooperative project of the Library of Virginia and Virginia’s public libraries." This article was unsolicited and appeared without warning.

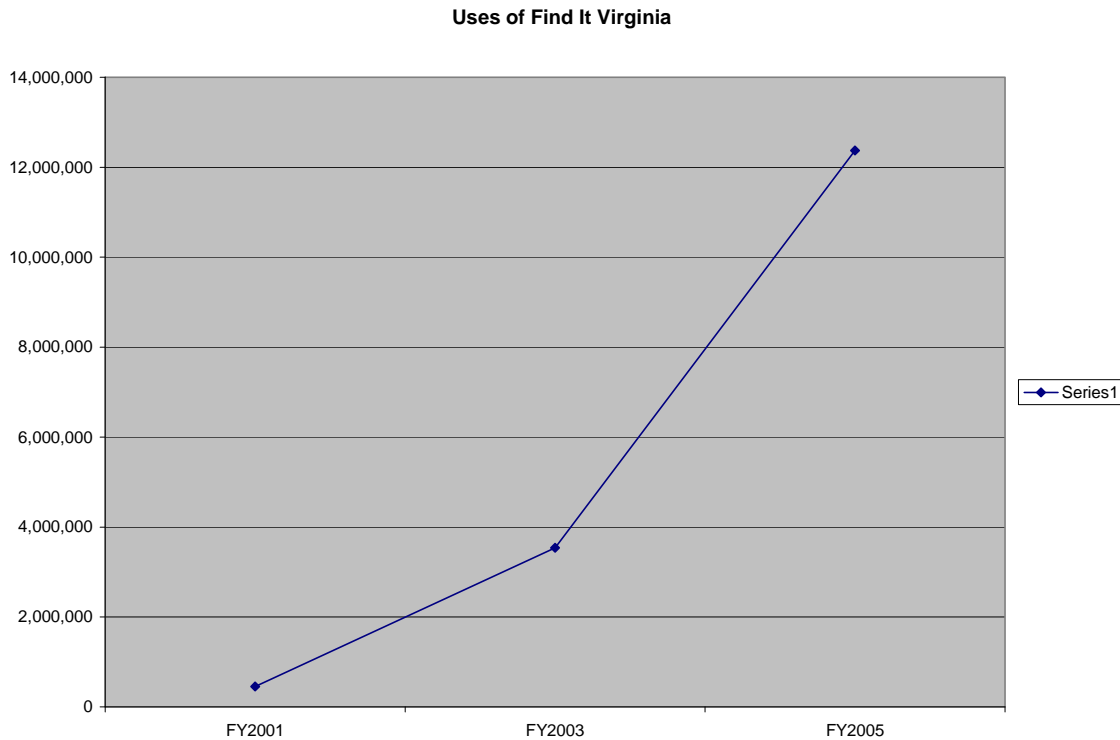
According to Tomi Herold, Library Director at **Highland County Library**, “For a rural or remote library, Find It Virginia provides access to the same information as large urban libraries. Without statewide funding, there is no way we could afford this on our own. It is very important to us.”

Bess Haile, Library Director at **Essex Public Library**, writes “Find It VA is one of the most valuable research tools in our library. It’s made it possible for us to meet the educational, employment, health and informational needs of our patrons at an unimagined level. With our small population base and below median income level, we would never have access to this much, this varied or this quality of information.

Find It VA is what I envisioned when I worked so hard to bring Internet Access to a rural population way back in 1992 and 1993. This is the real leveling of information access we’ve wanted for all Virginia’s citizens – for all Americans. High school children from a small rural county need never again compete with students from wealthier communities

with one hand bound. Entrepreneurs have resources that open up opportunities that had been closed to them before. One local physician sought me out to congratulate us for providing the high quality health and medical information via Find It VA.

Find It VA has transformed the Essex Public Library . "



Overall usage of the databases increased 145% for searches. Implementation of PowerSearch which allowed users to search several databases at one time resulted in the unusually large increase in searches. With the continued heavy use by the K-12 community of the GALE resources, the total number of annual sessions registered by Virginia patrons increased by 178% (from 701,104 to 1,952,171 sessions) from 2003 to 2005. Additionally, there was a modest increase in user sessions (97206) for the Find It Virginia site which provides remote access.

In the spring of 2006, an online user survey was conducted. This surveyed only users of the Find It Virginia web site. Below are the results of that survey:

- 70% of users indicated that they found the information that they were seeking. 33% report using for the first time. 35% use often, 19% use sometimes, and 13% use rarely.
- While only 40% reported using Find It Virginia to complete a school assignment, comments indicate that it is frequently used by teachers in preparing lessons.
- 10% used health information. One person indicated that the information "helped me decide to make an appointment with my doctor". A few used the resources for health related classes.

- 16% used business information. It was often used for information about companies especially for investment decision.
- Examples of descriptions of use:
 - I used the Business and Company Resource database to research various companies I own as part of an investment club.
 - I teach an adult Sunday school class. Our lesson referred to 2 saints. I wanted to know more about them, and I figured Bio R C would tell me. I was right.
 - I used it to help find an article for an author conducting research German reparations after WWII.
 - I am interested in companies that operate in the US and having headquarters abroad, especially in the United Kingdom
 - Looking for an article on a Roanoke business which closed recently.
 - While on Find It Virginia I also found an article that will assist the work of the Governor's P-16 Council and will be distributed to Council members.
 - Looking for sources of national and global economic facts and statistics other than imf, world bank, cia factbook, et al
 - Looking for current Business and Company information as well as access to newspapers in other parts of the country.

In late winter of 2007, a more comprehensive user survey was conducted.

87.3% reported finding the information needed.

52.2% were working on a school assignment.

Of those working on a school assignment,

75.9% were working on a K12 assignment

18.5% were working on a post secondary assignment

50.3% reported using Find It Virginia often

28.9% reported using Find It Virginia sometimes

12.8 % were using Find It Virginia for the first time.

58.7% learned about Find It Virginia from a librarian

21.2% found it on a library web site

15.9% learned about Find It Virginia in a variety of other ways such as a community organization or a professional conference.

Below is a sample of survey comments:

We especially appreciate the school access provided for Virginia schools. As a high school librarian, the Find It Virginia resources are our first line of research and provide invaluable resources for both students and faculty. They allow me to provide much broader resources than when I had to rely on my scarce budget dollars alone. I strongly encourage continued funding for both school and public libraries! Thank you

Everyone in my family uses it regularly - even more for "real life" needs or interests than for school assignments. It has changed our lives for the better. Thanks for making it available.

I am a teacher in a high school who uses Find It Virginia as a resource here at school and I teach my students to use it for research at school and at home. We constantly remind students and sometimes even have public card signups here at school for the main purpose of encouraging students to make use of the databases available through their public library.

Thanks for providing this information for Virginia families! It is wonderful to have such information free and at our fingertips.

Section IV: Progress in Showing Results of Library Initiatives or Services

The Library of Virginia's efforts in measuring outcomes have focused on training for youth services staff, a family literacy project, Growing with Mother Goose, two pilot projects, FUNtastic Family Challenge and Once Upon a Time Family Challenge, and the 2006 summer reading program.

2002

LDND staff attended a workshop sponsored by IMLS. At the workshop, we planned the family literacy project which began in this fiscal year. LVA contracted with the Vermont Center for the Book to offer Growing With Mother Goose training for public library youth specialists and early childhood teachers. Workshops were originally scheduled for September and team participants selected. The workshops were postponed until October due to Hurricane Isabel.

2003

The delayed training, Growing with Mother Goose, was held in October 2003 at two locations for 43 participants. Outcomes surveys were distributed and analyzed.

47% of the attendees of the Growing with Mother Goose programs returned their surveys. Of those, 95% reported that their understanding of early childhood literacy concepts increased by at least 1 point of a 5 point scale.

Growing with Mother Goose was based on an early childhood literacy curriculum developed by the Vermont Center for the Book. This project was designed to increase the knowledge of parents about age-appropriate activities that build literacy skills. It also was designed to increase parental behaviors toward sharing more literacy-building activities with their children. There were separate outcomes for library staff to acquire knowledge of early childhood literacy concepts, and best practices for sharing books with parents and children. This project was first initiated with training for library staff in the fall of 2003, with completion of the parent workshops in the fall of 2004.

Growing with Mother Goose Outcome Summary: Project was successful in meeting the outcomes for the library staff. We projected at least 60% would gain increased knowledge and we achieved 88%. The change was a 1 point change on a scale of 5 rather than a 2 point change. A 2 point change was not realistic for a 5 point scale, considering that most youth specialists have knowledge of early childhood literacy concepts/ practices.

Our inexperience with OBE outcomes resulted in not being able to measure a change in either knowledge or behavior of parents. We did not ask questions properly. We originally planned to have a pre-survey/post survey but decided a pre-survey was not feasible. Questions were not changed to reflect before/after; we could not evaluate whether a change occurred.

The library staff gained knowledge from this program curriculum; likely parents did too. As a first attempt at OBE evaluation we learned enough to use OBE in the future more effectively.

2004

In April 2004, a series of Emergent Literacy Workshops were also offered for 54 youth services providers. Outcomes surveys were distributed and analyzed.

41% of the participants in the emergent literacy workshops returned their surveys. Of these, 100% reported their understanding of how to share literacy concepts with parents and preschool children improved at least 2 points. All participants could also list at least two ways librarians support literacy, two age appropriate activities, and two reading readiness skills.

2005

FUNtastic Family Challenge Project Overview:

The FUNtastic Family Challenge was a joint project between Virginia and Georgia that was designed to measure the effectiveness of offering parents and children the opportunity to take part in literacy-building activities during the summer reading program—and to assist library staff in building their knowledge of family literacy. The FUNtastic Family challenge was piloted in 5 libraries in Virginia and 5 libraries in Georgia during the Vacation Summer Reading Program in 2005.

Each of the 10 libraries agreed to participate by attending an overview and training session on a key element of family literacy—the role of parents as their child’s reading role model and teacher. Further the libraries agreed to collect both staff and patron surveys in keeping with the evaluation plan (logic model) for the project.

Participating libraries gave each family a FUNtastic Family Challenge Game Card, which contained 20 reading and literacy activities.

FUNtastic Family Challenge Outcome Summary: Survey results showed an increase in the ability of parents to knowingly help their child build literacy skills. Parents who were able to identify literacy building activities approached 100%. Using the indicator for completion of the program, which in Virginia were all nine activities, the results show 71% of online respondents and 54% of print survey respondents, completed all of the activities.

Staff outcomes were successful in that 100% of staff was trained in family literacy concepts and practices. However, the projected target of 60% was not met in terms of whether staff would use this new method (the game card) for their future summer reading program. However, when staff was asked if they would incorporate family literacy concepts and practices into other library programs, the favorable response rate

went up to 68% on both the online (joint) survey responses and the printed survey responses from Virginia.

2006

The Library of Virginia's OBE efforts focused in three areas. First was spring training for youth services staff. It was required that all library systems using the statewide summer reading program theme send at least one person to training. The training focused mostly on the logic model for 2006 summer reading program but it also contained some general information about OBE, such as terminology, and how to construct indicators and logic models, and the importance of surveys to collect data.

Second focus relates to the actual evaluation of the 2006 summer reading program, which was entitled "Once Upon a Time". The outcomes were assessed by surveying the participants and their parents or caregivers using an online survey tool.

Lastly was a pilot project that we conducted that involved parents and care givers entitled, "Once Upon a Time Family Challenge". We used a separate logic model and survey for that program. The pilot also included a survey that we required of library staff to gauge their understanding of the family literacy model used in the project.

Section I: OBE Training, Spring 2006

Of the 91 library systems in Virginia, we had 94% participation for the spring training. The 140 participants received an online survey.

Outcome I – Library staff will gain the knowledge to successfully evaluate the effect of the summer reading program.

Target for the indicator was 50%
Actual 61 out of 73 responses or 81%

Target for the following indicator was 50%
Actual 25 out of 47 responses or 53%

Outcome II – Library staff will view OBE process as an important tool in evaluating programs and services.

Target for the indicator was 60%
Actual 50 out 62 or 80%

Section II: Once Upon a Time Statewide Summer Reading Program for 2006

We distributed the logic model for the 2006 Virginia statewide SRP at the Spring OBE Training. Each of the participating library systems was asked to submit 10 online surveys per library location. About 54% of libraries submitted their surveys.

Outcome I – Children understand that reading is fun.

Target was 70% of children would list reading as one of three fun activities.
Actual responses were 46%

Outcome II – Children know the library provides fun reading materials.

Target was 40% of children would rate the library as a top place to find fun reading materials
Actual responses were 95%

Outcome III – Parents know that children can maintain reading skills over the summer by reading books.

Target was 30% of parents will agree with a statement about reading books
Actual was that 84%

Outcome V – Parents know that the library provides fun learning activities.

Target was 60% of parents reporting that their child learned a fact from summer reading.
Actual was that 94% of parents reported this positively

Section V: Lessons Learned

In beginning to look at outcomes and collect information from users, we learned a great deal about surveys. While the new web based survey software make creating a survey seem easy, developing good questions is not. Sometimes we had difficulty interpreting collected data once survey was finished. Field testing of the survey is critical. Also, getting survey responses is challenging. The Find It Virginia surveys were especially difficult to get responses from a diversified group of users. As with all surveys response rates were lower than we would have liked. Incentives might have improved response rates.

Another challenge that we faced was staff turnover and long vacancies. Several positions are still vacant. We are currently recruiting for Planning and Data Consultant, Children's and Youth Services Consultant, and Technology Consultant. Often when we tried to reexamine data or reports that had been previously prepared; we either had difficulty locating the information or had questions about the information.

Section V: Review of Evaluation Process

A. Who was involved?

This type of evaluation involved many individuals throughout the library community over preceding five years. The staff of the Library of Virginia, especially the Library Development and Networking Division, the Collection Management Services Division and the Information Technology Division were heavily involved. The public library community commented through the area library director's organizations: Capitol Area Library Directors, Tidewater Area Library Directors, Southside Area Library Directors, Mountain 6, Wild Turkey, NRPLCOOP. School libraries were well represented by Charlie Makela and Linda Holt of the Virginia Department of Education. Feedback was also gathered from the Library Advisory Committee of the State Council on Higher Education, the Virginia Library Association and the Virginia Educational Media Association. The LSTA Advisory Council consists of representatives of public, academic, school, special, museum, and institutional libraries. The public and individual library staff members were involved through several surveys.

B. How was the evaluation conducted?

The five year evaluation is the gathering and analyzing of information about assessments conducted during the preceding years. The Library Development and Networking Division staff regularly meet with representatives of the public, academic and school communities. LSTA is included in the "state library updates" portion of these meetings. The list of groups was listed in section A. The listed groups meet no less than quarterly. Additionally, all workshops receive written evaluations which are examined and rated as both a short and long-range planning tool. There were several surveys of both library staff and library users. Also, information was gleaned from the public library study conducted by Himmel and Wilson, *Inventing the Future of Public Library Service in Virginia*.

C. What was the cost of the evaluation?

Costs of this evaluation are often difficult to isolate. The evaluation process is spread over several years and much is done in concert with other activities. The costs to prepare this report centered on staff time in gathering and reviewing information and the reports review by the library community cost approximately \$5,325.