

Health and Wellness

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Health and wellness can have a tremendous impact on one's daily life, particularly among more vulnerable and marginalized populations. Libraries can use their position as a trusted resource to help their communities explore ideas and navigate the complex issues related to this topic.

While projects may take a broad approach in addressing health and wellness, libraries may also choose to focus on a particular subject, such as stress, aging, nutrition, or even death. Funds may be used to improve collections – whether it's something traditional such as books and online resources or perhaps a bit more novel, like food toys for children to inspire healthy eating. Libraries should engage their target audience in a variety of ways, such as hands-on workshops, lectures by experts, and in-depth trainings.

Libraries are strongly encouraged to partner with relevant organizations, including area hospitals and clinics, their local Council on Aging, and other appropriate health or community agencies.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all public, school, and academic libraries that meet standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant programs. This is a one year grant with a maximum of \$7,500 available.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent form with the "Health and Wellness" option checked off. For additional information about this program, please contact Lyndsay Forbes at the MBLC at 1-800-952-7403 ext. 252 or email lyndsay.forbes@state.ma.us.

BACKGROUND

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that "Nine out of ten adults struggle to understand and use health information when it is unfamiliar, complex or jargon-filled," and that "limited health literacy costs the healthcare system money and results in higher than necessary morbidity and mortality." It is worth noting that some groups, such as adults over 65, non-

native English speakers, and racial and ethnic groups other than white are particularly at risk when it comes to health literacy (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). While the amount of health information available can be overwhelming, it is vital for individuals to understand it. Libraries can help promote healthy communities by providing opportunities for individuals to learn about and discuss health and wellness issues that affect them.