

## 2026 IPLAR Programming Guidelines

When compiling programming statistics for your library, read through these guidelines carefully, and prepare your data to answer the appropriate questions in Section 15. Count all programs, whether held on- or off-site that are sponsored or co-sponsored by the library. Exclude programs sponsored by other groups that use library facilities.

### IS IT A PROGRAM?

All programs whether in-person or virtual, must meet this definition: “A program is any planned event which introduces the group attending to any of the broad range of library services or activities, or which directly provides information to participants. Programs may also provide cultural, recreational, or educational information, often designed to meet a specific social need. They are sponsored or co-sponsored by the library.”

### IS IT A SYNCHRONOUS PROGRAM?

A synchronous program is any planned event, as defined above, that is scheduled for a specific date and time, and where more than one person is expected to gather. Examples of these types of programs include film showings, lectures, story hours, literacy, English as a second language, citizenship classes, tech or gaming clubs, presentations about library resources to students at a school, story time at a local park, and book discussions. One-on-one technology tutorials are not considered programs.

### IS IT A SELF-DIRECTED / ASYNCHRONOUS / PASSIVE ACTIVITY?

A self-directed (asynchronous or passive) activity is any planned event for which the patron can participate on their own (instead of at a designated time with a group). Registration is not required. A staff member may monitor the activity but may or may not directly interact with the participants. Examples of these types of events include drop-in craft sessions, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, self-guided Story Walk, pre-recorded (on-demand) story times, take and make kits, library scavenger hunts (when not done as part of a group), etc.

### IS IT HOSTED ON LIBRARY PROPERTY?

Does the planned event take place on library property, either indoor or outdoor (or a combination of both)?

### IS IT HOSTED OFF LIBRARY PROPERTY?

Does the majority of the planned event take place off library property? For example, a group might meet briefly on library property, then leave for another location.

### IS IT OFFERED ONLINE?

Is the planned event virtual? Depending on how it's offered, it may count as synchronous, or asynchronous.

### CAN PATRONS ATTEND THE ONLINE SESSION LIVE?

Count live virtual programs and recorded program content **separately**. Only live presentations are programs, while recorded content is a self-directed activity. Please refer to the definition of program content to determine whether your virtual live presentation content meets the federal guidelines to as a program.

### CHOOSE ONE AGE FOR YOUR PRIMARY INTENDED AUDIENCE:

- Children 0-5 - A program session **targeted** at children ages 0-5 is any planned event for which the primary audience is infants, toddlers, or preschool-age children. Do not inquire of or record the ages of the participants; the planned event is in this category because it is **targeted** at children ages 0-5. Count planned events aimed at children ages 0-5 even if adult caregivers also attend. Include adult caregivers as attendees of this planned event.
- Children 6-11 - A program session **targeted** at children ages 6-11 is any planned event for which the primary audience is children ages 6-11. Do not inquire of or record the ages of the participants; the planned event is in this category because it is **targeted** at children ages 6-11. Count planned events aimed at children ages 6-11 even if adult caregivers also attend. Include adult caregivers as attendees of this planned event.
- YA/Teens 12-18 - A program session **targeted** at young adults ages 12-18 is any planned event for which the primary audience is young adults ages 12-18. Do not inquire of or record the ages of the participants; the planned event is in this category because it is **targeted** at young adults ages 12-18. Count planned events aimed at young adults ages 12-18 even if adult caregivers also attend. Include adult caregivers as attendees of this planned event.
- Adults 19+ - A program session **targeted** at adults age 19+ is any planned event for which the primary audience is adults age 19+. Do not inquire of or record the ages of the participants; the planned event is in this category because it is **targeted** at adults age 19+.
- General interest (all-ages/intergenerational/family) – A program session aimed at all age groups, or multiple age groups. Do not include program sessions here that have already been counted in earlier age category elements. Avoid including program sessions that are targeted at more than one non-adult age category and are not targeted at adults; these should be counted in the child or young adult age category that best represents the target audience.

### FOR EACH PROGRAM AND RECORDING, YOU WILL REPORT ATTENDANCE OR VIEWS:

- Count **attendance** for in-person and live virtual programs.
- Count **views** of prerecorded programs within 30 days only (if the recording stays up that long) or as of the date you remove the recording if fewer than 30 days. For audio-only programs, count the number of times played within 30 days.
- One device equals one view. Don't multiply for several family members attending through one device, for example.

## ENTERING DATA

Your total number of programs must match. See example below.

close

	15.1 Synchronous Programs (All Group Programs by Age)	15.2 Attendance	15.3 Self Directed Activities	15.4 Self Directed Activity Participants
Children (0-5)	<input type="text" value="17"/> <input type="text" value="14"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="20"/> <input type="text" value="60"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown
Children (6-11)	<input type="text" value="17"/> <input type="text" value="14"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="96"/> <input type="text" value="108"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown
Young Adults (12-18)	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="3"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown
Adults (19 and older)	<input type="text" value="6"/> <input type="text" value="7"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown
General Interest	<input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown
<b>Total</b>	<input type="text" value="40"/> <input type="text" value="38"/>	<input type="text" value="141"/> <input type="text" value="184"/>	<input type="text" value="7"/>	

Programs and Attendance should match

7 programs and only 3 attendees?

Onsite, Offsite and Virtual (All Group Programs by Type)		15.29 Program Sessions	15.30 Program Sessions
Synchronous In-Person Onsite Program Sessions	<input type="text" value="42"/> <input type="text" value="38"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="141"/> <input type="text" value="184"/> Unknown	
Synchronous In-Person Offsite Program Sessions	<input type="text" value="7"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	
Synchronous Virtual Program Sessions	<input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	<input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> Unknown	
<b>Total</b>	<input type="text" value="49"/> <input type="text" value="38"/>	<input type="text" value="144"/> <input type="text" value="184"/>	

## DEFINITIONS

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) defines children as a person ages 11 years and under.

### FEDERAL PROGRAM DEFINITION [PLS]

A program is any planned event which introduces the group attending to any of the broad range of library services or activities or which directly provides information to participants. Programs may cover use of the library, library services, or library tours. Programs may also provide cultural, recreational, or educational information, often designed to meet a specific social need. Examples of these types of programs include film showings, lectures, story hours, literacy, English as a second language, citizenship classes, and book discussions. Count all programs, held on- or off-site, sponsored or co-sponsored by the library. Exclude programs sponsored by other groups that use library facilities. If programs are part of a series, count each program in the series. For example, a film series offered once a week for eight weeks equals eight programs. Note: Exclude library activities delivered on a one-to-one basis, rather than to a group, such as one-to-one literacy tutoring, services to homebound, resume writing assistance, homework assistance, and mentoring activities.