



## SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM OF NEW JERSEY

One Vogt Drive, P.O. Box 6700, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

T: 908.458.8400 F: 908.707.8324

Visit [SCLSNJ.org](http://SCLSNJ.org)

### Summary:

Starting the week of April 6, 2020, Young Minds and Family Resources (YMFR) began presenting staff-led YS/YA programs which focused on five main age groups: preschool, elementary, tween, teen, and parents and families. By the end of April, program scheduling increased to up to 10 YS/YA programs a week including at least one outside presenter. **The summer grew to 10-20 programs a week, which lead to over 200 YS/YA virtual programs** offered through August. All programs either incorporated SCLSNJ Virtual Resources and access instructions. During that time, **75% of the programs were staff-led, while 25% were YMFR booked outside presenters.** YMFR also created a virtual learning resources webpage for families and teachers who were looking for additional virtual learning resources and activities while the schools were closed. Weekly Facebook posts promoting SCLSNJ youth virtual resources were created. June saw the virtual Summer Reading Challenge begin. Additionally, Teen Volunteer Coordinators co-collaborated to launch a virtual Teen Volunteering Program.

### Goals, Strategic Priorities, and Core Services:

The ultimate goal was to make community connections by providing core library services virtually as it is important that SCLSN remains relevant to our library public during physical branch closures. Several strategic priorities and core services were involved:

- Explored new ways to SHAPE OUR SPACES to meet community needs by launching virtual programming, creating a virtual learning resources page, transitioning to a virtual Summer Reading Challenge, and a virtual teen volunteering program.
- Made PERSONALIZED CONNECTIONS between patrons and materials with programs that adapted to those who attended and the questions they asked.
- Presented virtual programs that helped the community members CONNECT, EXPLORE, SHARE AND DISCOVER with one another and SCLSNJ, through interactive elements like chat boxes and video conferencing.
- Served as a community GATHERING SPACE through daily virtual programs where youth could socialize with one another and SCLSNJ staff.
- Promoted and supported LIFELONG LEARNING, by making SOARING virtual through Early Literacy programming and promotion of Early Literacy virtual resources. Also the virtual Summer Reading Challenge helped to prevent the Summer Slide and encourage a love of reading.

### Impact:

Parents were thrilled with the wide range of staff-led and outside presenter programs, calling them **phenomenal, educational, and entertaining.** The teen volunteers shared their appreciation for SCLSNJ being one of the few community resources that provided an opportunity to earn volunteer hours this summer. Between April 6 - July 2, **SCLSNJ hosted 97 YS/YA virtual programs and had over 4,205 attendees. SRC recorded over 2,100 youth participants with an 18% increase of readers.** Lastly, the virtual Teen Volunteer program **served over 525** teen volunteers this summer.