

Guidelines for Library Services to Homeless people: why we need them?

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**WE ARE
VISIBLE**

SIGN UP SPEAK OUT BE SEEN

HELPING YOU CONNECT TO THE SOCIAL WORLD





Famous people who were once homeless:

Jack Kerouac, George Orwell,

Charlie Chaplin, Harry Houdini

David Letterman, Halle Berry

Jesus ... and many others.

Homelessness can happen to anyone!





Why do we need Guidelines?

- homeless people do not have equal access to libraries and information (no ID card, permanent address or money for membership)
- most homeless people have some kind of disability
- librarians need extra education and support
- attitudes toward the homeless is different from country to country
- because I am the only librarian in my country who organizes library services for the homeless





Mile got ID – finally membership





Zagreb City Libraries services for the homeless:

- 1) IT workshops for the homeless
- 2) The homeless as volunteers in the library
- 3) Creative workshops with the homeless
- 4) Occasional sales of items made by the homeless and the sale of the *Street Lamps* magazine
- 5) Assisted article writing for the *Street Lamps* magazine
- 6) Promoting programs that include the homeless
- 7) Gatherings *Bring Along A Friend*
- 8) Donation of books and computers





Through networking, partners and individuals can solve specific individual issues (legal, social, health, clothing, food ..)



A BOOK FOR A ROOF

Zagreb City Library's support programs for the homeless

Programs



Began 23. 4. 2010.
8 various programs

beskucnik.kgz.hr

Participants

145 users
17 volunteers
12 partner organizations



Results



365 computer literacy workshops
791 hours of volunteer work
24 promotional activities
112 media releases

Donated

895 books
6 computers
1 printer



Printed



collection of papers **A Second Chance**
leaflet **Information for the homeless**
workbook **Computer basics**
leaflet **Internet safety**
Guidelines regarding the psycho-social
components in workshop work

** data is based on the first 4 years of the project*





Results of the project during EIFL grant (2011/2012)

- 63 users of the IT workshops, 29 of them users of job-seeking support workshops
- 22 users found some kind of employment
- strengthening partnerships and creating new ones
- increased visibility of library
- improved image of library (interviews with users, partners, volunteers, local government)
- City gave funds for continuing the project
- library reached out to the homeless at the shelter





The biggest challenge - working in the shelter



Challenges:

- **users' unpredictable behavior**
- **individual approach**
- **resistance to structural activities**
- **hard not to involve oneself in difficult life stories**
- **need for additional knowledge in the fields of psychiatry, social work, law...**
- **partners cannot always be available when help is needed**
- **success is rare, progress is slow**
- **risk of developing the "burnout" syndrome**
- **are you ready for activism? (Chip Ward)**





World Homeless Day - public gathering





How to overcome challenges?





Educate yourself first.

- find out the real needs of the homeless population in your community

- contact organizations which work with the homeless

Make a decision as to what kind of services you can and want to organize.

- include homeless person in implementation

- include volunteers

- ask for the advice and help of other professions (social workers, lawyers, psychologists, nurses ...)

Whatever you do is better than doing nothing!

Sensitise, make network, encourage changes!





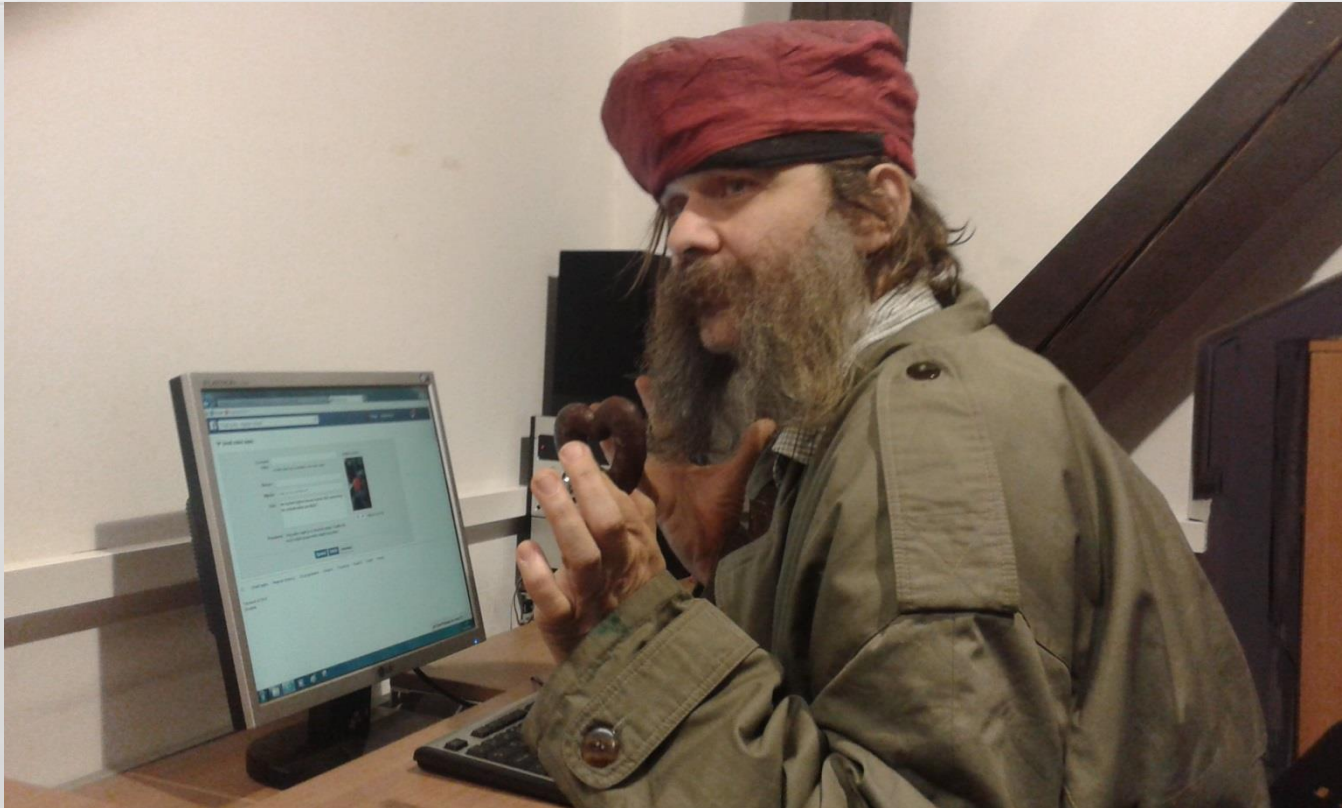
What should be included in the guidelines?





- different definitions of homelessness (not only those who don't have a roof)
- causes of homelessness
- different socio-economic backgrounds of homelessness
- different structure of homeless population
- different attitude towards solving problems
- the specifics of working with them
- challenges and how to overcome them
- library services for homeless and examples of good practice
- make research about library services in other countries around the world
- Partners & resources: Homeless Hub, National Alliance to End Homelessness, FEANTSA ...





**We accept each other as
we are!**





Thank you for your attention!

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