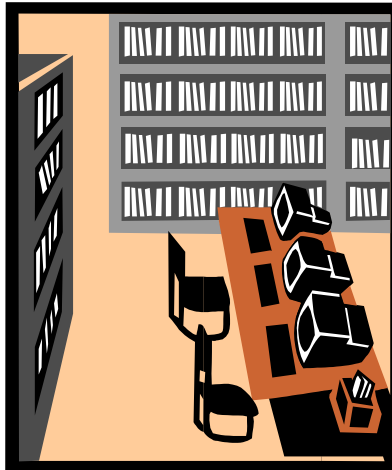


# INFORMATION NEEDS OF SPECIAL POPULATIONS IN COLORADO



October 2002

# **INFORMATION NEEDS OF SPECIAL POPULATIONS IN COLORADO:**

Literature Review  
Census and Community Analysis Information

**Literature Review by  
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Prepared for the Colorado State Library  
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## SUMMARY

We live in an increasingly diverse, fast-paced world. Libraries are responding to this change. They are diversifying their collections, expanding their programs to meet the needs of users whose backgrounds cover every age, ethnic group, and education level.

The challenge is to revise services efficiently and effectively. Institutions' limited budgets require that libraries make decisions based on quantifiable information, not conjecture.

*The Future Is Now*, the Colorado Council for Library Development's strategic plan for 2001-2004, requested information on the needs of and usage by special populations. Census and demographic data are one resource. The Special Populations & Issues Committee of the Colorado Council for Library Development sought additional assistance through a review of research examining the information needs and "search behaviors" of special populations.

The result of this review is that primary research on the topic, especially that specific to Colorado, is limited. However, common trends and inferences do exist:

- Race and ethnicity have much less of an impact on information needs than educational attainment, language ability, and poverty.
- All communities, backgrounds, ages appear to want information about health, money, entertainment, employment opportunities, hobbies and families.
- Across groups, people were more inclined to seek information from other members of their community (i.e., community leaders) or community resources than institutions. Hence, a rich area for possible development for libraries is enhancing relationships with community leaders.
- Libraries can capitalize upon their potential position as a community resource and the informal interaction of library staff with patrons to better reach diverse populations.
- It is important that library personnel familiarize themselves with a group's cultural background before undertaking additional formal information needs studies to establish a level of trust.
- Libraries have a window of opportunity to reach diverse ethnic populations through their educational offerings, especially to those for children.

A library can be a bewildering, overpowering place for those unfamiliar with it. A library that attracts people from all special populations uses a common-sense approach, is a library that shows diversity in its staff and volunteers; places a high priority on friendly personal service; and assists customers in accessing trustworthy information easily.

By devoting time and attention to the qualities that comprise special populations, libraries can enhance their services to diverse groups.

## **INTRODUCTION**

While library literature abounds with work related to minority populations, the majority of it deals with programming suggestions and reflections on existing and changing demographics. There has been little primary research done examining the information needs and seeking or searching behaviors of minority groups. This was borne out during a literature review undertaken in 2002 by the Colorado State Library. Targeted groups were ethnic groups such as Hispanic Americans, Asians, Black Americans, and American Indians; those with mental or physical disabilities; the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community; the poor and/or homeless; and the elderly.

The proposed emphasis was on studies done in Colorado or surrounding states during the past ten years. The goal was to ascertain the information needs and seeking behaviors of a minority community from that community's point of view. It was hoped that a variety of entities, including academic sources, community groups, and business and medical researchers would have tried to answer these questions through techniques such as surveys, key informant or community gatekeeper interviews, focus groups, and observational studies. The Colorado State Library's goal was to provide the state's libraries with available data from the library user's point of view that would support improved library services to an increasingly diverse population.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Initially, searches were conducted in databases such as ERIC, LISA, and ABI-Inform. The scope was then broadened, using Dialog. An initial search was conducted of all files, exempting various obviously unrelated areas such as patents and trademarks. Potential areas of interest such as medicine, business, technology, psychology, and communications were all retained, in addition to the standard library and educational literature. Key words combined various ways of referring to each target community, numerous terms for describing research techniques, and several versions of "information seeking" behaviors, methods, styles, and preferences. Restricting results to Colorado proved too limiting, so that aspect was eliminated. The next step involved exploring the resulting files in-depth, researching each minority community individually.

At the same time, interviews were conducted with the Colorado State Library Special Populations Committee. Recommendations were given as to community and national leaders and organizations within each of the targeted populations. These leads, and the numerous ones that resulted from them, were followed up through telephone or electronic mail as well as additional online research.

## **TERMINOLOGY**

During interviews with community leaders, the question of appropriate terminology for each minority group was considered. The final designations were chosen from terminology used on by the Colorado Department of Education on its web site.

## **RESULTS**

The majority of findings in library or educational literature discussed existing programs grounded in librarian or educator perception of a minority community's needs as opposed to the community's views of its needs. There were numerous literature reviews, but very few primary studies. Medical literature was similar. Business literature, with an emphasis on market research, proved more fruitful.

Additional research was undertaken in a larger body of gray literature, such as reports produced by professional organizations, advocacy groups, corporations, and market researchers. There is a vast body of this work, but it is rarely indexed within the academic databases. It is recommended that the Colorado library community continue contributing to this compilation as new work is discovered.

However, based on the work that was reviewed, it is clear that race and ethnicity have little or no impact on information needs. Educational attainment, language ability, and poverty have a much greater effect. Indeed, physical and mental ability did have some degree of impact, but again, not to a large extent. Cultural background affected personal communication styles, as did length of time in the United States.

Repeatedly, study respondents from all communities, all backgrounds, all ages wanted to know about health, money, entertainment, employment opportunities, hobbies, and their families. This varied in proportion as people aged, but did not change overall. All studied ethnic groups shared these common interests. Non-English speakers were less open to English-based library services, as would be expected. All ethnic and/or racial groups were more inclined to seek information from other members of their community, as indicated in the numerous studies of community leaders, or gatekeepers. Community resources were sometimes perceived as having greater credibility than institutional resources. Individuals with vision or hearing impairment, aside from an interest in and need for information on their disabilities, had the same interests as the general population.

The importance of library personnel familiarizing themselves with a community group's cultural background prior to undertaking any sort of formal information needs study cannot be emphasized too much. Follow-up is crucial. Once the library staff establish an initial level of trust with a community in order to conduct primary research, it must be maintained by reporting the results and putting those results to use, to the benefit of that community.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## OVERALL

Colorado Trust, prepared by REFT Institute, Inc. (2002) Keys to Cultural Competency: a Literature Review for Evaluators of Recent Immigrant and Refugee Service Programs in Colorado. Denver, CO. The Colorado Trust.

[http://www.thecoloradotrust.org/pdf/publications/SIRFI\\_REFT.pdf](http://www.thecoloradotrust.org/pdf/publications/SIRFI_REFT.pdf)

The Colorado Trust undertook an extensive study of the literature on evaluating recent immigrant groups in order to better measure service programs in the state. While not specifically about information-seeking behavior, this excellent report provides valuable background information on various ethnic groups, many of which are new to Colorado, plus important suggestions for conducting multicultural research. While the information was compiled for the benefit of Colorado, it is not Colorado-specific. However, it is valuable to any library exploring ethnic groups in its own community.

The Colorado Trust makes the important point that “when preparing to gather information in an immigrant or refugee community, it is critical to use the appropriate community-based communication channels to let the community know about the research, why it is being conducted and who the sponsor is.” Many concepts that patrons in U.S. public libraries may take for granted, such as confidentiality, are alien in other cultures. This same issue may take on additional significance with undocumented immigrants, who may be wary of “official” investigation. Well-meaning and well-planned interviews with and surveys of a community may be perceived as meddling, or even threatening. Has there been negative stereotyping of a particular group, or unwelcome government intervention? It’s important to consider these factors. A community may react negatively if previous researchers have never brought back any useful findings, or taken any positive action to benefit the group as a result of their work.

This literature review provides important background information on recent immigrant populations into Colorado, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kurdistan, former Soviet republics, Mexico, Central American countries, Laos, Vietnam, Somalia, and Sudan. Each community review highlights important historical points, the status of the group upon entry into the United States, educational and work background, social networks, family relations, women and youth issues, psychological stresses, and communication style. All of these, but especially the latter two, can have a serious impact on information-seeking behaviors.

This report makes the point that certain evaluation techniques, such as face-to-face interviews, have a European cultural context and may be unwelcome in other cultures, such as Southeast Asian. When conducting interviews, it’s important to ask the least threatening questions first, waiting to establish a certain level of trust.

D'Elia, G. (1993). The Roles of the Public Library in Society: the results of a national survey. Evanston, IL, The Urban Libraries Council.

This landmark study surveyed more than 1,000 people nationwide, determining their perception and opinion of public libraries' roles as a community center, a variety of different types of educational support centers, a source of recreational reading, a research center, and a quiet place. The overall results were then broken down to reflect the opinions of Blacks and Hispanic Americans. Results by age and physical disability were also outlined. Both Black and Hispanic-American respondents as well as the overall group overwhelmingly placed a high level of importance on the library in its educational role for preschoolers, all students, and independent adult learners. However, Blacks and Hispanic-Americans regularly accorded each role a higher level of importance than respondents who did not belong to those ethnic groups. Both Black and Hispanic ethnic groups were also more willing spend more capita on library services.

For the most part, seniors (over 65) did not significantly evaluate library roles differently from other age groups. This cohort did place a higher value on the library as a public work place than those in the 18-50 category, and a lower value on its role as a business reference source.

It's interesting to note that respondents living in a household with a disabled person place a high value on the library as a public work place. Disabled respondents themselves placed a high value on the library as a source of popular materials, as well as a public work place.

Lynch, M. J. (1997). "Using public libraries: what makes a difference?" American Libraries 28 (November): 64-66.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) measured library use by household on a national basis in a 1996 telephone survey. While the overall results are briefly summarized online at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs/97446.html>, this article provides a look at public library use by ethnicity tabulated at the American Library Association's (ALA) request. Ethnicity is determined by the head of the household's self-perception. It's important to note, however, that while the percentages in this article reflect usage patterns, they do not offer insight into the underlying reasons for these patterns.

Evaluating ethnicity in terms of household library usage reveals that more Asian or Pacific Islander households had recently used a public library (within the past month or year), while fewer Hispanic households did. Remaining ethnic groups -- White, Black, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and other -- were within one to two percentage points of each other.

However, when household public library usage is examined not only in light of ethnicity but also in terms of the reason for using the library, there is a notable difference. While the Asian/Hispanic differential remains the same when library usage is for enjoyment , hobbies, or personal or consumer issues, the pattern changes when the library is being used for school, work, finding employment, children's activities, or tutoring. In these



cases White households use the library the least, while Asian households continue to be the most likely users.

Metoyer-Duran, C. (1993). "The information and referral process in culturally diverse communities." RQ 32 (3): 359-371.

The 1990 Gatekeeper Study conducted for the California State Library analyzed information-seeking behavior by gatekeepers in American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Hispanic communities in southern California. Not surprisingly, gatekeepers in all groups relied heavily on interpersonal relationships, both acquaintances and professionals, as sources of information. More than half of all respondents used non-English newspapers, while very high percentages of Chinese, Hispanic, Japanese and Korean gatekeepers have a high dependence on newspapers. A majority of Chinese and Hispanic gatekeepers also rely heavily on radio and television, while fewer American Indians do.

Ethnic community gatekeepers indicated they most frequently seek out information on questions of public affairs, education, and finance. The public library ranked quite high as an institutional source of information, below ethnic community and government agencies. However, when asked to site a hypothetical community information center, approximately two-thirds of gatekeepers preferred that the center be housed in a community agency, not the library. Many did not see the connection between the two.

Sontag, J. C. and R. Schacht (1994). "An ethnic comparison of parent participation and information needs in early intervention." Exceptional Children 60 (5): 422-433.

Parents of infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities were the focus of this study. Interviews were conducted with 536 families in the southwest and further comparisons were made among White, Hispanic, and American Indian participants. The median income was between \$20,000 and \$29,999. Availability of services was the most frequently selected type of information, by fifty percent of the parents. When asked to identify sources of information, the only source that garnered a clear majority were medical doctors. Slightly more than a third of parents said they used pamphlets and brochures. A third of parents also said they needed information on how to be a better parent in general, while slightly less than 20% indicated they wanted information on caring for their child's physical needs. Almost a third want to know what services are required by law.

Both American Indian and Hispanic parents indicated more of a need than White parents for information about how to get services, while American Indian families also wanted more information than other ethnic groups on parents' rights.

## **BLACK AMERICANS**

(1999). Summary Report on the African American Medicare Population. Washington, D.C., Barents Group for the Health Care Financing Administration.  
<http://www.medicare.gov/nmep/publications&reports/pdfs/sum4.pdf>

This report is one of several market research studies conducted by the National Medicare Education Program's consumer research division, based on data collected over several years. Findings are based on focus groups, a national Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, and an inventory of perceived needs based on input from appropriate organizations who work with beneficiaries.

Poverty, educational attainment, and geography were seen as having a greater impact than race on information needs and seeking styles. Overall information needs of Black Medicare recipients are quite similar to the Medicare beneficiary population as a whole. However, there were distinct knowledge gaps that researchers felt merited additional attention by Medicare, such behavioral risk factors, supplemental insurance, preventive care such as flu shots, and managed care. Managed care knowledge is seen as lacking due to a scarcity of managed care plans in Black communities. In addition, researchers noted a knowledge gap about health issues prevalent among Black, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Blacks relied more heavily on and placed a higher level of trust in the HCFA as the Medicare administrator, than did the general beneficiary population. However, findings emphasize that communication efforts should rely on local, community sources. This is organization-dependent, however. For instance, AARP was not necessarily seen as an ideal organizational partner for this population.

Agada, J. (1999). "Inner-city gatekeepers: an exploratory survey of their information use environment." Journal of the American Society for Information Society 50 (1): 74-85.

This study of Black community leaders focuses on an inner-city Milwaukee neighborhood with an unemployment rate higher than 20%, and almost half of the households depending on an income of less than \$10,000. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with twenty key leaders identified by community organizations, on the supposition that these community gatekeepers are often the source of information for a neighborhood as well as the means to communicate with a specific population.

Findings, unsurprisingly, included that gatekeepers have higher levels of education and income than the rest of the community. The most frequently cited information needs related to race relations, crime, and family issues.

It's important to note that information needs typically went unmet due to lack of awareness of or access to existing and available resources. Black community gatekeepers in this study were more likely to depend on personal contacts than all other sources of information. This is similar to studies of other ethnic groups, as well. Interpersonal relationships lend credibility. Institutional contacts, such as staff at government agencies, suffered from the "insider/outsider phenomenon". Gatekeepers felt that in some instances they suffered from the "selective dissemination of information". Neighbors, friends, and acquaintances were believed to provide information within a relevant context, unlike government and institutional sources.

Bishop, A. P., T. J. Tidline, et al. (1999). "Public libraries and networked information services in low-income communities." Library & Information Science Research 21 (3): 361-390.

This 1998 study, part of the Prairienet Community Network Initiative (CNI), combined household interviews, focus groups, and surveys to better understand community information needs and computer experience in a predominantly Black, low-income neighborhood in Champaign-Urbana, IL.

The majority of participants were female and participated in the CNI program. The majority of adults in the study were also employed, again not necessarily representative of their low-income neighborhoods. This undoubtedly biased results, but they are still important to consider in context. The most frequently cited information needs related to health, parenting, education, recreation, and employment issues. Once again, participants rely heavily on personal relationships for information regarding community resources and activities. Local institutions were also frequently cited.

Networked information access was perceived as crucial to full participation in society. Study participants, who were already using community center or library-based computers and benefiting from the CNI training program, believed home access was critical, as it is not dependent on institutional schedules, rules, and privacy.

Participants were eager to contribute their own knowledge as content for networked community information.

Ellis, Evelyn M. (1997) The impact of race and gender on graduate school socialization, satisfaction with graduate study and commitment to completion of the degree among Black and White doctoral students. Higher Education. University Park, Pennsylvania State University.

<http://www.diversityweb.org/Digest/F00/graduate.html>

This doctoral dissertation compared the experiences of a small sample of Black and White men and women at a predominantly White research institution. Among the various conclusions is the finding that race appears to have more impact than gender on whether students have a positive or negative graduate school experience. Black women appeared to be the most isolated, and often found academic support outside of their departments for such tasks as forming dissertation committees, finding research articles, improving writing skills, and giving presentations.

Spink, A. and C. Cole (2001). "Information and poverty: information-seeking channels used by African American low-income households." Library & Information Science Research 23 (1): 45-65.

This survey of three hundred predominantly Black households in a low-income community in Dallas demonstrated that family and friends were the primary information source. External sources are used more frequently, however, for health and employment issues.

## ASIAN

Zhang, X. (2001). The Practice and Politics of Public Library Services to Asian Immigrants. Immigrant Politics and the Public Library. S. Luevano-Molina. Westport, CT, Greenwood Press: 141-150.

This essay offers a valuable discussion of the information-seeking behavior of Asian-language speakers, based on the author's personal and professional experience. This brief section touches on the lack of awareness of public library services such as reference by Asian immigrants, and the reasons why. The author emphasizes that this community is not likely to complain about lack of services or bilingual staff, as speaking up is not a cultural norm. Language proficiency is a serious issue, as this prevents societal integration and limits the ability to solicit assistance.

## DISABILITIES

(1999). Summary Report on the Medicare Population with Vision Loss. Washington, D.C., Barents Group for the Health Care Financing Administration.  
<http://www.medicare.gov/nmep/publications&reports/pdfs/sum2.pdf>

(1999). Summary Report on the Medicare Population with Vision Loss. Washington, D.C., Barents Group for the Health Care Financing Administration.  
<http://www.medicare.gov/nmep/publications&reports/pdfs/sum1.pdf>

These two reports are among several market research studies conducted by the National Medicare Education Program's consumer research division, based on data collected over several years. Findings are based on focus groups, a national Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, and an inventory of perceived needs based on input from appropriate organizations who work with beneficiaries.

Vision-impaired elderly Medicare beneficiaries comprise almost 40% of the total elderly beneficiary population, but are proportionately older, much poorer, less educated, and in worse health than the entire pool of beneficiaries. Important information needs of this group are prevention of, diagnosis of, and treatment for vision loss; adaptive techniques; and assistive devices. Vision-impaired beneficiaries do need to rely on family and friends more than others to satisfy their information needs. Radio is very important as a source of information.

Similarly, 42% of the general elderly Medicare beneficiary population has some degree of hearing loss. As with the vision-impaired group, this large a percentage means that the information needs of the hearing-impaired are generally the same as the overall Medicare population. Again, as with the vision-impaired beneficiaries, those with hearing loss need information on diagnosis and treatment, cost of devices and treatment, and other matters related to hearing.

Differences occur between those who experienced hearing loss early in life and were

able to develop other communication techniques, and those who lost their hearing later in life. Indeed, those who experienced profound loss of hearing earlier in life were more likely to turn to community organizations than to Medicare for their information.

This community's concern is less with the source of information than with how it is disseminated. In-person communication is preferred, as it provides lip-reading opportunity and a chance to ask for information to be repeated. This is not true, however, for those with profound hearing loss. Written information was preferred by those with partial hearing loss, while those with early onset, profound loss were less likely to have the necessary literacy to find written tools useful. Sign language used within the hearing-impaired community channels was preferred by this group.

Deines-Jones, C. Van Fleet, Connie (1995). Preparing Staff to Serve Patrons with Disabilities. New York, Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

This entry in the excellent *How-to-do-It Manual* series, while not covering information needs research, does offer many excellent suggestions for providing services to disabled patrons, with separate chapters dealing with the needs of seniors, children, and young adults. A sample "Request for Demographic Information" form, intended for library staff, is provided in the chapter dealing with Outreach Services.

Williamson, K., D. Schauder, et al. (2001). "The role of the Internet for people with disabilities: issues of access and equity for public libraries." Australian Library Journal 50 (2): 157-174. <http://www.alia.org.au/alj/50.2/full.text/access.equity.html>

This article describes two separate studies, one focused on visually-impaired Internet users and their information-seeking behavior, while the other targeted a wider range of disabilities, including mental development.

The first study used two focus groups, one in Melbourne and one in rural Australia. Interviews were also done with an additional fifteen legally blind subjects. The majority of participants were female, many were older, and not all had ready access to a computer suitable for Internet use. Researchers concluded that an important issue when determining information needs was whether the subject had been born blind or became blind later in life. The former group tends to be more independent.

Aside from an interest in information about their disabilities and techniques for handling daily life in light of them, there was very little difference between this group and the population at large. Interests were comparable to studies of the elderly, which was not surprising as difficulty seeing is likely to increase with age. Family and friends were identified as the most frequently consulted source for daily topics such as health, money, recreation, and consumer issues.

The second study that focused on physical and intellectual disabilities included 102 subjects and nine different Australian public libraries. Recreational interests were explored indepth. Overall television commanded the interest of more than 40% of respondents, followed by football, reading, and dogs. Those with intellectual disabilities were far less likely, however, to list reading as an interest and more likely to list

television. Football was also of greater interest than to subjects with other types of disabilities. (As this is an Australian study, bear in mind that football here most likely refers to soccer.) Animals were also of greater interest to those with intellectual disabilities.

## **GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL/TRANSGENDERED (GLBT)**

Creelman, J. A. E. and R. M. Harris (1990). "Coming out: the information needs of lesbians." Collection Building 10 (3-4): 37-41.

The authors focused on the information needs of lesbians at a specific time: when they're "coming out", or publicly addressing their sexual identity. Fifty lesbians who were sufficiently comfortable with their identities to be involved in gay and lesbian community groups participated in a series of interviews. Findings must be interpreted in light of various inherent biases. All participants were White and living in a Canadian metropolitan area; had already come out; were asked to consider their answers based on wants and needs in the past; and the study was done more than a decade ago, prior to widespread use of the Internet.

Study participants were asked to recall the sorts of information they required during the time they were coming out. Respondents indicated a high awareness of libraries as a source of relevant information related to coming out, indeed, libraries were ranked in the number one position. Twice as many respondents had been aware of libraries as of women's bookstores or gay/lesbian counseling phone lines.

An equal number of participants sought help from print sources as from other lesbians. However, more than half did not find reading material helpful, saying they had difficulty finding relevant material; that available material focused on men; there was no "practical lifestyle information"; or the materials had a negative or depressing bias. Friends were the third most frequently chosen source of information, and the most popular.

Specific questions clustered into three areas: self-awareness, coming out to others, and seeking other lesbians and understanding social rules. In the self-awareness category, the most common question by a 2:1 ratio is the respondent trying to determine whether or not she is a lesbian. During the coming out process, the most common question by a greater than 3:1 ratio asks how to manage disclosure and how to handle rejection. The most common questions during the socialization process dealt with learning where to meet other lesbians, perceiving who else is lesbian, and understanding lesbian sex.

Phelps, L. (1999). Classroom Experiences of Self Identified Lesbian Undergraduate Students in Higher Education. College of Education. Greeley, University of Northern Colorado.

Learning styles from the classroom may also be applicable in the library. This qualitative study analyzes six lesbian students' in-class experiences, identifying concerns relative to feelings of safety, stereotyping, isolationism, peer support, and the

influence of professors. Recommendations for the campus setting include more visible GLBT role models such as faculty and staff; a GLBT resource center, which provides a "safe" environment; supportive faculty and staff; and incorporating GLBT issues into curriculum, which calls for an institutional commitment.

Garnar, Martin (2000). *Changing Times: Meeting the Information Needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community in Denver, Colorado*. University College. Denver, University of Denver.

[Denver GLBT survey - Martin Garnar.doc](#)

During the course of this project the researcher surveyed the Denver GLBT community about information needs during and after the coming out process. Respondents indicated they were more likely to turn to community centers and GLBT bookstores than a library when seeking pertinent information, raising questions about feelings of comfort and safety in the public library when dealing with a very personal and sensitive topic. Survey respondents included 169 gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered persons.

Whitt, A. J. (1993). "The Information Needs of Lesbians." Library & Information Science Research 15 (3): 275-288.

Whitt observed that the majority of library literature addressing gay and lesbian information needs was from the librarians' point of view. She responded with this excellent 1990 study, based on 141 completed mailed surveys in a metropolitan area in the southeast. Results indicate that the library is a frequent initial information source for this community, particularly if the lesbian community itself is difficult to find or non-existent. However, patrons are often deterred from later visits due to inadequate or dated collection, a perception that gay/lesbian material was buried, and an awareness of negativity on the part of circulation staff. Respondents also indicated a strong need for materials for teenagers, as they have less access to the GLBT community than adults.

## **HISPANIC**

(1999). Summary Report on the Hispanic/Latino Medicare Population. Washington, D.C., Barents Group for the Health Care Financing Administration.  
<http://www.medicare.gov/nmep/publications&reports/pdfs/sum3.pdf>

This report is one of several market research studies conducted by the National Medicare Education Program's consumer research division, based on data collected over several years. Findings are based on focus groups, a national Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, and an inventory of perceived needs based on input from appropriate organizations who work with beneficiaries.

Hispanic Medicare beneficiaries comprise the fastest growing racial or ethnic segment of the Medicare elderly population. They are also younger, poorer, less healthy, and less educated. While information needs are seen as similar to the overall population, self-reported knowledge of the program is more limited.



Community leaders are seen as an important information resource for Spanish-speakers, while English-speakers are more likely to turn to actual Medicare sources. While both the general Medicare population and the Hispanic population as a whole prefer one-on-one communication, Spanish-speakers also rely heavily on Spanish-language radio and television. The credibility of broadcast media to this population is substantially higher than with other beneficiary groups.

(1998). Multicultural Curriculum and the Latino Community. Denver, LARASA (Latin American Research and Service Agency).

This brief paper neatly summarizes the philosophy behind multicultural education, its impact on Hispanic students, demographic trends, and policy and practice in Colorado. While LARASA's work is for the most part a review of existing literature and law and not a primary analysis of information needs, its insight and recommendations are worth perusing. In particular, LARASA recommends increasing ethnic minority faculty with an eye to improving the opportunity for student mentoring, lending credibility to classroom equality in the students' eyes, and providing positive role models.

(1990). Adrift in a Sea of Change: California's Public Libraries Struggle to Meet the Information Needs of Multicultural Communities. Sacramento, Center for Policy Development, distributed by California State Library.

Although this excellent older work specifically targets California public libraries, its findings are still worth considering. The research focused on information needs assessments in minority communities, examining available demographic data, analyzing the value and availability of multilingual and multicultural staff, and the importance of leadership as a change agent. The study comprised field visits and mail surveys of 150 libraries. It's important to emphasize that this study surveyed library staff, and not the minority library users.

Findings emphasize that a particular minority group affiliation itself does not shape information needs, but related cultural and socioeconomic factors do. These include language, literacy, education, and level of acculturation. Librarians themselves perceived differences among minority groups, but were not clear as to whether minority groups' needs differed that much from White Anglos. A review of specific reference services targeting minority populations found they were underutilized, and that informal information networks were more popular with minority librarians than more formal resources. The key finding, however, is that staffing is the prime element to successfully meeting minority groups' information needs, particularly when there is an absence of community assessments.

(2002) College Knowledge: What Latino Parents Need to Know and Why They Don't Know It. Claremont, CA: Tomas Rivera Policy Institute.  
[http://www.trpi.org/PDF/College\\_Knowledge.pdf](http://www.trpi.org/PDF/College_Knowledge.pdf)

A telephone survey of more than 1,000 Hispanic parents in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles, followed up by key interviews with forty-one of these parents revealed that Hispanic parents were unprepared to advise children about college choices,



although almost all expected their children to attend college. This finding correlated with lower incomes, less educational attainment, and whether or not the parents were first-generation immigrants. The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute also assembled ten questions and answers to help prepare parents to advise their children about the college admission process.

Alire, Camila and Orlando Archibeque. (1998). Serving Latino Communities. New York, Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

This handbook provides an excellent guide for librarians wishing to do their own community information needs assessment. Early chapters provide an overview of the Hispanic population nationwide. Chapter 4 discusses the reasons for doing an assessment, as well as suggestions for designing and administering a survey, holding informal interviews and conducting focus groups. A valuable benefit is the inclusion of the bilingual questionnaire used by the Santa Barbara Public Library, and model focus group questions.

Gandara, Patricia. (1994). "Choosing Higher Education: Educationally Ambitious Chicanos and the Path to Social Mobility" Education Policy Analysis Archives 2 (8): <http://olam.ed.asu.edu/epaa/v2n8.html>, retrieved September 22, 2002.

In this study, 50 Hispanic Americans who had attained JDs, MDs, or PhDs were interviewed and studied over a period of more than ten years. All subjects came from backgrounds where neither parent finished high school or worked at more than skilled labor. It was determined that one of the key factors to the interviewees' success in educational endeavors was parental modeling of a hard work ethic. In addition, participants were exposed to a high achieving non-Hispanic peer group throughout their school careers against which they could compare themselves.

Moller, Sharon. C. (2001). Library Service to Spanish Speaking Patrons: a practical guide. Englewood, CO, Libraries Unlimited.

This rich resource by a Colorado Mountain College librarian draws on secondary research to support well-written explanations of Hispanic patron motivation and behaviors. The earlier sections on The People and Latin American Schools, Libraries, and Books provide historical and cultural background on information-seeking behavior. Moller emphasizes the importance of the wide variety of Hispanic cultural heritages, length of time resident in the United States, and the influence of messages delivered in Spanish. She highlights the differences between public and school libraries in various Latin American cultures and the U.S. In many instances the public library is not perceived as a community center or source of personal fulfillment and asking questions is frowned upon.

The appendices provide numerous resources in both Spanish and English, including a brief user survey.

Ocon, B. (2000). Effective Outreach Strategies to the Latino Community: a Paradigm for Public Libraries. Library Services to Latinos. S. Guarena. Jefferson, NC, McFarland & Co., Incl.

In the portion of this essay that deals with knowing your community, author Ben Ocon provides a general overview of the steps necessary to understand a Hispanic community's information needs, including researching demographic data, familiarizing oneself with the Hispanic community and its leaders, hosting focus groups, and conducting surveys.

Thapa, B., A. R. Graefe, et al. (2002). "Information needs and search behaviors: a comparative study of ethnic groups in the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests, California." Leisure Sciences 24 (1): 89-107.

This excellent study in the recreation field identifies the information needs of various ethnic groups using national forests in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Whites and Hispanic Americans dominated to such an extent that anyone who did not fit into either of these two categories were simply combined as Other. Of the 566 respondents, 65% identified themselves as White, 22% as Hispanic, and the remaining 13% as Other.

There was a wide income range. Whites reported using all available resources more frequently than Hispanic or Other forest users. Hispanics were "least likely to approach rangers or employees" while bulletin boards were least used by Other minority groups. The most frequently used information resource for all groups were fliers and brochures. White forest users were more inclined to inquire for orientation and educational reasons, while Hispanic respondents placed more importance on instrumental uses, such as parking, permits, and hours. This study also discusses how forest use varies by ethnicity.

## **AMERICAN INDIAN**

(1992) Pathways to Excellence: a Report on Improving Library and Information Services for Native American Peoples. Washington, D.C., U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS).  
<http://www.nclis.gov/libraries/nata.html>

This three year study focused on the information needs, resources, and available services of American Indian peoples, but did not appear to differentiate among tribes. Cited as broad significant needs at this time were applying electronic technology to create new material that could be archived, reflecting tribal culture and heritage; developing language documentation; providing books and other print resources in Native languages; and American Indian legal documentation.

## **POVERTY/HOMELESSNESS**

D'Alanno, Tracy A. (2001) Homelessness in the Denver Metropolitan Area: the changing Face of Homelessness. Third Annual Point in Time Study. Denver, CO.,

Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative and the Colorado Department of Human Services Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs.

<http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/shhp/PDF FILES/Executive Summary.pdf>

This study, the third of its kind, involved all six Front Range counties. On October 23, 2001, one hundred and twenty homeless providers conducted a census of homeless persons. Surveys were completed with the help of staff and volunteers at area shelters, food lines, day shelters, treatment programs, hospitals, welfare motels, transitional housing, and work programs. While this report does not investigate the information needs of the homeless population along the Front Range, it does give a very thorough picture of this population in terms of size, growth trends, ethnicity, age (especially the status of children), military status, mental illness, substance abuse, health issues such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, use of public assistance services. Confidentiality is cited as an important limiting factor in surveying this population.

## **SENIORS/ELDERLY**

(1999). Information Needs and Preferences of the General Medicare Population. Health Care Financing Administration, Washington, D.C.

<http://www.medicare.gov/nmep/publications&reports/pdfs/factsh~2.pdf>

This newsletter offers a brief, two-page summary of an ongoing study by Medicare's consumer research division of the information needs and preferences of its entire client base. Additional reports provide findings in greater detail for Blacks, the Hispanic community, those with vision loss, clients with hearing impairment, rural Medicare recipients, and those with limited education and/or low literacy. Descriptions of the first four appear elsewhere in this report.

General findings confirm that timeliness, relevancy, and clear, easily understood presentation are all important factors to Medicare beneficiaries. Information is more meaningful when provided within a personal context.

The majority of beneficiaries often didn't know where to go within the Medicare bureaucracy for information, and are frustrated by this inability to get the information they need. The report also highlights that the information needs of individual beneficiaries change over time.

Medicare beneficiaries are seen as needing three primary types of information: basic, navigational, and situation-specific. Basic refers to understanding elementary features of the Medicare program, while navigational describes the beneficiaries' need to know how to choose health care providers, and how to access Medicare services. Situation-specific could imply needs within a designated geographic area, but also refers to a beneficiary's personal context in a wider sense.

(2002). American Perceptions of Aging in the 21st Century: the NCOA's continuing study of the myths and realities of aging. [http://www.ncoa.org/mem/study\\_aging.htm](http://www.ncoa.org/mem/study_aging.htm)

Released in Denver in 2002, this study is a 25 year follow-up to a 1974 survey.

Its results have significant application to library services as it discusses what respondents, all of whom had to be 65 or older, perceive as their problems and their interest, broken down by gender, educational attainment (high school), and age range.

Among the key findings are that between 1974 and 2000 the perception of money, health, loneliness, and crime as very or somewhat serious problems for the respondent has decreased sharply. However, at the same time, the perception that these four areas remain serious problems for others age 65 or older has remained almost static. More than a third of respondents identify themselves as middle-aged, and only 15% of those 75 or older consider themselves “very old.”

Respondents were asked what kind of preparation is important for one’s later years. Both health and financial factors were cited as important by both men and women. Although financial issues are the key determinant in why people retire, health issues are perceived as the key to a vital later life.

It’s important to acknowledge that the results of this research cannot be generalized to those living in institutions or whose health prevented them from answering a 25 minute telephone survey. This link takes you to a detailed, 16-page brochure describing the history of the survey and highlighting the findings. There is an accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

Reinhard, Susan C.; Marisa A. Scala; and Barbara Coleman. (2001) Navigating the Long-Term Care Maze: new approaches to information and assistance in three states. Washington, DC., AARP Public Policy Institute.

[http://research.aarp.org/health/2001\\_12\\_maze\\_1.html#RC\\_TITLE\\_BAR](http://research.aarp.org/health/2001_12_maze_1.html#RC_TITLE_BAR)

Programs in New Jersey, Wisconsin, and Indiana were examined through extensive interviews at the state, county, and service provider level and through on-site visits in 2000. Each state uses a different model of information access in terms of leadership, system design, funding, and outreach. The researchers concluded that a single point of contact for multiple information needs greatly eases the difficulty for patrons, stating that minimizing “the amount of searching they must do ... enables them to find the services they need.” Leadership turnover and inadequate funding can both be detrimental, and a clearly stated plan for consumer information access should be in place.

## **DIGITAL ACCESS**

(1998). Losing Ground Bit by Bit: Low-Income Communities in the Information Age. Washington, DC, Benton Foundation. <http://www.benton.org/Library/Low-Income/>

The Benton Foundation examined the technology gap in low-income communities, assessed what barriers are slowing the spread of new technologies to the underserved, and describes some of the most promising efforts to produce a more equitable distribution.

(2001). Hispanic Internet Usage Profile. Port Washington, NY, Roslow Research Group.  
[Roslow Hispanic Internet Use.doc](#)

This study, conducted in July 2000 and March 2001, involved 600 telephone interviews with respondents identifying themselves as Hispanic in the six major Hispanic markets: Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, San Antonio, and San Francisco. Participants also had to speak Spanish at home at least some of the time, be at least 16, and have used the Internet during the preceding month. All interviewers were bilingual. Indeed, 79% of the interviews were completed in Spanish.

Findings here are rather more optimistic than many others centering on the Hispanic community. According to Roslow Research Group, 78% of Hispanic Internet users have home computers, with almost all of these equipped with Internet access. The average online time is almost 6.5 hours per week.

The most dramatic finding may be that online usage in Spanish has significantly increased, now outweighing English 55% to 45%. This is comparable to other forms of media consumption. The same respondents spend about 64% of their television time with Spanish-language content, and almost 75% of their radio listening time.

E-mail is the most common usage with 75% of respondents, 61% use the Internet for undefined research, 48% to get news, 40% for music, and 27% to get news about Latin America.

(2002). A Nation Online: how Americans are expanding their use of the Internet, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration.  
<http://www.esa.doc.gov/508/esa/nationonline.htm>

This nationwide survey of 57,000 households and more than 137,000 individuals, conducted in 2001, is one of the broadest studies ever done of Internet usage and connectivity. The report can be mined for useful information on which special populations are – and are not – using the Internet.

In Colorado, 57%-63% of the total population are Internet users. Nationwide, usage has increased steadily across all income categories. In the lowest income categories, use increased from 9.2% of households in 1997 to 25% in 2001. However, it's important to examine the effect of income in conjunction with educational attainment. Households with a high income but lower educational levels are less likely to use the Internet.

Use of the Internet in the Hispanic community varies depending on the language spoken at home. Only 14.1% of Spanish-only homes used the Internet, while almost 40% of people living in multilingual homes made use of it. However, once again this calls for the data to be examined through multiple variables. For instance, a much higher percentage of Spanish-only households are in the very low income range, compared to multilingual Hispanic households.

Both Hispanic and Black Americans were less likely than others to access the Internet for e-mail, or to search for news, conduct searches for product/service information or make online purchases.

E-mail and instant messaging was far and away the most popular Internet use for all income categories, including low and very low income households (under \$25,000). Product and service information search was the next most popular reason to go online, closely followed by news, weather, and sports. This did not vary across income categories.

Internet use by age is also examined. Usage in the 50+ age range increased by 11% from 1997-2001. Reasons for usage did vary by age, however. "Those 55 and older were least likely to use the Internet in many of the surveyed categories, such as playing games, job searching, participating in chat rooms or list serves, viewing television or movies, listening to the radio, or trading online. On the other hand, this age group was more likely (42.7 percent) than any other age group to check health information online. And those 55 and older showed equally strong e-mail use as any other adult age group."

Internet usage by those with a physical disability such as vision or hearing impairment, difficulty walking or typing, multiple disabilities, or difficulty leaving home, is also relatively high. In the under age 25 category, more than 40% of all disability categories and more than 50% of most of them use the Internet from any location (home, school, work, elsewhere). In the age 25-60 range, even higher percentages of all categories have a computer at home, and two-thirds to three-fourths of these use their computer for Internet access. The only exception in this age cohort is those with multiple disabilities.

While the percentages are high, they are still substantially lower than those for the population without physical disabilities. Usage patterns varied somewhat from the general population, with the disabled Internet user being more likely to use the Internet to seek health-related information or to play games. Those over 60 are less likely to use the Internet, and that situation worsens for those with disabilities.

The lessened likelihood to use the Internet for those with disabilities holds true even when income and education are factored in.

(2002). *Latinos and Information Technology: the Promise and the Challenge*. Claremont, CA, Tomas Rivera Policy Institute for the IBM Hispanic Digital Divide Task Force. [Latinos and IT.pdf](#)

This thorough report evaluates access to information technology (IT), IT development in schools or other educational settings, and Hispanics in the IT workforce. Findings include the point that "community relevance and cultural content are important predictors of Internet use by Latinos", and that the K-12 access to technology gap as a function of race/ethnicity and income is closing. Educational improvement is slowed by the lower penetration of home computers and broadband access in the Hispanic



community. The leading recommendation is to increase awareness of IT's importance throughout the community. The authors stress that this heightened awareness of IT's potential impact and participation in a networked communication environment will improve educational achievement and lower the dropout rate.

(2002). Keeping the Promise: Hispanic Education and America's Future. Washington, DC, U.S. Senate Health Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee; Congressional Hispanic Caucus; and U.S. Senate Democratic Hispanic Task Force. [Keeping the Promise Hispanic Educ.pdf](#)

The Congressional authors have highlighted key demographic and educational statistics, such as the expected dropout rates, teacher qualifications, immigrant status and budget cuts. However, the report also points out that the number of Hispanic students is growing in areas of the country not accustomed to serving them. Colorado experienced a 69% increase in the number of Hispanic youth ages 5 through 18 from 1990-2000. While this report is an excellent source of summarized statistics, it offers little or no insight into information-seeking behaviors and needs of Hispanic children and youth.

Casey, J., R. Ross, et al. (1999). Native Networking: Telecommunications and Information Technology in Indian Country. Washington, DC, Benton Foundation. [benton Native Networking.pdf](#)

While this report does not cover online usage patterns among American Indians, its discussion of available technology and its overview of demographics make it a valuable resource. According to the 1990 Census, 53% of American Indian homes on reservations did not have phones. However, more than half of tribal schools and colleges are equipped with classroom cable drops to connect computers once the facilities and equipment are ready. The Indian Health Service (IHS) is providing teleradiology in New Mexico, and arranging for shared data lines with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Navajo Nation. A look at tribal web pages reveals that in 1998 there were 550 federally recognized tribes, and about 100 of these had official Web sites accessible to the public.

The Benton Foundation's authors see tribal opportunities in community and cultural development, economic development, and political empowerment. Among these, of particular note is the suggestion that tribes without tribal colleges or K-12 schools could supplement education for their students in public schools. Archiving, preserving, and sharing cultural resources, an important goal for most tribes, would be enhanced with improved technology. Other suggestions include increased telemedicine and tribal ownership of communications infrastructure.

While there are no Colorado-specific statistics here, there are for several other states in the Rocky Mountain region, including Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Utah, Montana, and Wyoming.

Macias, E. (2002). Latino Internet content study: findings from focus group sessions. Claremont, CA, Tomas Rivera Policy Institute. [Latino Internet Content Study](#) (executive summary only)

The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, known for its research in the Hispanic community, conducted focus groups of Hispanic Internet users and non-users in New York City and Los Angeles. Concerns cited by non-users include online security; family safety issues such as pornography, identity robbery, and lack of interest in traditional learning modes; and loss of family interaction and sociability.

Culturally specific and bilingual web sites were not perceived as motivators by non-users. Access must come first, then Hispanic content becomes important. Local community information was seen as very important. However, content is not the driving force for access. Practical considerations such as hardware, software, connection fees, and lack of skills were more significant inhibitors. A feel of intimidation stemming from weaker English skills or lack of understanding about the technology also prevented non-users from going online.

More experienced users employed the Internet in order to save money on domestic and international phone calls. Education, research, entertainment, leisure, news, and shopping usage were all common. Online purchasing was less common than finding product and company information.

Focus group participants suggested providing computers in public centers and free access, along with creating content specifically for the Hispanic community in order to make the Internet more attractive.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

This section provides links to national, regional, and Colorado resources that may be able to provide additional help understanding and serving minority populations.

### **Multicultural/Multi-ethnic/Underserved**

#### ***National***

##### **[ALA Council Committee on Diversity](#)**

The goal of this ALA committee is to provide a forum for discussion of diversity issues within ALA and the profession; provide training and special events, develop materials; and serve as a resource to community groups, educators, and others. The committee's site offers policy statements, and all committee members and their e-mail addresses are listed



### **ALA Library Outreach to Underserved Populations**

Prepared by the ALA Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS), this site is a useful link to the many ALA organizations that work with minority groups, including elderly, people with disabilities, GLBT population, people of color, and the poor and homeless.

### **ALA Office for Diversity**

The Office for Diversity consults and trains on diversity issues affecting ALA members and the profession, and serves as the staff liaison to the ALA Committee on Diversity. The web site offers links to valuable resources in other communities and libraries in such areas as aging, multiculturalism, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender issues, and various levels of learning, perceptual, and physical abilities. The Diversity Articles section offers numerous downloadable full text or abstracts of pertinent articles, as well as several bibliographies.

### **Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table**

This ALA round table provides information on recommended ethnic collections, services, and programs as well as sponsoring conference programs and publishing material that may be useful to the librarian serving a multicultural community. The discussion list is open to all. See their Links page for additional library and cultural resources. Of particular interest is their Publications page for EMIERT's **Directory of Ethnic and Multicultural Publishers, Distributors, and Resource Organizations**, a rich source of contact information regarding specialty materials.

## **Colorado**

### **Boulder Public Library, Multi-Cultural Outreach Services**

Ghada Elturk, Outreach Librarian, [elturkg@boulder.lib.co.us](mailto:elturkg@boulder.lib.co.us)  
303-441-4941

Boulder Public Library's Ghada Elturk has garnered national attention for her work in multicultural library programming. The BPL Web site offers very detailed information on current and future programs, including outreach services established in cultural centers or ethnic neighborhoods elsewhere in Boulder. Turn to the site's [Multi-Cultural Resources Web Links](#) for well-chosen and annotated links to resources in careers, multilingual computer tutorials, arts, languages, history, online periodicals, and particularly cultural diversity.

## **Black**

### **Black Caucus of the American Library Association**

The Black Caucus works to promote and improve library services to the African American community and to provide for the recruitment and professional development of African American librarians. The web site offers links to pertinent resources in fields such as history, literature, civil rights, genealogy, health,

## **Asian American/Asian/Pacific Islander**

### **Asian/Pacific Islander American Librarians Association**

The APALA targets the needs of Asian/Pacific American librarians as well as those who serve the Asian/Pacific American Communities.

## **Hearing Impaired**

### ***National***

#### **ALA - Libraries Service to the Deaf Forum**

This forum, a division of the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, promotes library and information service to deaf persons in both the library community and in the deaf and hearing populations. It also monitors legislation and funding related to library services for deaf persons; promotes library careers for deaf persons, and has developed a clearinghouse of information on services.

#### **National Association of the Deaf (NAD)**

This non-profit combines 51 state affiliates to do advocacy, offer legal assistance, certify interpreters, and provide information. NAD also includes the Library Friends section, formerly known as FOLDA, or Friends of Libraries for Deaf Action.

### ***Colorado***

#### **Colorado Association of the Deaf**

Daniel Curl, President  
3632 South Spruce Street  
Denver, CO 80237-1358  
Email: cadpresident@aol.com  
tty: 303-290-9715

#### **Colorado Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Barbara J. Wood, Executive Director  
2211 W. Evans, Bldg B,  
Denver CO 80223  
email: Deaf.Commission@state.co.us

The Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH), a division of the Colorado Department of Human Services, provides a central point of entry for government agencies and the deaf and hard of hearing community regarding the interests of this population. The CCDHH makes recommendations to the Colorado Legislature on the issues and concerns of the deaf and hard of hearing community in an effort to ensure equivalent access to state government, to make government work more efficiently, and to serve in an advocacy role for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

### **Colorado Department of Education: Colorado Services to Children who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing**

This site lets you explore services available through the state and local school districts, read about ongoing research being done by the state, and find contacts within the state's education system who may be able to provide assistance.

### **Colorado Families for Hands and Voices**

This parent-volunteer organization supports families who have children with deafness or hearing loss. Activities include outreach events, educational seminars, advocacy lobbying efforts, parent-to-parent network, and a newsletter. They publish the excellent **Colorado Families for Hands and Voices Resource Guide**, described below.

### **Colorado Families for Hands and Voices Resource Guide**

Developed in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Education and also available in Spanish, this excellent guide gives families of hearing-impaired children clear descriptions of who different hearing professionals are and how they differ in the help they can provide; explanations of the different types and philosophies of communication methods; a thorough but not overwhelming discussion on the different types of hearing aids; and much more. The Colorado Co-Hear (Colorado Hearing Resource Coordinator) Regional Coordinators are listed by county. There are links to lists of books and videos, as well as additional national and state organizations.

## **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered (GLBT)**

### ***National***

### **ALA's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Round Table**

The GLBT Roundtable presents programs, publishes a newsletter, and maintains a clearinghouse of related bibliographies, directories, and reading lists. The web site offers some material useful to library staff serving a GLBT community, particularly material appropriate for children and youth.

### **GLAAD (Gay Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation)**

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)'s goal is to eliminate homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation from the media. Their well received report on the impact of Internet filtering and ratings, **Access Denied**, was originally published in 1997 then updated in 1999.

### **The Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies (IGLSS)**

The Massachusetts-based Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies (IGLSS) concentrates on GLBT policy issues and attendant strategy. The resources section of the web site provides an exceptionally rich set of links to substantive research in these areas.

### **PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)**

This national advocacy, educational and support group has numerous Colorado chapters. Web sites for the [Boulder](#) and [Colorado Springs](#) chapters offer additional local resources.

## **Colorado**

### **The Center (The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center of Colorado)**

This Denver-based community center provides numerous programs, including Rainbow Alley, the only Colorado drop-in center for GLBT youth; Pridefest; a film festival; a health and wellness program; and a legal outreach program. The Center also houses the Terry Mangan Library, with more than 4,000 titles.

### **Colorado State University Libraries: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Studies**

This thorough directory of resources provides lists of material available at CSU and on the Internet. Some resources are annotated. "Queer Theory" link does not permit backing out.

### **GLSEN Colorado (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network of Colorado)**

GLSEN Colorado, the local chapter of a national organization, works to build respect for all members of the school community. The Resources section of the Colorado site provides numerous links to local and national resources, including a superb 1999 bibliography defined by age and audience and authored by Tracy Phariss..

### **HQQ76.3/Colorado**

This site, formerly entitled "Front Range Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Library Workers", offers links to materials used at presentations in Colorado as well as links to numerous Colorado organizations.

### **Library Q: The Library Worker's Guide to GLBT Resources**

Library Q is one of the best designed library resource sites out there, designed and maintained by Auraria librarian Ellen Greenblatt. Each link is clearly annotated.

[\*Barriers to GLBT Library Service in the Electronic Age\*](#), an article co-authored by Greenblatt and Cal Gough of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library and published in *Information for Social Change*, concludes that the GLBT population is still underserved despite many librarians' best efforts, often due to lack of awareness of available resources. The article's conclusion points to numerous valuable sites.

### **University of Colorado, Denver: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies Resources**

Lists annotated Internet resources on the first page and library-specific resources with links to the catalog on the second. This resource offers a more Colorado-specific focus, as the first page offers Auraria sources and local community links.

## Hispanic/Latino

### ***National***

#### **REFORMA**

This ALA affiliate promotes library services to Spanish-speaking patrons. The web site offers numerous links, unfortunately not annotated, to relevant online resources in such areas as art, literature, business, education, health, and political issues.

#### **Isabel Valdes**

Isabel Valdes is a well known and respected market research specialist in the field of marketing to the Hispanic community. Many of her [presentations](#) are available and downloadable online, including [Marketing to American Latinos: An In-Culture Marketing Opportunity](#), a presentation she gave at SLA Annual Conference in 2002. (See the [online summary](#) from the SLA Advertising and Marketing Division) Valdes attacks misperceptions about income levels and language skills, and intelligently discusses the media consuming habits of her target market. She is also the author of two books, *Marketing to American Latinos: A Guide to the In-Culture Approach*, parts I and II.

### ***Colorado***

#### **Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

This membership organization promotes business and educational opportunities for Hispanic-owned businesses. The Demographics section of this site provides several charts of the Colorado Hispanic community, including business growth, payroll growth, and a wider view of minority-owned businesses in the state. It is affiliated with the [United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce](#).

#### **LARASA**

LARASA, the well-respected Latin American Research and Service Agency, conducts ethnographic research with the goal of improving quality of life for the Colorado Hispanic community.

## **Mental Health**

#### **NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally III)**

NAMI is a nonprofit support and advocacy organization of consumers, families, and friends of people with severe mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and anxiety disorders. There are Colorado chapters in Alamosa, Aurora, Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, Fort Morgan, Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction, Greeley, Henderson, Lakewood, Littleton, Loveland, and Pueblo. The national web site has a searchable research archive.

### **National Institute of Mental Health**

The National Institute of Mental Health is the nation's leading research agency in this field, conducting large scale, long term clinical studies and mental health services research. The web site offers a wealth of information. An excellent place to start is the "For the Public" link, which takes you to information about "the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illnesses. Included are brochures and information sheets, reports, press releases, fact sheets, and other educational materials."

### **National Mental Health Association (NMHA)**

NMHA provides advocacy, education, and research in the area of mental health. Their [Resource Center](#) offers fact sheets, a listing of affiliates, a toll-free number, a referral service, and links to additional resources.

## ***Colorado***

### **Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council (CBHC)**

This non-profit membership organization brings together 17 statewide community mental health centers, the mental health managed care entities (known as "MHASAs"), mental health clinics, and two state institutes. Their web site provides a detailed listing of mental health centers and organizations throughout the state, as well as a listing of events and a discussion of pertinent legislative issues.

### **Empower Colorado**

EMPOWER Colorado supports the families of children with brain disorders, and has a good set of links to local and national research, advocacy and support organizations.

### **Mental Health Association of Colorado (MHA)**

The Mental Health Association of Colorado, a non-profit organization, provides information to the public, develops and works for public policy positions, offers screening services, and even maintains a pro bono program for those in need of care but unable to afford it. The web site's Education and Research section offers background information on depression, job loss stress, anxiety disorders, legal issues, and more.

### **Colorado Department of Mental Health Services**

This division of the Colorado Department of Human Services is responsible for services to Medicaid-eligible, underinsured or uninsured mentally ill Coloradoan, and provides those services through contracts with six specialty clinics and 17 private, non-profit community mental health centers. Their site offers links to the various regional and county mental health centers, information resources,

## **Native Alaskan/American Indian**

### ***National***

### **American Indian Library Association**

This ALA affiliate organization is devoted to serving the needs of the native community and of Native American library staff. Scroll down the page to a selection of relevant links, such as bibliographies, notable collections, and tribal library programs.

### **Library Services to Indigenous Populations: A Bibliography**

This superb bibliography, compiled by the [ALA Office of Outreach and Literacy Service's Subcommittee on Library Services to American Indians](#), includes books, chapters, journal articles, web resources, reports and unpublished materials.

### **National Indian Education Association (NIEA)**

The web site of this education and advocacy organization offers numerous downloadable bibliographies and research papers.

### **TRAILS: Training & Assistance for Indian Library Services**

Although somewhat out of date, this resource developed at the University of Oklahoma's School of Library and Information Studies offers a set of links to useful resources, including collections, bibliographies, Internet resources, and government documents.

### **The Tribal College Librarians Professional Development Institute**

This web site of this annual Montana State University-based institute offers electronic versions of each year's agenda and participant list. The brief [list of other sites](#) offers additional Native American and related library resources.

## ***Colorado***

### **Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs**

This state office's site provides the commission's annual reports, and links to tribal, government, and a few cultural sites.

### **Colorado Mountain College Native American Links**

The Colorado Mountain College library web site offers a solid list of links to Native American resources, including those specific to tribes in Colorado.

### **Denver Indian Center**

The Denver Indian Center works primarily with southwestern and Plains tribes, providing job training and community referrals and hosting many important cultural and commercial functions such as the Indian Market and Powwow. The web site includes an extensive set of links to Denver-area based organizations.

### **National Indian Law Library**

Colorado is fortunate to have the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) and its excellent [National Indian Law Library](#) in Boulder. NARF itself provides legal representation and assistance to tribes, individuals, and organizations. The library's web site provides ready access to tribal constitutions and codes, updates on U.S. Supreme Court Indian



law cases, and an extensive set of Research Links to both legal and general reference sources.

### **[National Tribal Resource Center](#)**

The Boulder-based National Tribal Justice Resource Center, established in 2000, provides training and serves as an information repository to Native American and Alaska Native tribal justice systems. Online resources include searchable databases of [tribal court opinions](#); [codes and constitutions](#); and [funding opportunities](#).

### **[Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce](#)**

The Denver-based Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce promotes economic opportunities and relationships among tribes, American Indian-owned businesses, and the broader business community. It is a member of the Colorado Minority and Women's Chamber Coalition.

## **Poverty/Homelessness**

### ***National***

#### **[National Coalition for the Homeless](#)**

This Washington, D.C.-based advocacy and educational group's mission is to end homelessness. Although some of the papers on the Publications portion of the site are for sale, many reports and factsheets are free and provide useful statistics. There is also a K-12 Materials section that offers an annotated bibliography by grade level. The Internet Resources provide numerous additional online sources, such as the [National Center for Homeless Education](#).

#### **[Profile of the Working Poor, 2000](#)**

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, issued this detailed report in March 2002. It answers the often controversial question of who is the working poor, providing tables that break down the information according to weeks worked in a year, age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, educational attainment, family status, and occupation. This is a national snapshot.

#### **[The Urban Institute](#)**

This Washington, D.C.-based non-profit research organization examines social, economic, and government issues. Much of its research is freely available on its web site. The Research section is divided by topic, including Elderly; Housing; Immigration; Race, Ethnicity, and Gender; and Welfare Reform and Safety Net Issues.

### ***Colorado***

#### **[Colorado Department of Human Services: Division of Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs - Information on Homelessness](#)**



This is an excellent compilation of mostly Colorado-based resources on homelessness, including three points-in-time surveys, a shelter referral, information on domestic violence services, youth services, homeless organizations and providers, and housing information.

## **Seniors/Elderly**

### *National*

#### **[American Association of Retired Persons \(AARP\)](#)**

This national advocacy group for the aging also sponsors a tremendous amount of research. The [Research Center](#) on their web site provides links to reports on health issues, independent living, demographics and general reference, economic security and employment, and consumer issues. While few studies examine the specific information needs of an elderly population, many provide an indepth look at issues as diverse as transportation, long term care, and sexuality.

#### **[National Council on the Aging \(NCOA\)](#)**

The [Research and Demonstrations](#) section of this national non-profit organization's web site provides links to past and ongoing research, with a mission of promoting the vitality of an older population. The NCOA is a nonprofit association of more than 3,500 organizations and individuals, including senior centers, adult day service centers, area agencies on aging, employment services, congregations, health centers, and senior housing.

## **COMMUNITY ANALYSIS**

In the best of all possible worlds, libraries would have unlimited access to marketing and demographic information, focus groups, advisory bodies and studies tailored to their exact needs.

Excellent substitutes are at hand, however. Begin with the wealth of information contained in the U.S. Census and updated every decade. The tables below track the populations of Colorado counties by race, as one example. **<<http://www.census.gov/>>**

Additional resources can be found on the Internet. Library Research Service, a division of the Colorado State Library, provides a range of tools on its site.

**<[http://www.lrs.org/html/topics&tools/community\\_analysis.html](http://www.lrs.org/html/topics&tools/community_analysis.html)>**

In fact, a companion site with the "Community Scan Form" provided by the Public Library Association, is a one-step resource for library managers engaged in planning. When completed, it provides a snapshot of your area's employment, population, ethnic background, resources, education and many other elements.

**<[http://www.lrs.org/html/topics&tools/community\\_analysis\\_web.html](http://www.lrs.org/html/topics&tools/community_analysis_web.html)>**

Additional resources may be found right in your community. Try contacting the local chamber of commerce, health care system, and education offices. If they have conducted needs analyses, your library can incorporate those findings into its own planning.