

The Haverford Township Free Library, the leading library of the 26 Delaware County Libraries envisions itself as a dynamic community hub for life-long learning, creativity and culture. We accomplish this vision in multiple ways. We provide resources, we educate and we build community with an average of 179,000 visitors a year of which 20,804 adults, teens and children attended 775 programs meeting the goals of our mission statement, “To provide residents of the Township of Haverford, as well as the public at large, with exemplary access to the broadest possible range of resources, programs and services that enhance and enrich their lives.”

Even though technology has grown exponentially over the past ten years, the need for Haverford Township residents to have a place to go to increase their knowledge, find information beyond their own personal sphere of ownership, and to connect with others in the community has not changed. The Pew Research Center reported a similar nationwide finding in 2013. And so today, we are as dedicated as ever to our educational roots and our core services of providing resources, educational opportunities and community building.

Our primary activity is to provide resources to the community for research, growth, and leisure and helping people navigate the surplus of information available to them. To this end our collections include books and magazines in print, audio and digital format, research databases covering most major subject areas such as history, health, literature and current events, music and movies, electronic devices such as eReaders and ROKUs, and unique offerings such as museum passes, book club kits and local history materials. Our collections are always changing to meet the demand and need of the community. And our staff is always increasing its knowledge of those resources in order to best guide and serve the public.

Our second most important activity is to educate. For instance, we know that early childhood literacy is essential to successful educational outcomes so we offer early childhood literacy classes (that are filled to capacity) to build both child and parent skills. Education does not end with childhood and formal schooling though, just as our understanding of literacy doesn't simply end with basic literacy and the ability to read. We know that a vital municipality is dependent upon a literate citizenry and so we support health literacy, financial literacy, civic literacy, and digital and information literacy. We bridge the formal educational gap by offering lectures, book clubs, author visits, how-to classes, cultural programming, and hundreds of one-on-one sessions with individuals learning how to use technology and navigate their digital lives.

Our third and final activity is to create a dynamic community hub. With 59 public service hours (open 7 days a week, 6 in summer) we are uniquely positioned to be both a haven for those who want to quietly study, research, or read as well as provide a public gathering space for tutors and students, middle school and high school kids, young parents and their children, homeschooling families, business and civic groups, and retirees. In our upcoming renovation, we will be looking to reconfigure the building to accommodate the growing need for group meeting space and individual study space. Finally, we actively seek out partnerships with local groups, institutions and businesses for programming and expertise. Through these partnerships we stay abreast of the needs and concerns of the community and work to meet those needs in new ways.