Community Resource Audit
of Low-income and Poor Children

Jesse Caldwell
Introduction
Poverty is on the rise in the United States

United States Quick Facts

- 47 million people in the United States live in poverty (15%)
- 21% of children live in poverty
- 44% of all children in America are labeled as low-income

Lawrenceburg, Indiana Quick Facts

- Average household income is $33,759
- 17.1% of people live in poverty
- Almost a quarter of that 17.1% of people are children
- Almost every child in Lawrenceburg is labeled as either low-income or poor

This community resource audit is primarily focused on understanding the information needs and behaviors of children living in Lawrenceburg, Indiana. This is due to the fact that I am a member of the Youth Services Department within this library district.

The Lawrenceburg Public Library rests in the middle of Lawrenceburg, Indiana with a city population of about 5,200 people.
A Literature Review to better understand the information seeking behaviors of low-income and poor children
In various studies, Bilal partnered with other researchers to explore the information seeking behaviors of children. They found the following:

**Bilal and Beheshti (2014)**
- One of the largest influences on information behavior is literacy.
- Understanding the research process has a positive impact on information behaviors

**Bilal and Sarangthem (2008)**
- Children are influenced by digital environments
- Their knowledge of these environments influences their behavior
Online Catalog Use

Borgman, Hirsh, Walter, and Gallagher (1995) research that agrees with Bilal and Sarangthem

- Online Catalogs have become one of the most sought after information resources in public libraries
- Discovered that children need a catalog designed for them.
- This catalog should be simple to use and act much like Google Search
There is unequal availability of print and digital resources at the students’ homes, schools, and neighborhood public libraries based on socioeconomic status

-Sin (2009)
Emily Shktoff (2015) wrote that “60 percent of children living below the poverty level did not have a public library card. Impoverished children often fall behind in school as they face challenges obtaining materials, accessing high speed Internet and finding reliable information online.”

- Relates to previous research.
- Without access to resources there is a negative effect on the information behaviors of children.
- Lack of library cards indicates something larger.
Code of Ethics

ALA
- Access for all
- Keep our beliefs out of our work

Low-income and Poor Children
- Don’t have access (lack of library cards)
- Not treated equal due to personal beliefs
Resources

Literacy Assistance
• Flipster
• Hoopla
• Indiana Digital Download Center
• Novelist k-8
• Overdrive
• Tumblebooks

Homework Help
• A to Z the USA
• Global Road Warrior
• Live Homework Help (tutor.com)
• Goodwill Community Foundation

College Prep and Info
• Inspire
• Federal Student Aid
• The Princeton Review
• 21st century Scholars
• Khan Academy – SAT Prep

Family and General Help
• Driver Education Program
• NCCP
• USA.gov
• Benefits.gov
Developing a Needs Assessment