



In 2015 the County of Los Angeles Public Library received a \$75,000 grant from the California State Library to pilot life skills programs for teens at 15 county libraries. This series of programs was created for teens ages 13-18 and was designed to prepare them for adulthood and the workforce by teaching them the soft skills necessary to be successful in life¹ by providing them with knowledge about staying healthy and safe in a multitude of environments. The project was designed as a series of 8 modules: Easy Etiquette, Healthy Living (fitness and nutrition), Financial Savvy, The Public U (public speaking and persona), Social Media and Cyber Smarts, Personal Safety 411, Managing your Time and Workplace Know-how.

At the end of the grant period post-program surveys showed that 79% of teens who reported feeling “average” in their preparedness for adulthood before the programs, reported feeling either “good” or “excellent” after attending Adult 101 programs. The County of Los Angeles Public Library immediately decided to not only maintain Adult 101 at the 15 pilot libraries, but to expand the program to all 88 County Libraries.

Each library will be hosting Adult 101 programs for teens throughout the year. These programs will continue to encourage life skills learning among LA County teens in order to help fill the soft skills gap among today’s youth.² To assist library staff in hosting Adult 101 programs the grant team created program in a box kits (all-in-one program kits complete with instructions and materials) for most of the Adult 101 modules. Librarians have been encouraged to use these program kits to plan and host life skills programs in their libraries. For the Financial Savvy module library staff have teamed up with the LA County Department of Business and Consumer Affairs to invite their professional speakers to speak with library teens about being money conscious and savvy consumers.

Research shows that the soft skills gap is a major barrier to not only employment, but life success.³ By providing Adult 101 life skills programs to teens the library is helping to remove barriers and create opportunities for teens to succeed throughout their lives.

To view upcoming Adult 101 library events please visit
<http://www.colapublib.org/teens/adult101/>.

¹ Workforce Connections. Key “Soft Skills” That Foster Youth Workforce Success: Toward a Consensus Across Fields. June 2015. <http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015-24WFCSoftSkills1.pdf>

² Carlee J. Adams. ‘Soft Skills’ Pushed as Part of College Readiness. November 13, 2012. Education Week. http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/11/14/12softskills_ep.h32.html

³ Jaime Green. Soft Skills: Preparing Kids for Life After School. February 2016. AMLE Magazine. <https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/WhatsNew/WNDet/TabId/270/ArtMID/888/ArticleID/585/Soft-Skills-Preparing-Kids-for-Life-After-School.aspx>