



Saint Paul
Public Library

Teen Engagement Research Project

Library Board—August 6th, 2025

Our Goals

- Understanding the **needs, challenges and general perspectives** of Saint Paul teenagers
- Target population of **14 -19** years old
- Reaching a variety of teen friendly spaces

Our Goals

- Create offerings that truly resonate with teens across the city
- Have youth lead the process to encourage authenticity
- Give interns valuable experience in leadership and outreach



Our Team

- **Rebecca Ryan**, Deputy Director, Public Services
- **Shaina Abraham**, Parks and Recreation Manager
- **Austine Vaughn-Bergling**, Co-Supervisor (SPPL)
- **Teresa Little**, Co-Supervisor (Parks & Rec)
- **Natasha Ogbeifun**, Supervising Intern

- **Dulce Armenta**, Teen engagement intern
- **Yekubate Zenge**, Teen engagement intern
- **Avery Junior**, Teen engagement intern
- **Aaronn Sanders**, Teen engagement intern
- **Rose Vang**, Teen engagement intern

Methods

- N = 164
- Questionnaire (physical survey)
- Measuring teen:
 - Social habits
 - Library/rec center usage
 - Hopes and stressors
 - Demographic data
- Incentivized with goodies



Teen Engagement Survey

We want to hear from teens like you! SPPL and Parks & Rec are working to make our spaces more welcoming and useful. This short, anonymous survey helps us understand your needs and challenges. Thank you for your help!

- Which word for your age group do you prefer most?
 - ☐ Teens
 - ☐ Young Adults
 - ☐ Adolescents
 - ☐ Youth
 - ☐ Other: _____
- Where do you usually hang out when you're not at school or home?

- What features help you feel focused? (select all that apply)
 - ☐ Low Lighting
 - ☐ Decoration
 - ☐ Light music
 - ☐ Complete quiet
 - ☐ Soft seating (blankets, pillows, etc)

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- Why do you visit the library? (Choose up to 3)
 - ☐ Computer/internet/technology usage
 - ☐ Books or reading

**Saint Paul
Public Library**

**“Where do you go when
you’re not at home? “**

**“ What barriers keep you
from visiting?“**

**“ What do you love about
your community?“**

**“How often do you visit?
Why do you visit?“**

**“ What makes you feel
anxious?“**

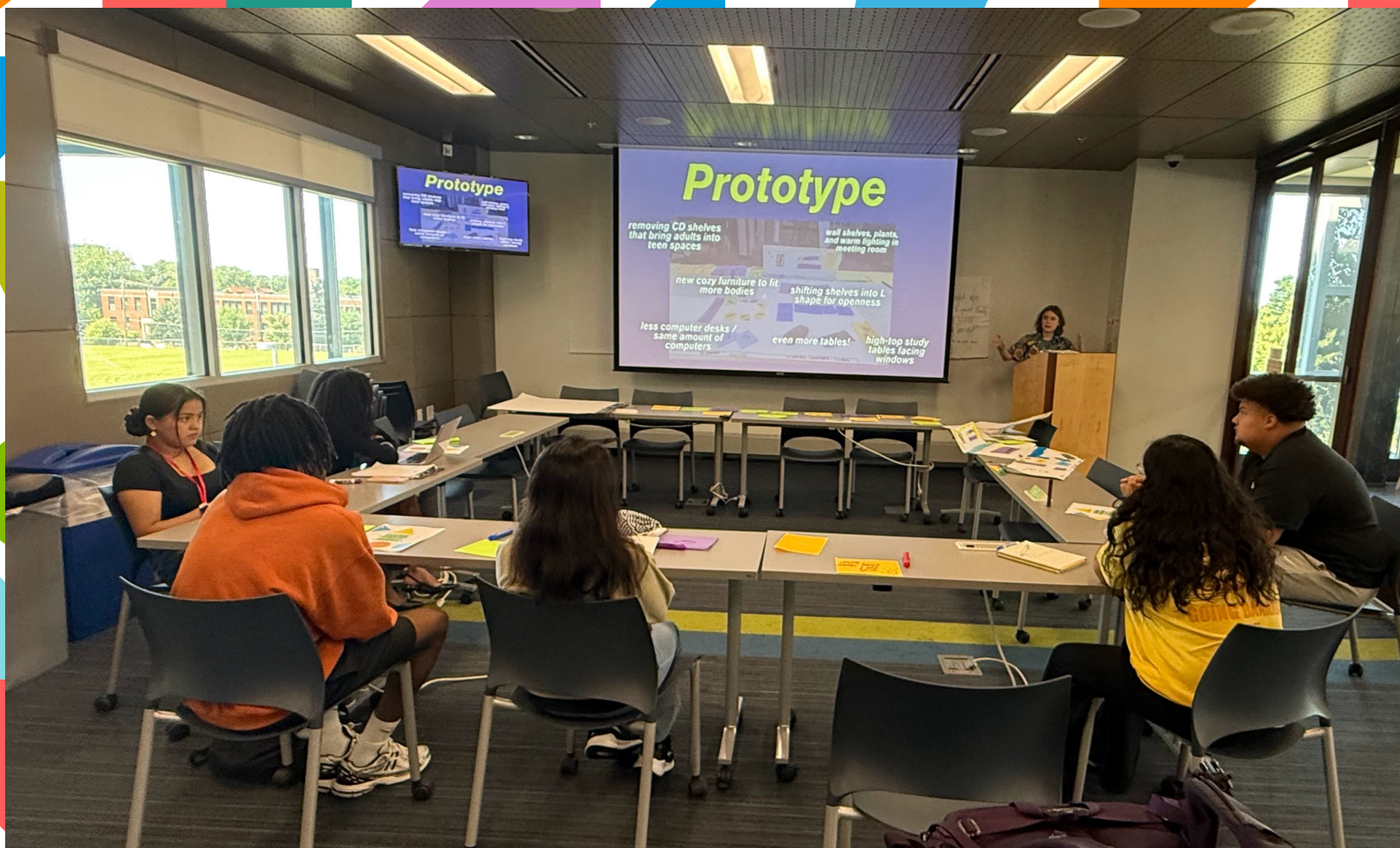
**“ What do you want to
achieve?“**

Locations Reached

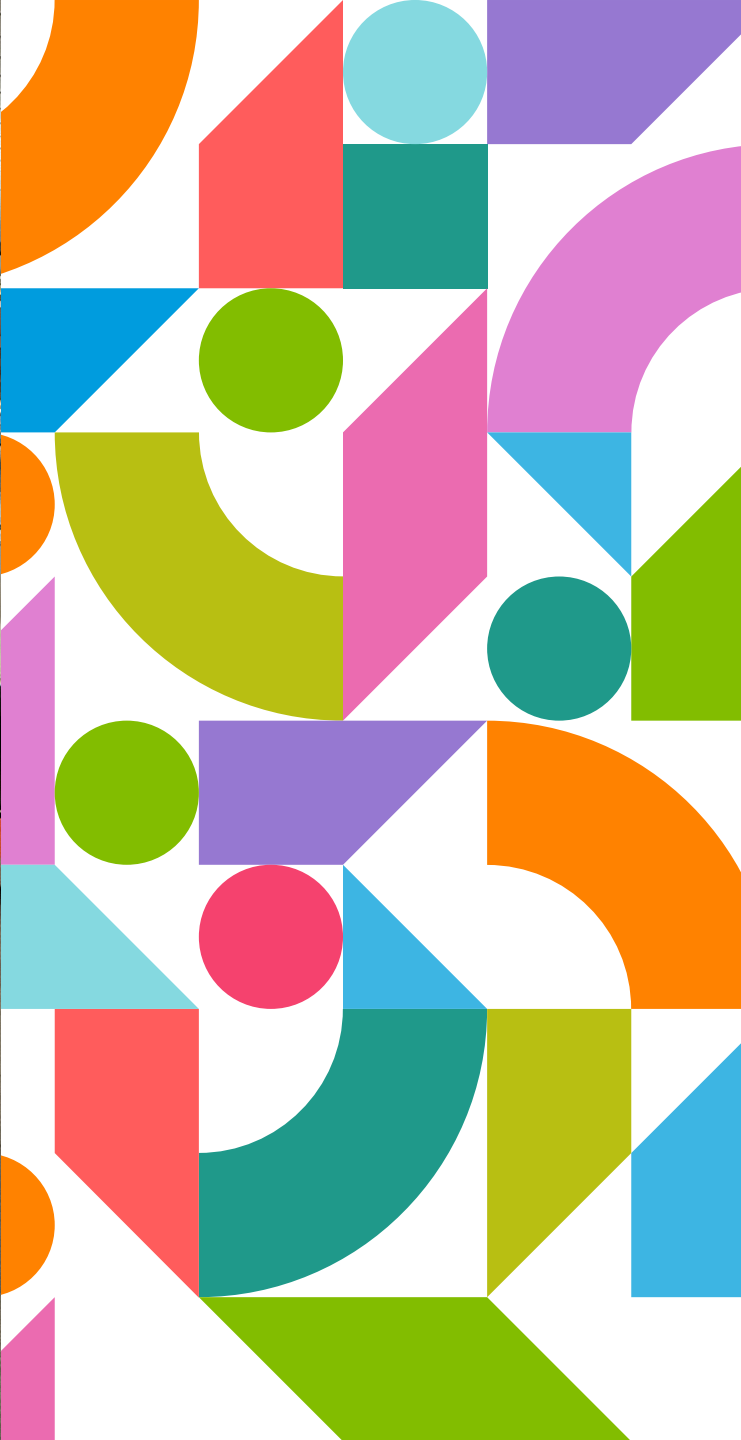
- Arlington Hills Library
- George Latimer Central Library
- Highland Park Library
- Rondo Library
- Sun Ray Library
- Conway rec center
- Frogtown Community Center
- Highland Park Library
- Oxford Community center

Locations Reached

- Malls (MOA, Rosedale, Maplewood)
- Skate park
- Shopping centers (Target, Patina, etc.)
- Restaurants (Flava Café, Starbucks etc.)
- Como Park and Zoo









Significant Findings



Demographics

N = 164

- 40% boys, 55% girls, 4% non-binary
- Age ranges: 15-17 (62%), 18-19 (26%), 13-14 (12%)

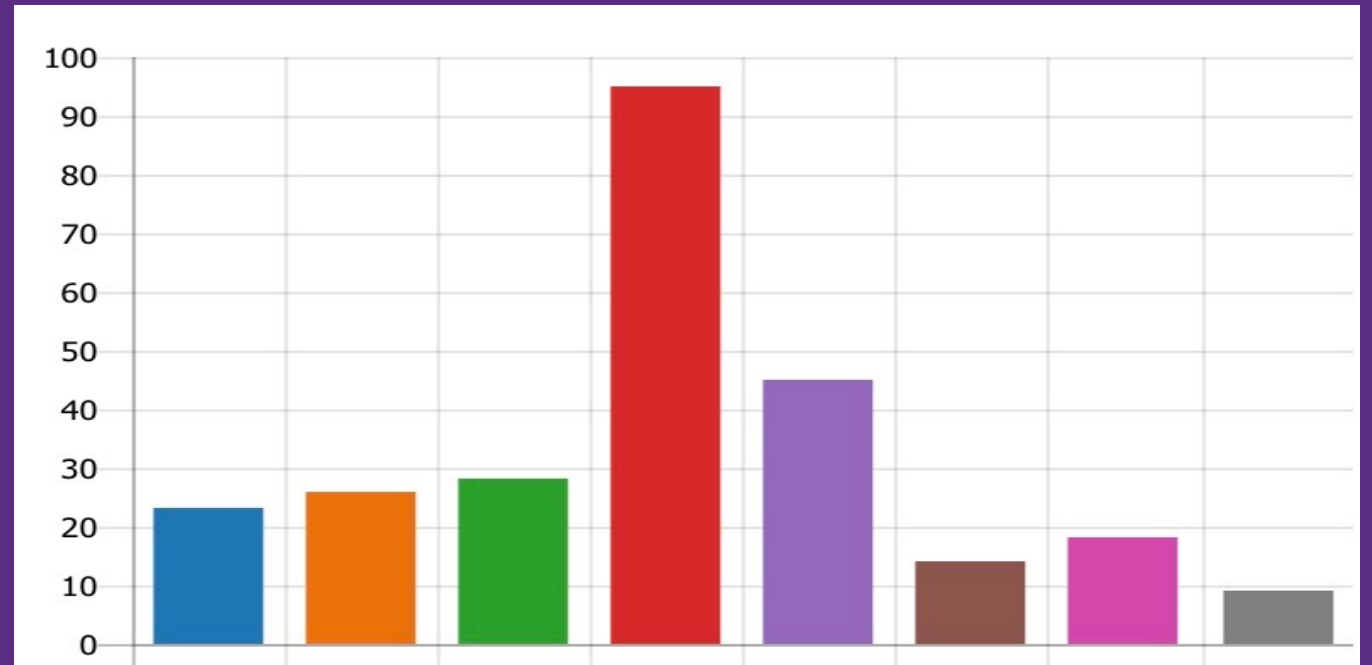
Top zip codes:

- 55117
- 55104
- 55116

**What keeps teens
from visiting
libraries and
recreation centers?**

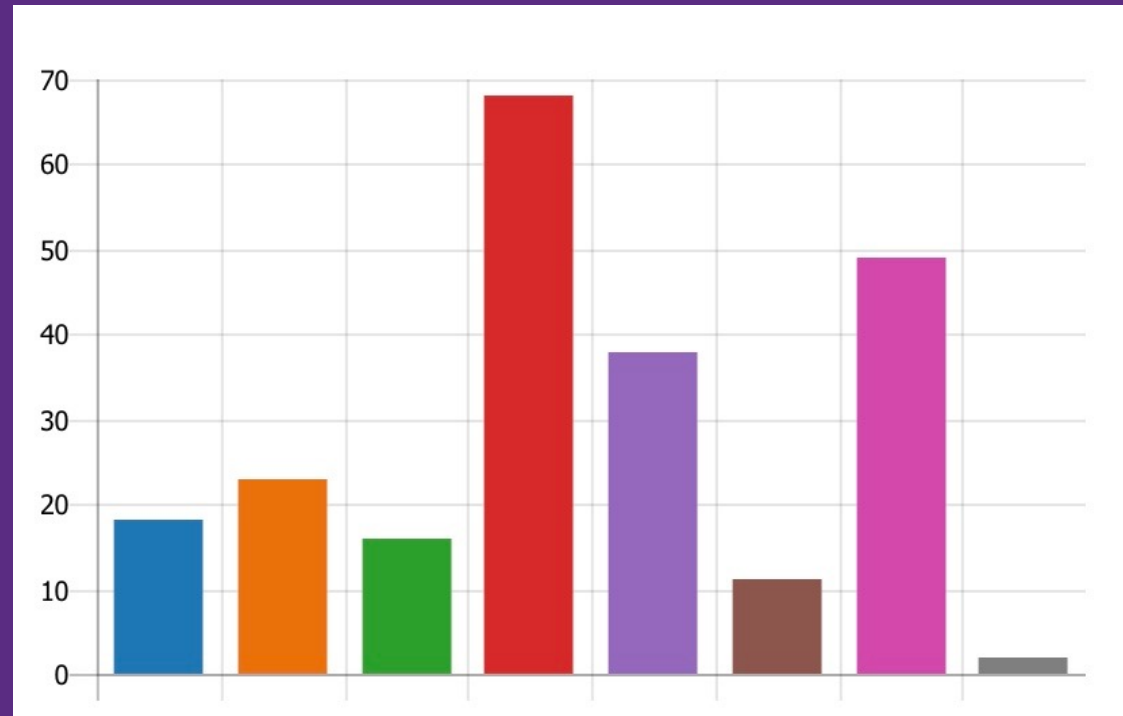
Libraries

● I don't know what it offers	23
● It feels boring	26
● No easy way to get there	28
● My schedule is full	95
● I don't know anyone who goes	45
● I/my parents have safety conc...	14
● Nothing does	18
● Other	9



Recreation Centers

I don't know what it offers	18
It's not for me	23
I don't have a way to get there	16
I'm too busy	68
My friends don't go	38
I/My parents have safety conc...	11
Nothing	49
Other	2

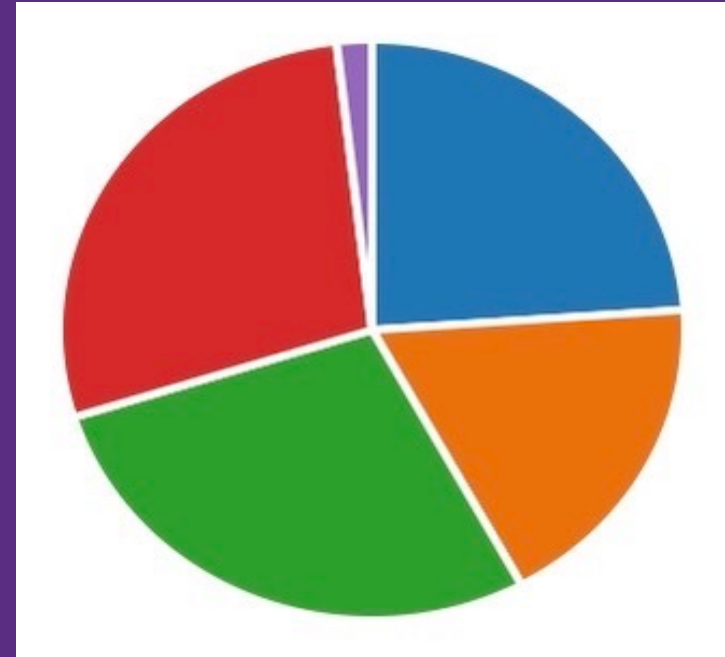
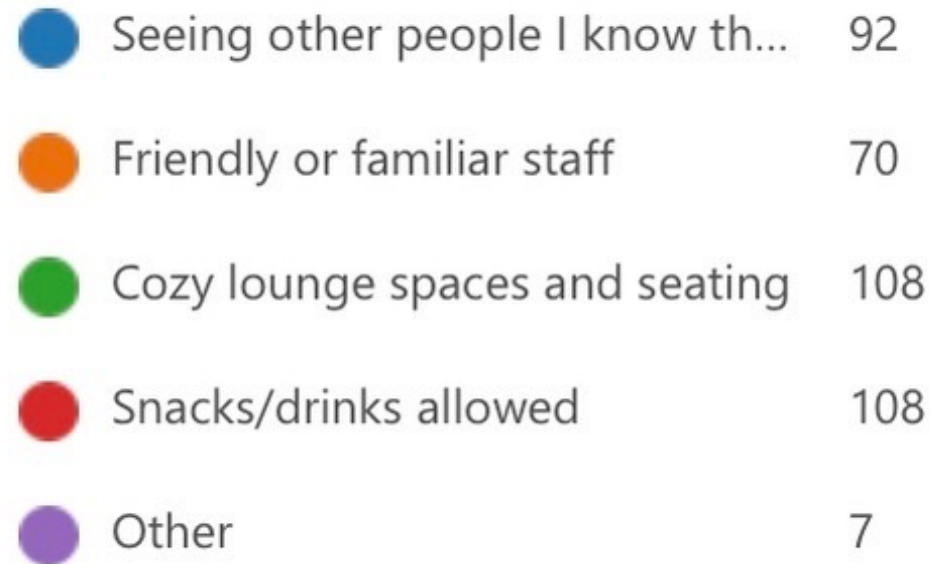


Implications

- Teens are busy people!
- They are likely be being served by their school's library, after school programs, and open gyms
 - Matter of convenience
- Most teens find libraries (64%) and rec centers (70%) to be welcoming environments
 - How can libraries/ recs get more involved with SPPS?

**What would make
libraries more
welcoming for
teens?**

Libraries



Implications

- There are challenges with allowing food inside of libraries and rec centers
- Aside from studying, or programming, teenagers **need third spaces**
 - Most responses speak to this need!
 - How can we create this space visually or otherwise?

What do teens want to achieve?

Broad Categories

Career, academics, financial stability, & family.

“Stable career”

“Learn more about myself”

“Buy a house”

The image features a vibrant, abstract geometric pattern. The background is a solid deep purple. At the top and bottom, there are horizontal bands of colorful geometric shapes, including squares, circles, triangles, and curved segments in shades of blue, orange, green, pink, and light purple. The central area is a solid purple rectangle containing the text "Thank you for your time!" in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Thank you for your time!