**GRANT REPORT for Brooklyn Public Library** Made possible through The Heckscher Foundation for Children In collaboration with Nudge<sup>4</sup> Solutions Lab



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# Applying Behavioral Science to Boost Library Access & Engagement

2021

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## 

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# PROJECT BACKGROUND

# PROJECT BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Since their beginnings, public lending libraries have struggled with the tensions between providing universal access to information, and ensuring that materials return to their shelves. Historically, administering late fines has been a standard approach to get patrons to return borrowed materials. However, in recent years it has become clearer that not only do fines fail to encourage timely returns or get paid off, but they also create financial barriers to access for libraries that are supposed to be free and open to the public. In 2019, the American Library Association published a resolution calling fines "a form of social inequity," and stated that they "create a barrier in public relations, and absorb valuable staff time applying, collecting, and managing dues." The Colorado State Library's 2016 review of the impact of charging fines, particularly on children's material, concluded that no evidence was found that fines are effective in lowering overdue rates. In fact, they often have the opposite effect – unable or unwilling to pay late fines, patrons do not return books and do not come back to the library. In Brooklyn and other jurisdictions, financial barriers to access fall disproportionately on children and teens, especially on those from low-income neighborhoods.

In 2017, when the seeds of this particular project were planted, 14% of all of Brooklyn Public Library (BPL)'s juvenile and young adult patrons had accounts blocked because of fines. The zip codes with the highest percentages of people living in poverty accounted for 32% of all youth cards, but 35% of all youth had blocked cards and carried 35% of the total money owed by kids and teens. Tracking Juvenile and YA cards over one year, an average of just 8% became unblocked. So of the 37,411 blocked, about 2,993 checked out books again. The other 34,418 were still blocked from using the library after a year's time because of fines and fees.

In December 2017, The Heckscher Foundation for Children awarded BPL a planning grant to collaborate with Dr. Ben Castleman of the University of Virginia's Nudge<sup>4</sup> Solutions Lab and design a nudge campaign to encourage young patrons and their families to return borrowed library materials on time, more effectively manage future fines and increase their engagement with BPL. The BPL-Nudge<sup>4</sup> partnership drew on the expertise of researchers and behavioral scientists from University of Chicago's Behavioral Insights in Parenting Lab (BIPL) and non-profit behavioral design firm ideas42 to evaluate current communications with library patrons and explore opportunities for structural and behavioral interventions to improve youth engagement with BPL and prevent overdue fines.

http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/Resolution%20on%20Monetary%20Library%20
 Fines%20as%20as%20form%200e%20Socia%20Inequity-FINAL.pdf



#### JUVENILE AND YOUNG ADULT PATRONS HAD ACCOUNTS BLOCKED BECAUSE OF FINES



## OVERVIEW OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

Behavioral science is the study of how people behave and make decisions in the context of complexity and limited resources. We want to exercise every day, but may fail to make it to the gym at the end of the day. We want to remember to execute all critical steps in an important work assignment, but may forget one. We want to read an interesting biography, but may turn on Netflix instead. These behavioral responses to complex situations with limited resources can lead to suboptimal outcomes (e.g., less exercise). Behaviorally informed interventions aim to address this intention-action gap.

The next section provides an overview of some common behavioral responses to complexity and ways in which those biases might manifest in the public library context. We further outline potential evidence-based strategies that can help address or overcome these barriers, drawing from a variety of different settings including finance, health, and education.



# Examples of Behavioral Barriers and Evidence-Based Strategies



1 Heuristics, or mental shortcuts: When resource-constrained or faced with too many choices, we sometimes rely on simplifying decision rules, like choosing a grocery store product because it happens to be at eye level, which may not lead to positive long-term outcomes.

Evidence-Based Strategies to Counteract Behavioral Bias

- Reduce complexity by simplifying complex concepts and processes
- Design programs so they offset heuristics and biases (i.e., increase salience of important information by using userfriendly visual cues and roadmaps)
- Leverage defaults

Examples of Behaviorally Informed Interventions in...

- Health: A surgical safety checklist was introduced to eight diverse hospitals and aimed to improve surgical care at critical junctures before, during, and after a surgery. Since the introduction of this checklist, the rate of deaths and postoperative complications fell.<sup>3</sup>
- Clavien, P. A., Barkun, J., De Oliveira, M. L., Vauthey, J. N., Dindo, D., Schulick, R. D., ... & Makuuchi, M. (2009). The Clavien-Dindo classification of surgical complications: five-year experience. Annals of surgery, 250(2), 187-196.

## What might mental shortcuts look like at BPL?

When parents have limited time or energy, they may turn to books that are familiar to them, such as ones their kids have already read, or books that are readily available to them, such as ones displayed on BPL's homepage. However, these books may not match their kids' reading levels or interests.



(2) Hassle factors: There are small obstacles that stand in the way of accomplishing any task, like needing to fill out a brief form to qualify for a program or opportunity, and these obstacles get in the way of accomplishing something we care about.

Evidence-Based Strategies to Counteract Behavioral Bias

- Eliminate hassles (e.g., shortening forms)
- Provide one-on-one guidance •

Examples of Behaviorally Informed Interventions in...

Education: Students who received 1-on-1 assistance • with applying for financial aid for college from H&R Block tax professionals were more likely to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and more likely to enroll in college than students who simply received information about the FAFSA.

Bettinger, E. P., Long, B. T., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L (2009). The Role of Simplification and Information in College Decisions: Results and Implications from the H&R Block FAFSA Experiment. An NCPR Working Paper. National Center for dary Perearch



Limited attention: We have many demands on our time and energy but limited bandwidth. This leads us to miss important details and fail to follow through on intended actions.

Evidence-Based Strategies to Counteract Behavioral Bias

- Send timely and targeted reminders
- Personalize outreach
- Leverage defaults

Examples of Behaviorally Informed Interventions in...

• Public benefits (childcare subsidies): Packets sent to parents included a handwritten greeting and parent's name, and further included a list of three childcare providers near the family's home. This strategy improved parents' decisions around finding high-quality providers.

Dechausay, N., & Anzelone, C. (2016). Cutting through Complexity: Using Behavioral Science to Improve Indiana's Child Care Subsidy Program. OPRE Report 2016-03. Administration for Children & Families.

## What might hassle factors look like at BPL?

Parents care a lot about helping build their kids' literacy skills but may face many hassles like remembering their BPL website login credentials (and retrieving it if they cannot recall the information), taking time to choose a set of books, and going to the branch to pick them up.

## What might limited attention look like at BPL?





Parents are busy. They may tend to put off making important decisions (e.g., choosing which books to check out) or doing additional research needed to make informed choices (e.g., browsing book lists). Attention can be easily distracted especially in the context of poverty and economic instability.

Present bias: We tend to overvalue present costs and gains over long-term costs and gains, like getting extra sleep in the morning rather than getting up to exercise. This present bias can induce procrastination and impatience.

Evidence-Based Strategies to Counteract Behavioral Bias

- Make clearer the expected returns or benefits of the task •
- Adjust the framing so that foregoing current temptations feels psychologically less "painful"

Examples of Behaviorally Informed Interventions in...

• Finance: Savings options in a finance technology app that were framed in more granular amounts (e.g., \$1 per day instead of \$30 per month) increased the share of participants who signed up for recurring deposits programs.

Hershfield, H. E., Shu, S., & Benartzi, S. (2020). Temporal reframing and participation in a savings program: A field experiment. Marketing Science, 39(6), 1039-1051.



(5) Planning fallacy: We often underestimate the time it will take to complete a task and overestimate our ability to complete the task, making it difficult to plan ahead to complete tasks on time.

Evidence-Based Strategies to Counteract Behavioral Bias

- Encourage goal-setting
- Prompt people to form implementation plans (i.e., how and when they plan to do the task)

Examples of Behaviorally Informed Interventions in...

• Voting: Encouraging voters to form a voting plan (when, where, and how) increased turnout more significantly than other strategies such as simple reminder phone calls.

Nickerson, D. W., & Rogers, T. (2010). Do you have a voting plan? Implementation intentions, voter turnout, and organic plan making. Psychological Science, 21(2), 194-199.

## What might present bias look like at BPL?

Parents may face a host of other pressing needs or temptations (e.g., job and income instability, more leisure time), which can lead to overvaluing the present and putting aside tasks with future and more psychologically distant benefits (e.g., choosing books to read together with kids, whose benefits like improved literacy skills are realized later in the future).

## What might the planning fallacy look like at BPL?





Parents may fail to pick up their BPL items on hold because they underestimate the time and effort necessary to check out books for their kids and pick them up.

6 Belonging anxiety: In a new environment, we often feel uncertain about whether we fit in, which can affect our behavior or hamper our performance.

Evidence-Based Strategies to Counteract Behavioral Bias

- Amplify people's positive identities i.e., don't amplify negative stereotypes
- Encourage people attribute negative experiences or thoughts as temporary and common, instead of as permanent and specific to themselves

Examples of Behaviorally Informed Interventions in...

 Education: Students were presented a narrative that framed concerns about belonging (in college) as temporary and common at first, and further internalized the message by writing an essay and recording a speech about their own college experiences. This social belonging intervention improved students' academic performance and self-reported health and well-being (relative to peers who did not complete the intervention).

Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students. Science, 331(6023), 1447-1451.

What might belonging anxiety look like at BPL?

Parents may not be familiar with choosing books for their kids without the personalized guidance of teachers and librarians. This lack of support is exacerbated during times like the COVID-19 pandemic when parents cannot engage with teachers and librarians for help with choosing reading materials appropriate for their kids.





# **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH-PRACTICE** PARTNERSHIP

## DISCOVERY AND PLANNING

With generous support from The Heckscher Foundation for Children, a team of experts from Brooklyn Public Library (BPL), ideas42, Behavioral Insights in Parenting Lab (University of Chicago), and the Nudge<sup>4</sup> Solutions Lab (University of Virginia) engaged in a 3-month discovery phase to better understand the BPL context, their patrons, and their engagement levels and decisionmaking processes.

Specifically, we looked at:

- The factors influencing (1) how patrons manage library fines, (2) their level of engagement with the library system, and (3) their response to current communications they receive from BPL
- The communications life cycle with patrons, from when they first sign up for a card through when their accounts are sent to the collection agency for unpaid fines
- The availability of patron-level data like contact information, demographic information, and circulation records for current and prior patrons—and potential allowable uses of this data to help patrons manage their library fines more effectively and engage with the library system

C	

Here is an example of how we mapped out the library card application process and identified potential barriers that arise as patrons progress from one step to another:

### **STEP 2 –** Parent navigates to the BPL website

The parent may not know where to click to sign up for a card, closes out of the browser, and does not progress to the next step.

### **STEP 4 –** Parent sees a confirmation page that prompts them to activate their card

The parent does not think through when and how they will stop by their local branch to activate the card, forgets to complete this final step, and does not progress to the next step.



• The parent may be unsure whether the card should be in their name or their child's name.



• The parent is interrupted in the middle of filling out the application, forgets to return to it, and does not progress to the next step.

**STEP 5 –** Parent goes to their local branch to activate their card

• The parent forgets to bring appropriate documentation for their proof of address and walks away without their card activated.

## **BEHAVIORAL DIAGNOSIS**

We collectively identified target behaviors for patrons (e.g., borrow books) and, for each desired action, conducted a behavioral diagnosis of existing processes and current communications strategies to uncover any barriers that might hinder patrons from engaging in the target behavior.

## **THE 3 PATRON TARGET BEHAVIORS** WE FOCUSED ON:

Activate their library card

#### **Borrow books**

**Return library materials** on time and repay any overdue fines

### Activate a library card

- Potential behavioral barriers to success
  - Hassle factors: Multiple steps (sign up online, wait for card to arrive, remember to bring ID to branch) hinder the likelihood that a patron will complete a process from start to finish
  - **Procrastination (or present bias):** Tendency to overvalue present costs (like having to gather paperwork together) and undervalue long-term benefits (like being able to read lots of new books for free)
  - Not right now: May not feel an urgent need to activate their card if another family member already has one set up
- Opportunities to apply behavioral insights to mitigate barriers
  - Framing effects: Instead of transactional framing of communications around activation (i.e., "If you want to use your card, activate it at a local branch"), frame communications around visiting the library and, while they are there to enjoy library services and programs, activating their card
  - Loss aversion: Highlight patron-relevant books and free opportunities they are missing out on (e.g., eBooks)
  - **Planning prompts:** Help patrons identify when they can fit a library visit into their schedule, ideally close to when they have finished the online card application

Bigger picture idea: Connect with other data systems with resident and address information (like the United States Postal Service) to pre-activate or verify prospective patrons' addresses

#### **Borrow books**

- Potential behavioral barriers to success
  - Information gaps: Lack of clarity around hours or locations
  - Unclear benefits: Patrons are not sure why visiting a library will be beneficial to them
  - Belonging anxiety: Patrons may not view themselves as "readers" or "library patrons"
- Opportunities to apply behavioral insights to mitigate barriers
  - Identity activation: More explicitly connect library engagement with outcomes that families care about
  - Social norms: Highlight popular books that other patrons have read and enjoyed (e.g., "Other children love the Hunger Games series") while being mindful not to shame current behavior or reinforce a sense of not belonging
  - **Planning prompts:** Encourage patrons to think through the specific steps of how and when they will carry out the desired task (e.g., prompt them with questions like: "What day this week will you return your library books? Where will you be coming from?")
  - **Customization:** Personalize outreach to patrons based on their characteristics, like providing curated book lists based on individual patrons' age and/or reading history



**Bigger picture idea:** Create a mini social reading network for youth patrons, highlighting popular books and encouraging them to write reviews

#### Return library materials on time and repay any overdue fines

- Potential behavioral barriers to success
  - Struggle to plan ahead: Patrons intend to return their books but struggle to plan ahead and think through how going to the library to return books fits into their daily schedule
  - Information gaps: Uncertainty about when books are due, branch hours, or locations of books drops or branches
  - Lack of urgency: Lack of significant consequence for unreturned books (e.g., patrons are fined only 10 cents per day per book that is overdue) and/or lack of immediacy for unpaid fines may lead patrons to put off returns and fine repayment indefinitely
- Opportunities to apply behavioral insights to mitigate barriers
  - Planning prompts: "Your nearest drop box is at Central Library and you can return books there 24/7! What day this week can you do this?"
  - Information clarity: Standardize hours across branches and promote information about book drop locations
  - Promote prosocial behavior and positive social norms: "Please return your books on time so families like yours can enjoy those books next" or "90% of patrons at this branch return their books on time"

Bigger picture idea: Install more book drop boxes so each branch has an after-hours return option. Install book drop boxes at non-library but high-traffic locations, such as the local grocery store or bus stations, to make it easier for patrons to return books when the library is closed or out of their way

One invaluable source of information about behavioral barriers and ways to address them was the patrons themselves. BPL worked with ideas42 to organize focus groups with parents to shed light on what obstacles they face when trying to complete each of these target behaviors.

Here's what we learned:

#### → Patrons struggled with fines, which sometimes acted as a deterrent to using the library.

- "One [fine] went to collections, it was \$110, and I was like, 'oh no, I gotta pay that off.' The second incident was, my daughter has her own card, and she had to take books out on her card, and it ended up coming out a lot. It was \$75 because again, my situation is crazy, I got a crazy schedule, but yeah, we didn't go to the library after that."
- "It's not easy [to handle fines]. Sometimes you don't have the money to pay for it. But since you know that you're gonna need to borrow books you find a way."
- "Honestly, I can't keep track. When I go back again, that's when they tell me I owe X, Y, and Z."

→ Patrons relied on reminders about when items were due, but many felt they did not come far enough in advance or were unaware that text message reminders were an option.

- "That was part of the problem with the emails was that we'd find out the day before it's due and we had already planned for something else."
- "I like to leave my receipt on the refrigerator, so that way I remember the days since the calendar is on the fridge."
- "Sometimes the email won't come in until the very day or the day before, and that is not enough time for me. I have to prepare myself to make sure I have my day planned out so I can make it in time to return it if I'm not able to renew it. So I put a reminder in my phone."
- "I didn't even know the text message was an option."
- "Some people don't read email every day, you know, but the text they will actually read."
- "I did not even know it was possible to receive reminders."
- "Sometimes I try to put in my schedule that, okay, I don't know exactly when it's due. But I'm gonna just go to the library and just return the books. And sometimes I actually returned it before the due date, because I'm scared of the fee. Sometimes I have to go back and check out the same books that I returned early. And that's frustrating."

→ Because of other commitments like work and school, patrons found book drop boxes that were available 24/7 to be crucial to ensuring they could return their books on time.

- "If we don't go to the library this weekend to the bookdrop, it's going to be the next Saturday or next Sunday. I's always going to be on the weekend."
- "We come on Wednesdays because it's a half day. So it's always Wednesday that we go. And for that, we live in Queens. We have to plan for that half day, are we going to the library for that half day, or are we doing something else? That was part of the problem with the emails was that we'd find out the day before that it's due and we had already planned for something else. We'd usually go every other week or so."
- "Outside return boxes would be incredibly helpful in getting things returned on time and more easily. Many times we've come to the library to return books at the wrong time (library closed) and have had to return home with due or overdue books."



# BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AT BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY



We implemented three behavioral interventions at BPL between Spring 2019 and Spring 2021.

#### Applying for a Library Card (Spring 2019)

- Motivation: Many patrons intend to get a library card • but fail to make it through the entire application process. Conversations with BPL patrons revealed several barriers to completion, such as lack of awareness that the final step to getting a card is visiting a branch in person and showing proof of address (e.g., with a driver's license or utility bill).
- **Goal:** Increase the number of patrons who complete ٠ the final step in the library card application process, specifically walking into a branch and showing proof of address to activate their card
- What we tested: We used behavioral insights to simplify • the card application process and encourage patrons to complete the final step: visit a library to activate their card.

## **RESULTS:**

Once BPL implemented the newly designed library card application form, activation rates for applications completed online increased by about 12%.

## → Design Enhancements

Incorporate conditional logic to customize application questions to the applicant

(2)

(1)

To improve BPL's patron records, use data validation to check, in real time, whether the phone number patrons provide on the form is a valid one

Increase customization by asking patrons about their (3)individual preferences for future communications from the library

(4) Make the call to action as clear as possible

(5) Use visually compelling images to communicate what types of identification are acceptable for address verification

Increase personalization by showing the branch  $(\mathbf{6})$ closest to the patron's address, along with the hours and relevant links like how to get there

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#### 2) Returning Books On Time (Fall/Winter 2019)

- **Motivation:** Many patrons return their books late and accrue fines. Once fines reach \$15, patrons' library cards, including kids' cards, are blocked and they can no longer check out items. Conversations with BPL parents and guardians revealed several barriers to timely returns, including:
  - Parents and guardians do not recall what items they or their children have checked out
  - Parents and guardians do not recall the actual due date for items
  - Parents and guardians struggle to plan out how book returns fit into their daily schedule and alongside other pressing tasks
- **Goal:** Increase the number of youth patrons who return their materials on time
- What we tested: We used behavioral insights to modify the email and text message courtesy notices that BPL automatically sends to all patrons 3 days before their items are due.

## **RESULTS:**

Before the intervention, about 59% of individuals receiving the standard courtesy notice returned their book on time. Behaviorally informed courtesy notices with enhanced information about items checked out-including the book titles and images of book coversincreased timely return by almost 10%. Text messages that included planning prompts also increased the likelihood patrons would renew or return their books.





#### Engaging with Librarians for **Book Recommendations** (Spring 2021)

- Motivation: The COVID-19 pandemic and the • concomitant closing of library branches sharply reduced circulation and overall patron engagement with BPL. Amidst ongoing challenges with the pandemic, BPL staff expressed strong interest in promoting a service called BookMatch, where patrons submit an online form with a request for recommendations from librarians about what to read next.
- Goal: Increase the number of BookMatch requests that • youth and family patrons submit and increase the rate at which they check out books during the pandemic
- What we tested: We mailed a postcard to individual patrons' homes to encourage them to use the BookMatch service. We tested different framing to motivate takeupfor example, including a picture of a librarian to help personalize the connection between patrons and the library, and highlighting the academic benefits of reading with children to increase literacy skills.

### **KEY RESULTS:**

Almost immediately after postcards reached patrons' homes:

- The number of BookMatch requests spiked.
- Patrons who received a postcard were • much more likely to submit a BookMatch request than patrons who did not receive a postcard.
- We did not find a significant impact on physical circulation; effects on overall circulation including eBook borrowing are still pending.



## $\rightarrow$ BookMatch Results, Spring 2021





BookMatch Requests in first two weeks of postcard campaign









# DIRECTIONS AND **IDEAS TO INFORM** FUTURE STRATEGIES



In addition to small behavioral design tweaks, consider big-picture changes-both structural and proceduralthat can improve patron and library system outcomes

#### **Change Processes**



A Use a mobile app or SMS-based library card, so patrons do not have to remember to bring their library card/key tag or memorize their account number.



**Change Financial Systems** 

A Consider using rewards instead of fines to motivate timely return of materials. These rewards can be non-monetary - e.g., provide enhanced services for patrons who return books on time.



B Substitute payments with other meaningful patron behaviors like volunteering their time or committing to reading to their children for a specific number of hours per day.



**B** Remove structural barriers like activation requirements -i.e., integrate with information systems like the United States Postal Services to verify patrons' residences and automatically activate newly created cards upon verification.



C Expand fine repayment options to include technologies like Venmo and Apple Pay.

#### Proactively engage with patrons to elicit feedback on how libraries could improve

Use a combination of focus groups, interviews, and surveys to gain deeper insight into patron interests and the barriers they face in engaging effectively with the library. Patrons are already experts on what would be most helpful to them, so their feedback should inform what programs or services to prioritize, and in what ways.



 $\rightarrow$  In BPL's case, patrons expressed they would like to have closer options for dropping off their books. In response to this feedback, BPL rolled out 26 new book drop locations for patrons to more easily drop off their books.

- "Well, I'm a single mom, so my day is pretty much routine. So anything that is going to cause a rift in my day, I have to make sure I plan ahead. Especially if there's bad weather or something, now I have one daughter in one side of Brooklyn, and I have the other one in daycare on the other side of town, so time is also a factor for me because I do work in a school as well. And two days out of the week we get out late. So I do have to accomodate my time, I do have to make sure I make it for the [extended hours] day. I try to make it to the [extended hours] day at the library because the library I go to doesn't for some reason have that drop window that other ones have."
- "I never know which libraries have a book drop. So if I find the book is due and I want to turn it in and I know that all the libraries are closed, there's no way of going on the website and seeing what the closest library to me is that has a book drop."
- "I'm always wondering why the drop boxes are not available in every library branch. Because I think that would be very helpful. You get in a situation where you want to renew it, but it's on hold so you can't renew it. It's like, where is the drop box so I can just drop it? And I end up paying a fine for that book."

## Prioritize rigorous testing and evaluation

When possible, use randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to evaluate the impact of a program (or policy) on outcomes of interest. Specifically, RCTs help establish whether there is a cause-effect relationship between the program or policy and a certain outcome. An RCT requires randomly assigning patrons to either a treatment group (the program or service being tested) or a control group (receives business as usual services).

Here are 5 rules of thumb for planning and implementing RCTs in the library context:

→ Take stock of existing technologies that enable communications touchpoints and identify opportunities to test different strategies (commonly known as A/B testing).





→ Prior to implementing the intervention, clearly identify what will need to be measured –including baseline indicators against which the intervention's impact will be measured–and retained for evaluation purposes after the intervention has concluded. → Investigate existing library data infrastructure and identify any opportunities to leverage data about individual patrons to customize and/or personalize outreach to patrons.



#### Personalize, Personalize, Personalize

Patrons' profile data, like names, can be used to personalize outreach - e.g., pulling patrons' first names into the greeting of courtesy notice emails or text messages. Additional patron-level data about their behavior, like circulation history and program/event attendance, suggest opportunities to provide customized or personalized information - e.g., about additional books or future programs/events they might enjoy.



#### Collect Accurate Contact Information

Accuracy of contact information is critical for libraries to ensure important information like due dates, library events, and community resources reach intended patron recipients. BPL enhanced their contact information collection techniques by embedding data validation rules into their online library card application - i.e., when patrons input their cell phone numbers and indicate they want to receive notifications from BPL via text messages, the system automatically checks—in real time—whether the number is valid and SMS-enabled. → Set aside time to plan how to translate findings from the intervention into library practices in manageable ways. Effective change of practice involves collaboration and buy-in across multiple stakeholders, including on-the-ground staff.





→ Check staff capacity to support implementation and plan for contingencies. For example, if an intervention requires library staff to provide high-touch support to individual patrons, calculate estimated staffing needs and gaps relative to actual employee capacity.



## **CONCLUSION**

Many of the processes that we take for granted in libraries, like checking out and returning books, may unintentionally create confusion and obstacles for patrons. The tools and research from behavioral science can help shift libraries away from a punitive model towards strategies that actually work for and with patrons. This report is meant to serve as a guide for future interventions and a toolkit for understanding common mental biases that make people act in ways that might seem illogical, especially in a library or educational context. We hope that this documentation of what we learned can help inform your work.

## **CREDITS**

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