

Community Centered: 23 Reasons Why Your Library is the Most Important Place in Town.

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Libraries as Community Builders

1. Libraries help revitalize struggling or depressed neighborhoods and downtowns.
2. Libraries are important partners in sustainability.
3. Libraries' special collections grow out of specific community needs.
4. Archives preserve historic artifacts, oral histories, digital history projects, and monographs relevant to the community, including minority groups.
5. Libraries are places where people come to know themselves and their communities.
6. Libraries serve as catalysts for addressing social problems.
7. Libraries, which champion, promote, and reflect important democratic values, are a part of the community's political life.
8. Library buildings as architectural structures are culturally relevant.
9. Libraries provide important business resources, especially for small local businesses.

Libraries as Community Centers for Diverse Populations

10. Libraries help to ensure that non-English speakers see themselves represented in their communities.
11. Libraries provide immigrants with helpful information about, and opportunities to connect with, their new communities.
12. Libraries provide information, resources, and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexed, and questioning (LGBTIQ) patrons.
13. Libraries provide information, resources, and support for patrons with disabilities.

Libraries as Centers for the Arts

14. Libraries provide access to nonmainstream points of view and give voice to local artists.
15. Libraries provide opportunities for free classes that encourage art appreciation as well as art participation.
16. Libraries provide access to the arts for all, not just those who can afford them.

Libraries as Universities

17. Libraries serve as the "people's university."
18. Libraries offer opportunities for remote access, making it possible for those who can't get to the library to still access the library's cultural and educational offerings.
19. Libraries go beyond providing content to enabling patrons to create their own content.
20. Libraries promote civil discourse.

Libraries as Champions of Youth

21. Libraries teach teens important life skills.
22. Free tutoring, homework help programs, and summer reading programs for kids and teens help bridge the economic divide that impacts students' academic performance.
23. Libraries are important partners in child development.