# Podcasts In Action: The Teen Edition

## Innovation Strategy and Roadmap

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# What's the Idea?

When considering teen programming, the word "HOMAGO" comes to mind. Associated with youth, HOMAGO is an acronym for "Hang Out, Mess Around, Geek Out" and is a model that allows youth to have opportunities for self-guided learning that promotes engagement and creativity (YOUMedia Learning Network, n.d.). With this model in mind, the Teen Podcasting Studio is an avenue for teens to participate in HOMAGO in the public library. With a space filled with equipment and resources, teens will be able to create, edit, and publish their own podcasts. Aligning with the participatory service of the library, and as public libraries are important "third spaces" for teens, this will empower teens to feel welcome in the library, express their voices, share stories, and be flexible (Calgary Public Library, n.d.).
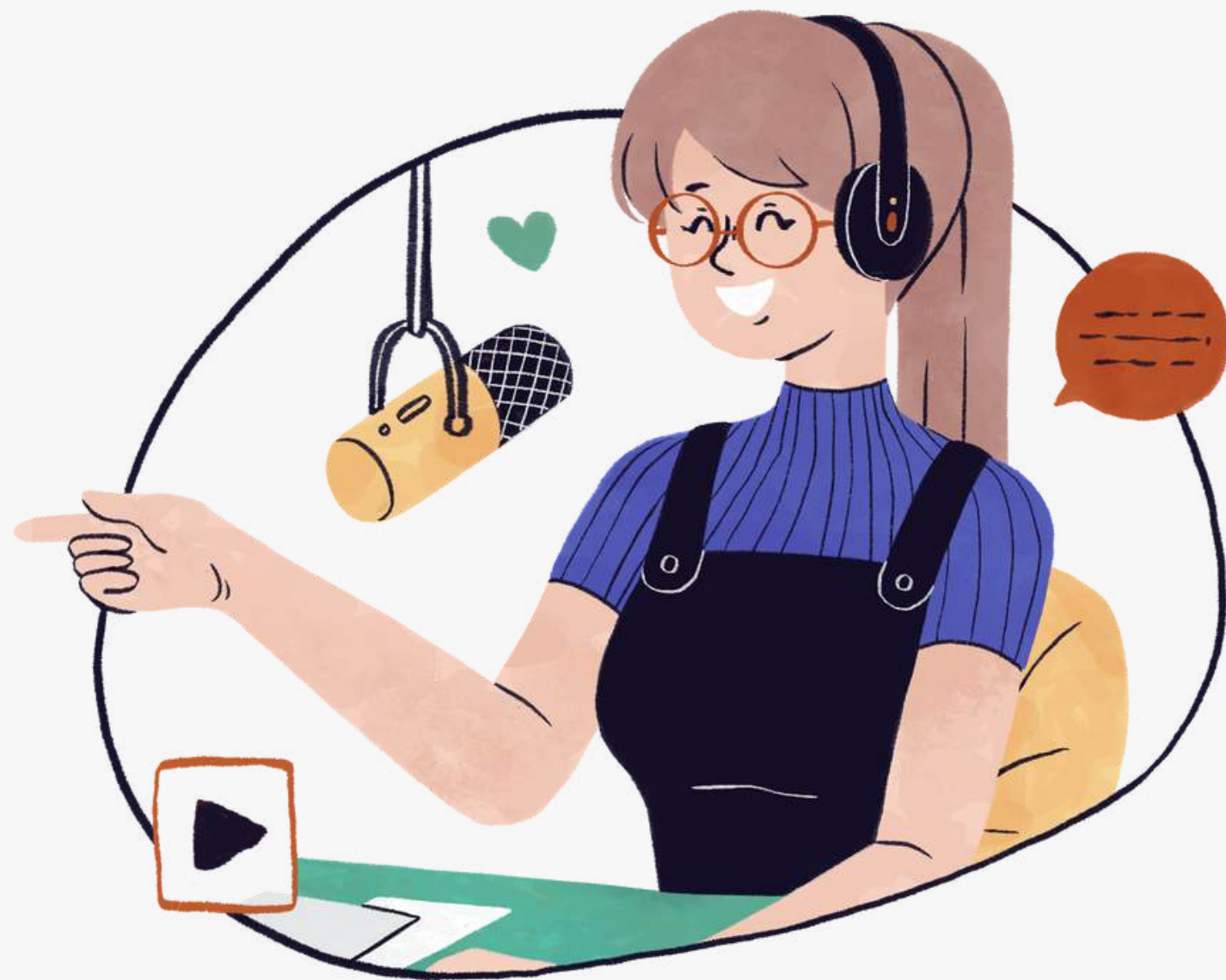
# Why Podcasts for Teens?

Teens are passionate people, and this initiative aligns with the library and their commitment to understanding teens and teen development (Calgary Public Library, n.d.). It is important to consider the involvement of technology in library services, as it is no longer an add-on, it is a necessity in their lives (Stephens, 2019). This is important to consider with teens and teen programming. More importantly, the library can cater to the ever-evolving needs of teens by providing them platforms to take charge, communicate, and develop their skills through the Teen Podcasting Studio.

# Empowerment

1. Allow teens the creative freedom and put themselves in charge of their own narratives and vision
2. Providing them skills for their future and encouraging them to practice these skills in low stakes and welcoming environments

# Collaboration

1. Encourage community members to work together on projects
2. Engage teens in the community to work together on projects
3. Encourages teens to build new connections

# Goals

# Digital Literacy

1. Allow teens to explore new technical equipment
2. Encourage teens to have hands-on learning to build and enhance their skills

# Third-Space

1. An outlet for teens to be teens, teens have the freedom to be in charge
2. Teens do not want to do things that are similar to school outside of school, give them the space to do something different yet engaging and enriching (Jensen, 2019)

# Goals

Public libraries can be a variety of different spaces for individuals, including a space to feel safe, access information, connect with others, and places to feel welcome (Hasan, 2022). Therefore, by providing a safe space for teens to be teens, the library allows them the opportunity to gather and be encouraged to share their diverse viewpoints, narratives, and perspectives.

# Action Brief

**Convince** the Calgary Public Library teen community **that by** utilizing and engaging with the Teen Podcasting Studio, they **will be** able to hear and share diverse stories, express their ideas in creative ways, **which will** further empower youth **because** there will be opportunities to enhance their confidence and communication skills, build connection with the community, as well as promote creativity.

LIBRARY
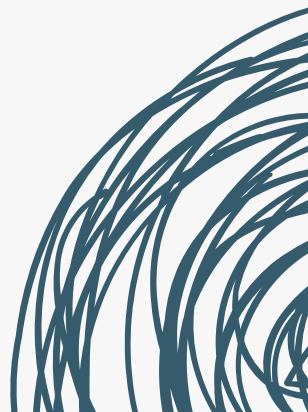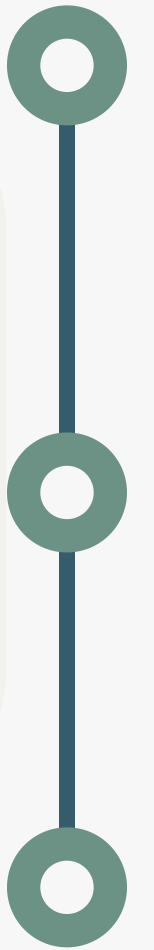
# Who Will This Help?

Teens are provided a space to be teens. They are empowered and encouraged to explore their interests, build relationships, develop skills, and just be able to hang-out.

## Teens

- Provides teens with the opporunity to explore new forms of creativity and build their communication and technology skills.
- Allow teens to create, and provide ways for expression and digital storytelling.

## Educators

- Encourage new projects and tools to be utilized
- Promote learning and communication in different ways

## Parents

- Activities for teens that enrich their skills.
- Promote learning and communication using new forms of technology.

## The Library and its Services

- This program will piloted on teens, with the hopes of increasing this program to include other members of the library.

# Inspiration

With the most libraries being equipped with the equipment and the idea of makerspaces, by using the HOMAGO model, and the principles of the Calgary Public Library's Teen Engagement Strategy, the initiative of the Teen Podcasting Studio was created.

Most libraries are equipped with podcasting equipment, however most of these spaces are self-serve and require the knowledge of the equipment in order to use it. This is what inspired the podcast studio program. By being able to provide teens the knowledge and resources on how to use the equipment, the podcasting initiative can be integrated into libraries easily. As well, it can be considered an expansion of Makerspaces that are present in libraries.

# Inspiration

Libraries that have successful spaces for audio, video and post-production studies include:

- https://www.calgarylibrary.ca/events-and-programs/book-a-space/audio-video-post-studios/
- https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/using-the-library/computer-services/innovation-spaces/recording-studio.jsp
- https://www.vpl.ca/guide/inspiration-lab-podcasting
- https://www.reginalibrary.ca/services/digital-media-studio/whisperroom

# Inspiration

Libraries that have successful spaces for audio, video and post-production studies include:

- https://www.epl.ca/makerspace/
- https://www.orl.bc.ca/using-the-library/our-services/orl-makerspaces
- https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/using-the-library/computer-services/innovation-spaces/
- https://fspl.ca/services/createandmake/

# Inspiration

As well, several libraries have been using their own equipment to create podcasts for their users to enjoy, successful libraries that have implemented this into their services include:

- https://beinspired.ca/podcast/
- https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/overdue-finds/id1377351226
- https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/library-land-loves/id1367675479
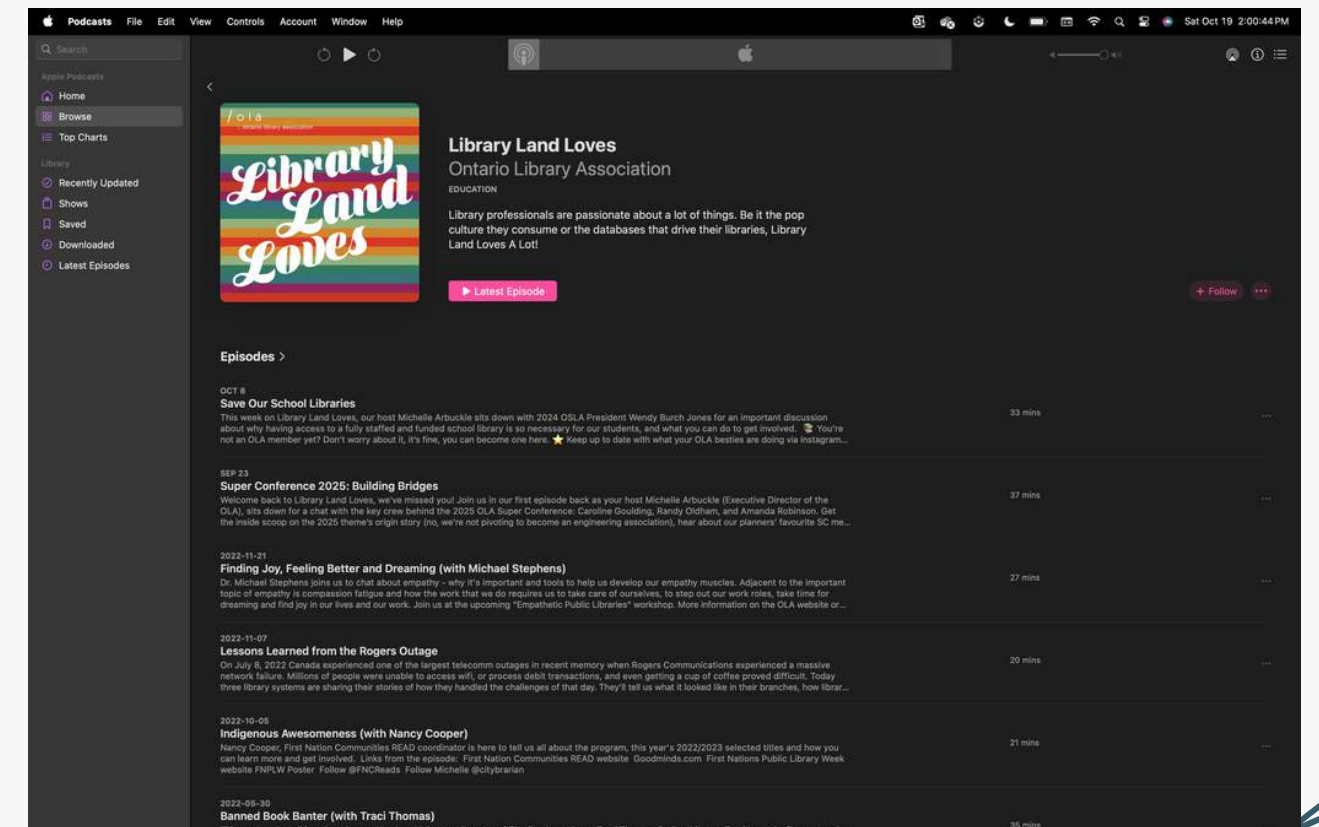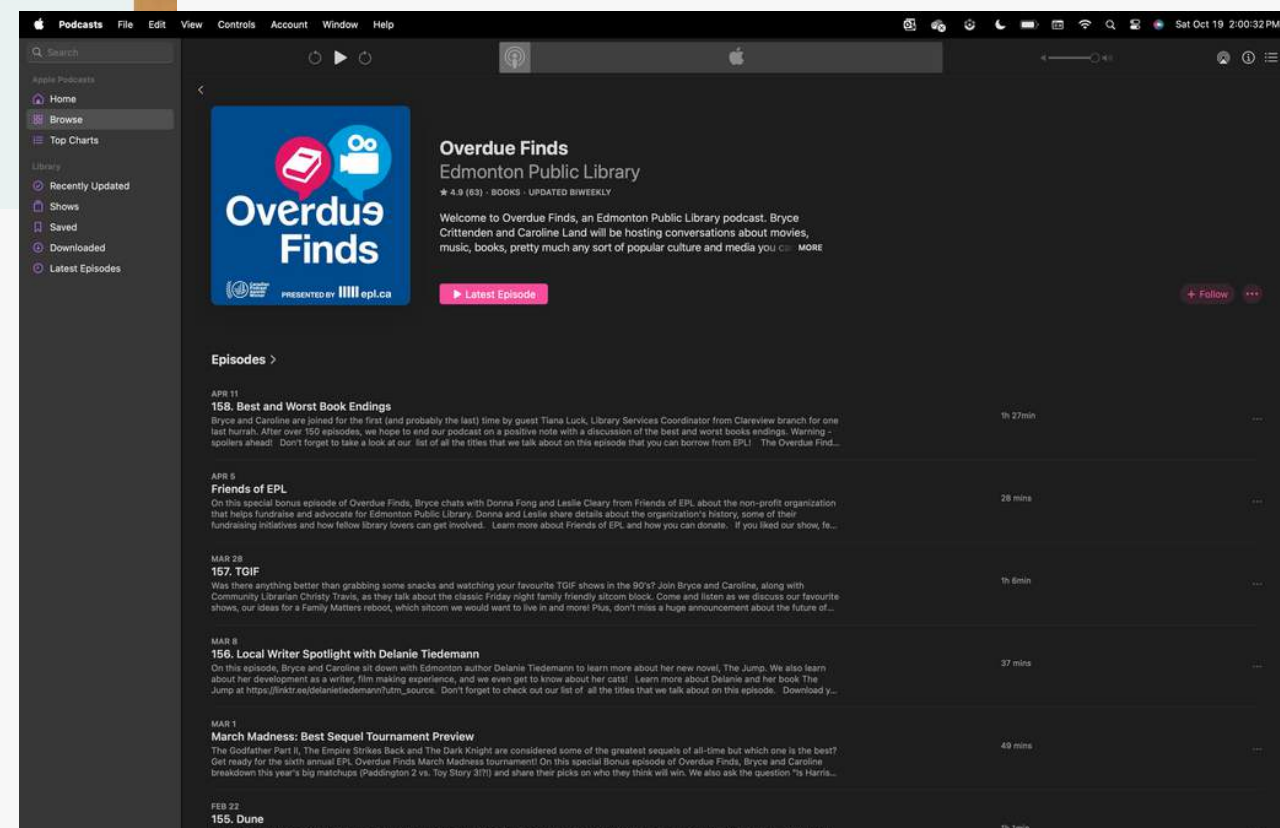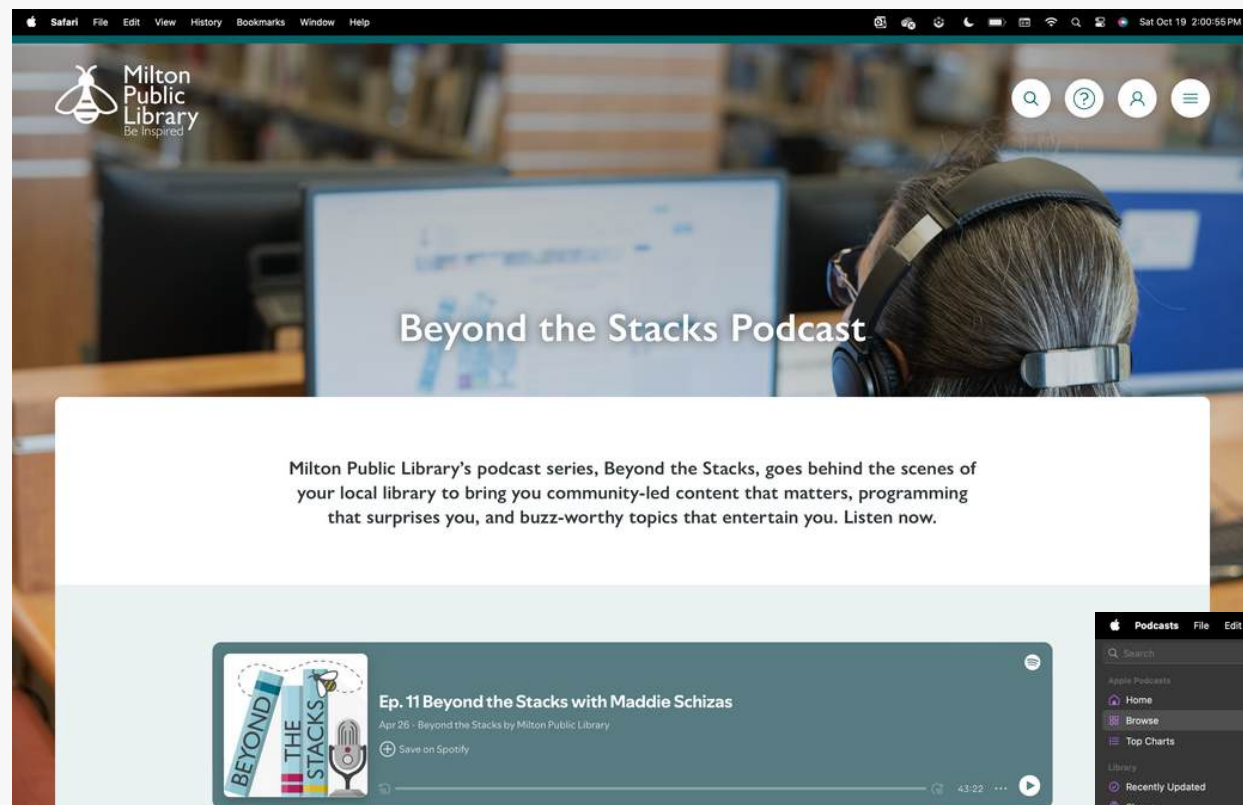
# Guidelines and Policies

Inspired by the ALA webpage, *Q&A: Makerspaces, Media Labs, and Other Forums in Content Creation in Libraries*, which provides policy guides for makerspaces and content creation, alongside the input of library administration, staff, and community members, including teens, the Calgary Public Library should consider the following policies for the implementation of the Teen Podcasting studio:

- Reservation Policies for Program and Usage of Technology:
  - Everyone should have equal opportunity to use the services, and blocked time should be set aside in advance for programming.
  - System should be set in place to allow for booking time slots that ensures equal access for individuals.
- Safety protocols:
  - Safe equipment use and individuals must behave appropriately.
- No misuse or damage to library services and equipment.
- Fees will not be charged for use of space or equipment.
  - Charges will only occur if there are purposeful misuse of library services.
- Intellectual Freedom Principles:
  - Users are encouraged to express their own thoughts and opinions.
  - All users using library services must include a disclaimer that the views expressed are of the individual and not the library.
- Technology Usage:
  - Library materials and services must be used for their intended purpose.

(American Library Association, 2017).

# Marketing

There are many ways to reach users of the library. Using "a wide array of channels for interaction across virtual and physical planes," the most important question is: how can we connect with our users to let them know the library is here for them and can be a part of their lives (Stephens, 2014, p. 41)?

Ways to do that is ensuring the library programs and information about these programs get into the hands of the users.
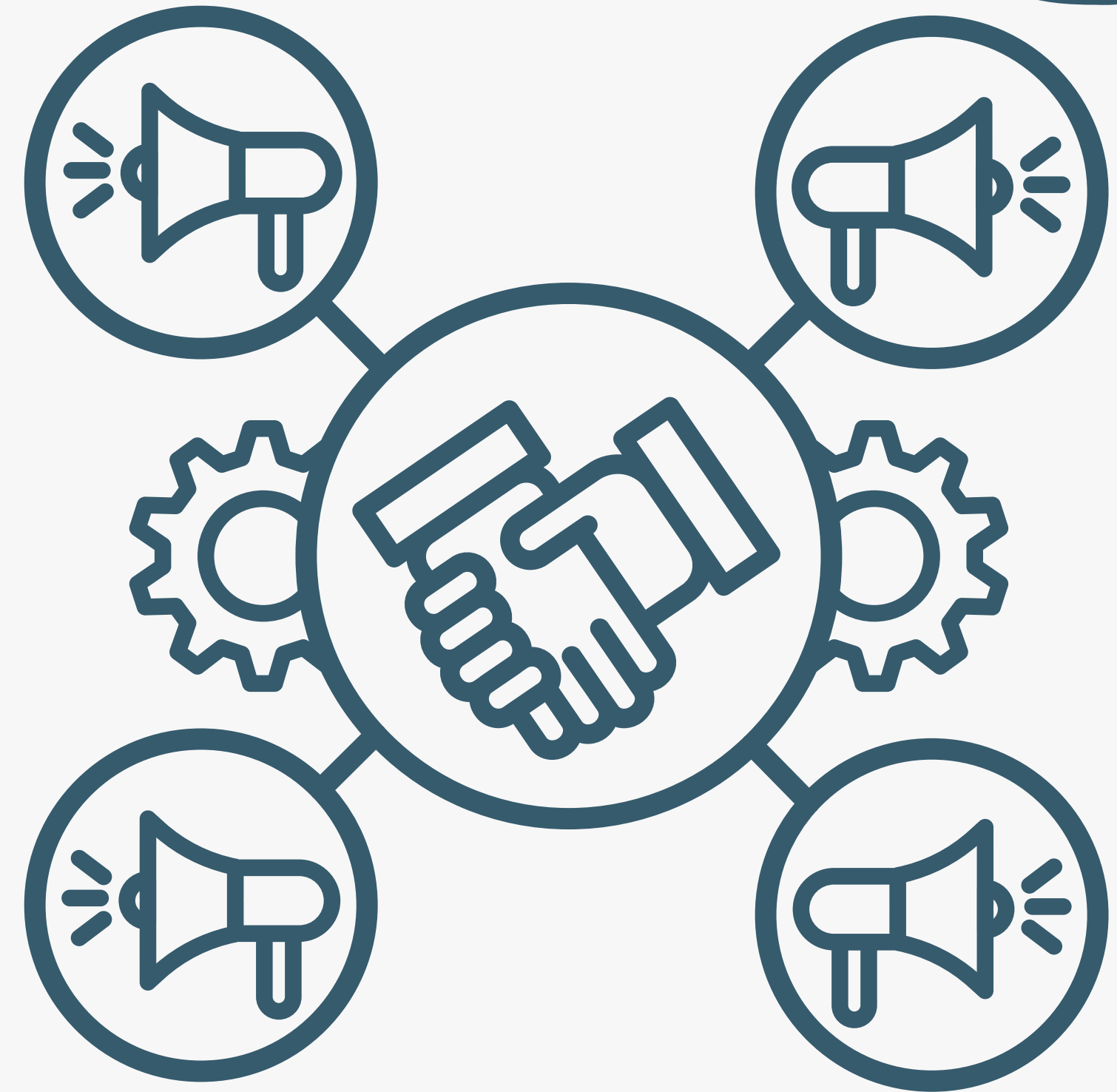
# Marketing

Social Media Sneak Peeks

- Audio snippets of Podcasts
- Promotion on social media of program and podcasts

Library Media

- Program promotion posters
- Promotional information on media caruosel on website and on-site at library branches
- Library can even create their own podcast to encourage users to use their services.
- Promote program initiative to staff
- Conduct staff meetings and promote staff interest to pilot program and discuss the Podcast studio offers
- Work on promotional materials that highlights and builds interest on the Podcast studio
- Utilize social media, outreach to local schools and community centers to promote the studio

# Timeline

**The program should be set to run over a course of 6 weeks, with breaks in-between programming of around 2-3 weeks to prevent staff burnout.**

**The timeline is for a 6 month program development.**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**6**

- Identify space for podcasting studio, obtain any additional equipment (microphones, recording software), design layout
- Preparations for program development begins

- Program is developed and complemented, Develop workshops for staff to attend on podcasting basics and storytelling
- IT develop troubleshooting guides for staff and public

- Train staff on how to use the equipment and how to facilitate the program
- IT refines troubleshooting guides based on feedback from staff.

- Launch on marketing campaign targeting local teens, school.
- Promotional posters and program is promoted to the public

Pilot program to the public

# Staff Involvement



Training Requirements
Staff will be required to:

- engage with podcasts experts and library technology department to develop outline for program
- get training for proper knowledge on the usage and operating of podcasting equipment
  - IT must be available to aide in remote troubleshooting for those using the spaces
  - IT must have time to develop and complete guides for the program
- create and develop their branches teen programming for Teen Programming Studio initiative
- some staff will be required to facilitate the professional development workshops on storytelling and audio production while other staff must be required to attend these workshops
- ensure user safety and proper equipment usage
- outreach to local schools or community centers to promote the program
- engage with experts to develop outline for program
- review feedback from pilot and make changes where necessary

# Evaluation

It is said that the hardest part of new services is the rexamination of ideas (Casey & Stephens, 2008). However, successful libraries and successful library programs value evaluation of all their services and there are many ways to determine if the current offering is valuable to the library (Casey & Stephens, 2008).

After the initial pilot of the Teen Podcasting Studio program, the program should be evaluated after the first programming period (6-weeks). Subsequently, the program will be evaluated once again after it has reached 6 months of run-time, and evaluated once more after it has completed a full year of programming. After the initial evaluations, programs will be evaluated yearly to see its relevance and contributions to the community.

The library will be required to track:

- attendance numbers for the program and studio usage
- user feedback through surveys that will assess the satisfaction and areas for improvement
- the number of podcasts created and shared by teens in the studio
- the number of program registrations
- staff feedback on program

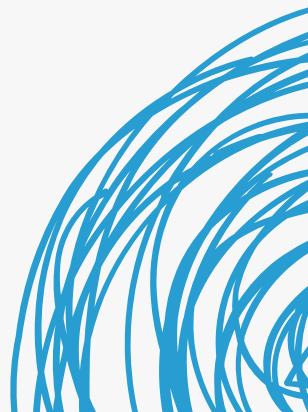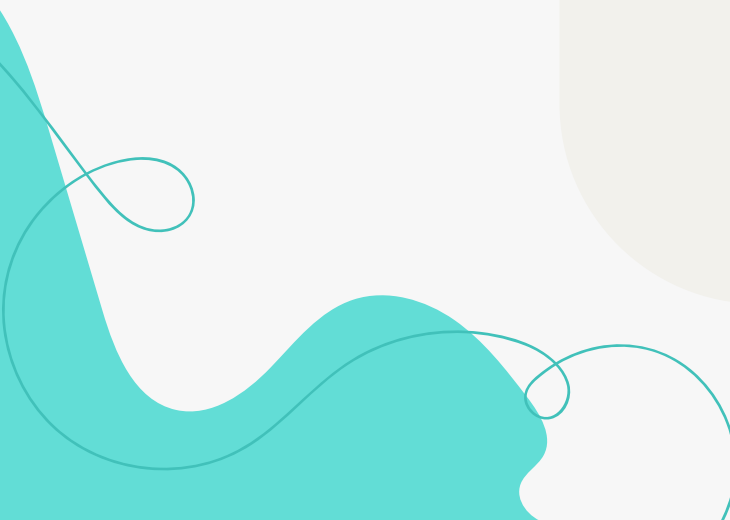Building on this, the program could expand to include:

- the opportunity to create this program for adults
- advanced workshops on audio editing and podcast marketing
- collaborations with local schools for curriculum integration
- additional resources for the program, such as online tutorials and guests
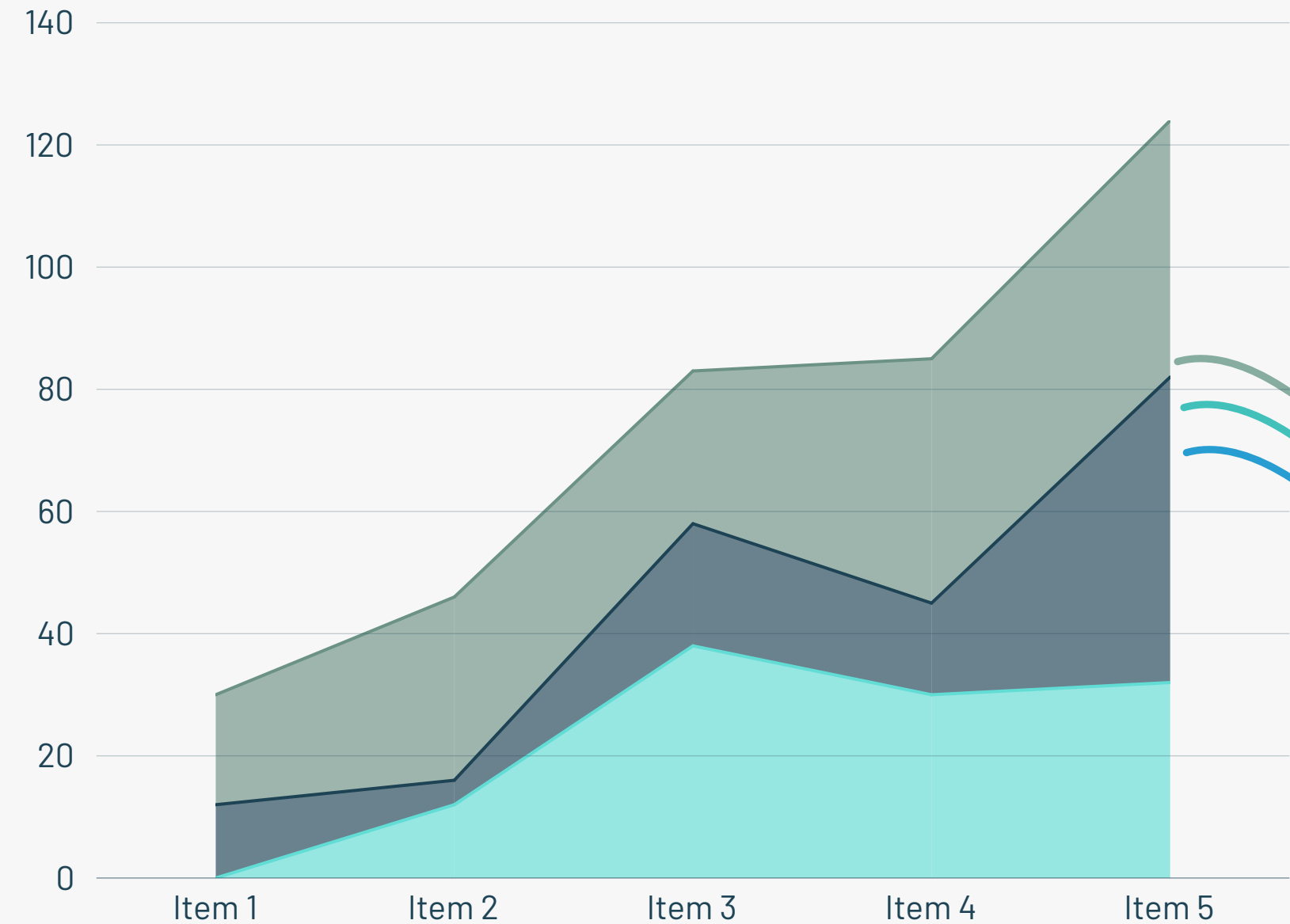
# Conclusion

In a media-driven world where teens are surrounded by technology, we need to cater to their needs. By building library programs that "promote positive outcomes by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and giving the support that is needed to develop young people's assets and prevent risky behaviors," we are addressing teen services and teen programming (Youth.Gov, n.d.). Therefore, the implementation of a Teen Podcasting studio at the Calgary Public Library can allow teens the essential opportunities to create, grow, and develop their interests and innovate with each other. The Teen Podcasting Studio is designed to nurture a vibrant, diverse creative environment for teens and the community.

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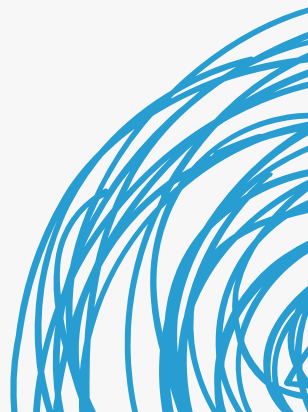
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# Thank you!