



# Communicating with the Homeless Customers in Your Library

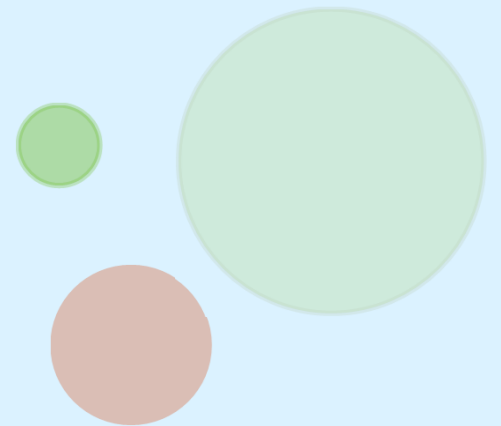
Ed McLaughlin

# PIT Count formerly known as K Count

- Introduction to working with the homeless outside of the library
- A small training in communicating with the homeless was provided
- Worked with a trained social worker
- Learned the advantages of having a “Bird in the Hand” having resources to provide when you approach them vs having to find them
- Meeting people from other groups that provide services

# Possible groups and people to reach out to

- Police or Sheriff
- County Human Services Office
- Religious Organizations
- Outreach Services
- United Way – 211
- Rehabilitation Facilities
- School Family Resource Office
- FSFB or other Food Pantry





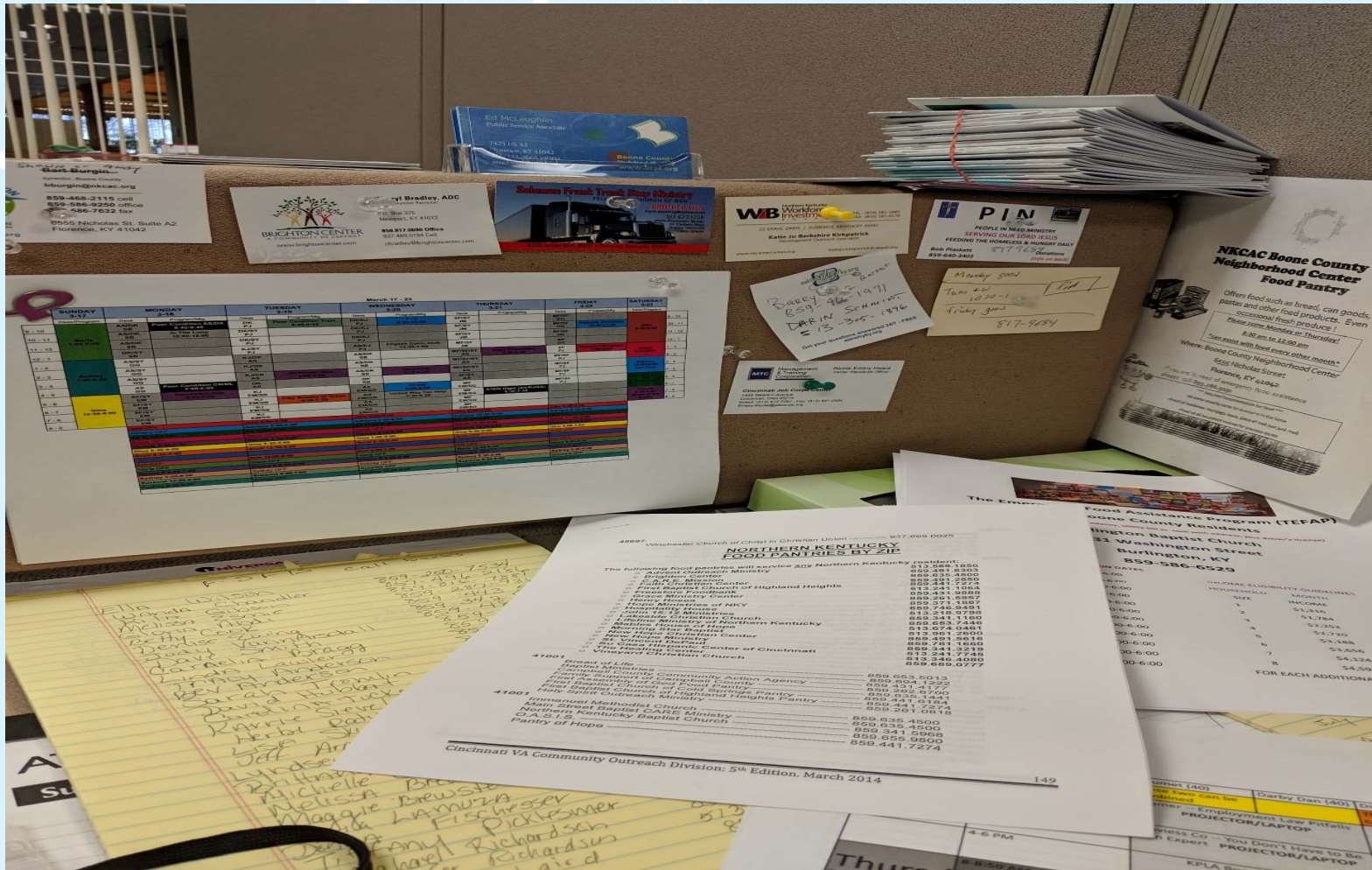
# Example of Resource Guide

## Resources

<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>Services Provided</b>	<b>Contact Info</b>	<b>Requirements</b>
NKCAC	Heat, Rent assistance Food Pantry	Teresa 859-817-0690 M –F 8am – 3.30pm	Must be Boone County Resident
PIN Ministry	Tents, sleeping bags Food delivery Clothes	Biker Bob 859-817-9684 Tues and Wed Business hours	None Will delivery items to the library



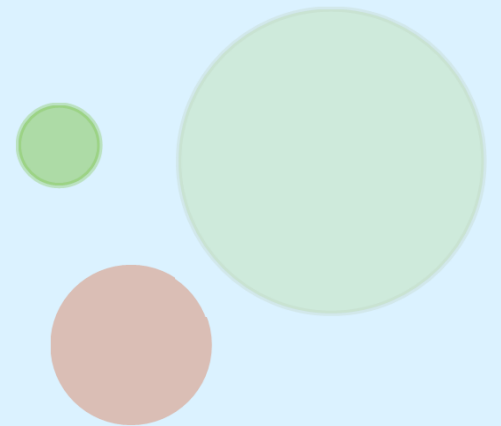
# Poor, however, more realistic version



Boone County Public Library

# Approaching & Engaging Marginalized Customers

- ✓ Be yourself – Regular homeless customers are observing you
- ✓ Treat all customers the same
- ✓ Patrol the library regularly – engage with a smile and a nod
- ✓ Treat all customers the same
- ✓ Enforce library rules equitably



# Things to consider

1. No sleeping in the building, it is a safety issue
2. Belongings must be with customers at all times
3. Customers can not be under the influence, sell or possess illegal drugs or alcohol on the property
4. Scale of enforcement
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> offense for small infraction ex. sleeping – warning; larger infraction ex. drugs or violence – leave the property or police involvement
  2. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – Leave the property – timing based on offense
  3. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Banned for one week
  4. Recurring offenders may have to speak to Branch Manger before returning

# Why waste library resources on the homeless?

- We support the public, providing resources is

## What We Do

- By assisting we are improving every customer's experience and environment
- Sometimes a 'hand up' is what a customer needs for improving their situation
- By providing resources We Can improve homelessness in our area



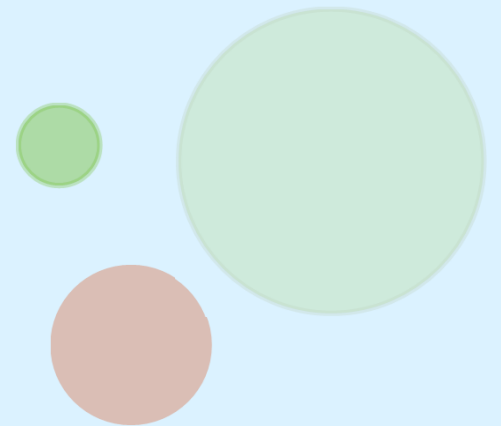


# Links to help YOU get started

- Identifying an effective way to communicate with homeless populations - [https://www.publichealthjrnl.com/article/S0033-3506\(11\)00275-7/abstract](https://www.publichealthjrnl.com/article/S0033-3506(11)00275-7/abstract)
- 7 rules for talking to homeless people - <https://www.operationwarm.org/blog/7-rules-for-talking-to-homeless-people/>
- Ever wondered what to say to a homeless person? 5 things to say and not to say – <http://nationswell.com/homeless-america-5-things-to-say/>
- 8 tips on how to approach and interact with a homeless person - <https://talesindigitalink.wordpress.com/2015/05/25/8-tips-on-how-to-approach-and-interact-with-a-homeless-person/>
- Homeless Etiquette: Here is how not to be a jerk to homeless people - <https://www.ranker.com/list/homeless-etiquette-tips/veronica-walsingham>
- Challenges double when reporting on homelessness and mental health, but a few tips can help - <https://www.centerforhealthjournalism.org/resources/lessons/challenges-double-when-reporting-homelessness-and-mental-health-few-tips-can-help>
- BART - <https://www.bart.gov/news/articles/2017/news20171016-1>



# Q&A



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