

Section 3. Basic Procedures

Developing the Collection

To ensure that resources are well spent and that the center contains the information vital to its intended patrons, the center must have a clear sense of whom it wishes to serve, on what topics, and via which types of services. This point is of primary importance. Only after targeted users and their information needs have been identified can attention turn to developing policies to guide the center's selection of materials and to establishing development goals for its collection. Suggestions and guidance from administrators of the funding organization are important. It also serves to inform them about the center's efforts.

Policy to Guide Selection In considering the materials which an information center will use to respond to clients' needs, it is important to recognize that this does not mean that all of the items actually identified need to be acquired and physically located within the center. For example, the sponsoring agency may already have subscriptions to journals that the center anticipates would be of interest to its patrons. Or the center may be located near a large reference library that has a considerable collection of books on alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, as well as serials. In such cases, the center may, at first, elect to rely upon some of the holdings of these other collections, rather than spend limited resources to duplicate materials it can already access. To maximize total resources, it is important to avoid unnecessary duplication of existing, readily accessible materials. The center should make efficient use of other collections when possible.

In developing its selection policy, a center has to consider which materials need to be immediately accessible in order to respond to users' needs promptly. Materials that are only needed infrequently can be borrowed from other collections.

Accordingly, the center should limit its purchases to materials that are important to the center's primary users and that are important to have on-site. The development of comprehensive collections is better left to nationally available resource and information centers with extensive funding. Becoming familiar with national centers and identifying the types of materials that can be obtained from them is an important activity.

In creating its *selection policy*, the center is establishing the guidelines it will follow as it builds its collection. This entails describing the types of materials the center will collect as well as specifying topics of special consideration. After a center is operational, its selection policy should be periodically reviewed to ensure that it is corresponding to the sponsoring organization's cur-

rent focus. If the sponsoring organization and its staff write and publish materials, the center should actively collect and catalog these in-house materials.

A selection policy, no matter how brief, can be invaluable when a center is confronted with specific decisions about buying expensive or controversial items. The scope of the collection, along with the services provided, determine the center's costs, the work load of the center's staff, and ultimately the functioning of the entire center.

The ultimate success of the center to some degree will be determined by its selection policy, the scope of the resulting collection, and the extent to which it meets the needs of the center's primary clients and the mandate given by the sponsoring organizations.

Scope

Because the scope of the collection is determined by the needs of those it will serve, it is important to focus on who those people are, i.e. health care professionals, administrators, the general public, special population groups, all of these, or only a subset. The question which follows from this is, "What do these users need?"

Surveying potential primary users can be helpful. Among the questions to ask are — "Which serials are important and to which should the center definitely subscribe?" "What specific books, documents and reports should be included in the collection?" "Are video and/or audio cassettes, posters, and news clippings essential components of the collection? If so, which ones?"

An important service of the center may be to collect, organize, and archive in-house publications. In many organizations this chore is overlooked, resulting in increasing chaos as time passes. Although this may not have been included in the original mandate for the creation of the center, it may prove to be an important way that the center can demonstrate its value. The creation of an annotated publications list of these materials can bring quick recognition to the center even as it is being compiled.

A related task may be to organize documents that are already on site. Books, journals, and reports may be scattered in offices and desk drawers or stored in file cabinets and storerooms. Quite possibly no one person knows what is already available or where it is located! To avoid duplication, if things are scattered throughout the organization, documents should be gathered and/or inventoried before additional copies of books or journals are purchased. Once again, this process and its myriad of related inquiries will increase the visibility of the center within the organization.

Beyond defining specific areas and types of information to collect, a related issue to consider is how inclusive it is important to be. Classifying, catalog-

ing, and housing each document demands resources. The center's collection can be quite far-ranging or limited to a specific topic. The center may restrict itself to only domestic information from local, regional, and national sources. Or it may wish definitely to include sources from not only North America, but beyond. The center also needs to decide whether materials will be collected in more than one language. French and Spanish may be essential. For a listing of the range of potential materials see the box in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Possible Types of Materials in a Center's Collection

In-house documents. For current distribution and for an archival collection.

Federal and State/Provincial Government Documents. Legislation, technical reports, policy and decision papers, surveys, memoranda, etc.

Reports. Prepared by non-governmental organizations or associations. May describe meetings or study groups.

Statistical Data. Found in books, serials, newspapers, government documents, etc.

Books and Monographs. These may be for reference use and not for general circulation.

Serials. Source of the latest facts, figures, and research findings. Possible to network with other libraries to share general topic serials and books.

Reference Materials. Directories, encyclopedias, handbooks, indexes, and bibliographies.

Bibliographies. Lists of publications on special subjects. Annotated bibliographies include comments or descriptions of the publications. Selected bibliographies do not include all the possible items on a topic and instead focus only on those publications considered by the compiler to be the most useful or important.

Public Education Materials. Examples of pamphlets, posters, books, videos, and any other materials used by health care workers and educators for their patients and students.

Materials for Program Development. These can include documents describing clinical, educational, and training or prevention programs.

Curricula. Courses of study developed for use at schools and universities.

Book Catalogs. Published by bookshops, wholesalers (jobbers), and publishers.

Pamphlets and Brochures. For distribution.

Notices of Meetings. A service to users.

Names and Addresses of Persons who are Experts on Alcohol- and Drug-Related Topics. For use when the center can find no answer to a query.

Information about Organizations and Treatment Centers. Among the most useful information in the center.

Audiovisuals (audiocassettes, videocassettes, films). Because they require a major expenditure of resources, this decision should be considered carefully.

***Identifying Existing
Information Collections***

The ability of a smaller collection to provide satisfactory service is dependent on several factors. One factor is the extent to which the center houses information which addresses the needs of its targeted users. The other is the extent to which the center can successfully link up with other centers. By linking itself to other library resources the information center has access to information that is located far beyond its own walls.

There are a number of places a center can turn to when it needs to identify sites with significant alcohol, tobacco, and other drug information. *Appendix A* sets forth a number of libraries and information centers which will be invaluable.

As a general strategy, consider contacting state/provincial or federal government information clearinghouses or libraries; libraries in general (university, medical, or public); special collections; and, finally, newspaper libraries and archives. To determine how any of these sources might be valuable to the center, ask each organization for a description of its collection, as well as a list of the serials to which it subscribes. The next question then becomes whether these materials are available for inter-library loan and, if so, whether or not an agreement for inter-library loan can be established.

***Non-traditional
Information Sources***

In addition to established libraries and information services, there are “non-traditional” resources to be kept in mind. These include researchers in academic and other research institutions, college and university faculty, treatment center professionals, substance abuse associations, private foundations and other non-governmental organizations, and publishers’ catalogs.

To successfully use these non-traditional information sources, know exactly what questions to ask and to whom the questions should be directed. A person who has some understanding of the subject of the question is more likely to elicit a useful response. If the librarian understands the issue surrounding the question well s/he should make the contact. If not, the name, address, and phone number, along with information indicating why that contact might be helpful, should be given to the client. The client should be encouraged to make the contact directly.

Don’t forget your own organization when it comes time to seek out non-traditional information sources. Those within the sponsoring organization may prove to be valuable sources of information for the center. Ask that the center be added to the distribution list for copies of all publicly available in-house reports and documents. Suggest to staff that the center is a good place to house “review” copies of books after the review has been written. Let it be known that “junk mail” is sometimes of high interest to an information center and can be forwarded to the center for processing, circulation, or disposal. Additionally, administrators and professionals may be able to suggest names of people and agencies to contact. Write to tell them about the information

center and offer them limited services. In turn, ask them to forward relevant information directly to the center.

Treatment professionals, researchers and community service people are other important non-traditional sources. Community professionals may know of information found in documents, presented at meetings, or other information that can be useful to the center. For this reason, being in contact with others on a regular basis is helpful.

***Government Documents
Clearinghouse Network***

The *Federal Drug, Alcohol and Crime Clearinghouse Network* was created by the U.S. Office of Drug Control Policy to provide easy access to federal drug clearinghouses. With just one phone call – 800/788-2800 – callers can be linked directly to any of the seven clearinghouses listed below:

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
Drug and Crime Clearinghouse
Drug Information and Treatment Referral Line
Drug Free Workplace Helpline
CDC National AIDS Clearinghouse
National Criminal Justice Reference Service
HUD Drug Information and Strategy Clearinghouse

(More about each of these clearinghouses can be found in *Appendix A*.)

Thus the Clearinghouse Network phone number may be the fastest way for many people to find U.S. government documents and tap the wealth of publications and services offered by the clearinghouses. It is suggested that the center contact each of the above clearinghouses, ask for a copy of its catalog, and request special information it may have available.

Recent legislative reports and hearings are often not available from the clearinghouses. One way to obtain them is to contact the office of your senator or representative and request copies. Centers with computers, modems, and network access can download them directly from the Library of Congress's database, MARVEL. (See *Appendix F*)

Cultivating Contacts

One of a center's tasks is to expand the circle of resources upon which it can call. Equally important is nurturing those who now assist the center. When cultivating contacts, consider following:

- * As you meet new people, ask to be put on their organization's mailing lists to receive relevant publications.
- * Request that the center be added to publishers' mailing lists as well. Peruse the catalogs and file current issues.
- * At every opportunity, remind colleagues to tell you about new documents

that should be considered for the collection.

- * Offer to exchange information with other groups. Exchange newsletters, annual reports, research papers, conference papers, and promotional literature on a complimentary basis with other organizations. It is possible to receive some periodicals without paying subscription fees.
- * When documents arrive from an individual, send a thank you letter. This encourages a continued flow of publications.

Technical Services

Technical services in an information center are comprised of the systems used to develop and organize the collection. Every information center needs selection and acquisition systems to identify and place orders for books and serials, as well as a classification system to arrange materials and a cataloging system to index them so that they can be found later.

Identifying Materials

Selection Tools.

Identifying materials for purchase can become very time-consuming as stacks of catalogs, acquisitions lists, journals, and magazines begin to pile up. To provide guidance and to ease this task, librarians often use “selection tools.” Selection tools include anything that helps find and then evaluate new publications of interest. For example, many journals and newsletters publish reviews and information about new books or audiovisual materials. *Appendix B* describes a number of periodicals that are especially useful in reviewing new materials. Most librarians scan a number of periodicals regularly as part of identifying materials to add to a collection.

Publisher’s catalogs as well as acquisition lists prepared by other information centers in the substance abuse field can be valuable. In addition, the patrons of a center who are knowledgeable in the field are often excellent sources of recommendations. Encourage them to offer suggestions.

Keep in mind that many reference materials, as well as a growing number of serials, are now available in both print and electronic formats, such as CD-ROM or downloadable Internet files. Costs and availability of both the materials themselves and the equipment needed to use them will determine a center’s choices. It is expected that increasing numbers of centers will use these alternative formats as we enter the 21st century because of the ease of both searching and housing them.

Acquisitions

Having selected materials for the center, the next step is to acquire them. The center needs an efficient acquisitions system that will keep track of multiple orders and ensure that the center pays only for orders received in good

condition. It is often economical to select a preferred supplier for books and for serials. Dealing with multiple publishers can be costly in both time and dollars. Money saved by shopping about and placing several small orders may be offset by increased bookkeeping costs and time spent. "Jobbers," the term used for subscription and book purchasing services, are frequently used because it is possible to place a single order, receive one package, and pay one bill for a number of books. When problems occur, only one person must be contacted.

Generally, a jobber's prices will be the same as the direct cost to the center on academic journals and scholarly books. For popular magazines and journals, the jobber is often able to pass on discounts received from publishers. Jobbers are widely used because they can offer economies of scale, discounts on publishers' prices, and automated systems that provide accurate subscription management services for libraries. Centers ordering larger numbers of periodicals will find the management reports that a jobber can generate useful. For example, the jobber can produce a renewal check list, as well as a claims status report that summarizes any outstanding materials not received, along with publishers' responses.

Several centers might combine their subscription orders with one jobber, still receiving separate invoices and subscriptions. In this way, very small centers can still take advantage of the economies and conveniences of having to interact with only one source.

Cost should not be the only criteria for selecting a jobber or subscription vendor, however. Equally important is the jobber's dependability. This will be measured by its capacity to fill orders promptly and accurately, as well as its ability to correct errors quickly and without hassle. In addition, the billing routine should be one with which your organization can work. To select a jobber ask colleagues for suggestions and recommendations.

A jobber may not be needed by some centers if most of its serials are a part of an exchange process or were received as gifts. Each center has different needs and priorities. Each should choose an approach to serials acquisitions that is most appropriate for it.

**Requesting Materials:
Sample Letter**

September 1, 1995

Mary Jones
Small Town Information Center
Middletown, Any State 00011

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
PO Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Madam/Sir:

Please send me your provide the full name and catalog number of the item of interest. I understand there is no charge for this item.

Please add the Small Town Information Center to your mailing list so that we might receive catalogs, announcements and updates.

or

I would like to order the following publication:

Author of publication, Title, Publisher's Name, Place of Publication, Date of Publication

Please send it to me at the above address with an invoice for payment. *OR* I am enclosing a (purchase order) check in full payment.

Thank you,

Mary Jones

Arranging the Collection: Classification

Information collections are valuable only when the information needed can be found. Unorganized collections are far less useful. For this reason centers adopt a classification system that arranges books on the shelves. A classification arrangement that places books about the same topic together on the shelf creates a collection conducive to browsing. The problem encountered in classifying a book is determining the major focus of the book and placing each book appropriately in relation to other books in the collection.

Books are not the only materials that an information center organizes or classifies. Often booklets, pamphlets, and reports contain the most current and important information. Many do not have hard covers and won't "stand up"

on a shelf. They can be stored in colorful, plastic or paperboard “*shelf file boxes*” or in file cabinets. Some centers use a library binding system or “hard-cover binders” for small documents so they can be conveniently shelved with books. *Serials* can be stored in “shelf file boxes” if they are not bound. Materials stored in boxes on the shelves are classified like books. Those stored in file cabinets are arranged by topics. The part of the collection housed in a file cabinet is referred to as a vertical or subject file.

Classified materials in libraries are usually divided into three sections: *Reference Collection*. Some documents will be used often and need to always be available. Some of these may be documents that the staff uses to answer questions. Some materials are very expensive and would be difficult to replace. For these reasons it may be wise to have them stay in the center. This non-circulating part of the collection is known as the *Reference Collection*.

Periodical Collection. This includes journals, magazines, newsletters and all other serials with ongoing titles that are published at regular intervals. Serials such as yearbooks and annual publications are usually housed with books. Many centers allow back issues of periodicals to circulate although for a shorter time than books do because of their generally broader use. The most recent issue of a periodical is usually reserved for use only in the center.

Circulating Collection. Circulating materials may be borrowed and taken out of the center. For centers restricting circulation of materials to a only a handful of staff members, a very basic system will suffice. For example, simply writing the name or number of the user on a book card next to the due date would most likely be both efficient and effective. Centers that circulate materials to a larger number of users will most often use more complex computerized circulation systems.

Choosing a Classification System A classification system is used to arrange books on shelves. The system is intended to group together documents on the same subject. Each subject is assigned a different classification number. There are several classification systems in use in North America today. The most commonly used systems are the Library of Congress Classification (USA), the Universal Decimal Classification (worldwide), and the Dewey Decimal System (USA and Great Britain). Each of these was developed for large collections that include *all* types of knowledge.

It is important to remember that once a center chooses a system to classify and catalog its materials and begins to use it, the cost of changing to another system becomes formidable. A center should not start to use a system without giving careful thought to both the initial cost and the cost of maintaining that system. The center should feel confident that the selected system will continue to be efficient and effective as its collection grows from 100 to 1000 or more books.

When a collection is small, it is often tempting to sidestep the need to purchase, install, and learn a professional system. But the eventual cost of recataloging and reclassifying an entire collection to convert it to a professional system later means this can be a very expensive decision. It is almost always appropriate for a small center to choose a professional classification system and then adapt and simplify it for use.

If a library or information center in your organization is already using a classification system, *use that system*. If your sponsoring organization is already using a classification system, ask the person who classifies material for the collection to also classify documents for the information center. Or, ask for help in learning to use the classification system.

If you have already used a classification system and know about it, then *use that system*. A third option is to approach an alcohol/drug information center with which you interact and discuss with the director the advisability of adopting the system being used in that center. A fourth option should only be considered if the collection contains less than a few hundred books and has absolutely no possibility of becoming larger. That option is to create one's own classification system.

Classification Numbers

Classifying a document gives it a unique code or label. This code tells what the book is about, who authored it, and when it was published. Classification systems use numbers or letters, or both. Often the classification system uses a code in three parts. The first part is the subject classification which tells the topic of the book. The second part is a code for the author's or editor's surname, often the first three letters. The last part is the year the document was published.

On the shelves the books are arranged by the first part of the call number which assigns a subject group. Then, within each group, the books are arranged alphabetically by the author's or editor's surname. When there is more than one document by an author, books are ordered by year of publication. This system places documents about the same subject together on the shelves, arranged alphabetically by author and then by the year published.

Cataloging Materials

Because of the necessity of choosing only one physical place to shelve a book, the center's catalog is the tool that, beyond browsing, helps the user find materials on a given subject. At the most basic level the catalog records an accession number, location or classification number, author, title, edition, publisher, place of publication, year of publication, International Standard Book Number (ISBN), and assigned subjects.

The catalog is the way to find books by your favorite authors or new books on your favorite topic. The card catalog that we all learned to use in school is

rapidly becoming obsolete, however. Its obsolescence has been accelerated by the cost of producing or buying multiple cards for each book and then filing them in a drawer in proper alphabetical order. Data entry on a computer is now faster, easier, and cheaper. In addition, it is possible to search a computerized database much more quickly and thoroughly than a card catalog.

Along with the computer has come a number of software products written specifically for library management. Librarians create in-house databases when creating a library catalog. The process is described below.

Because a computer allows one to find a book by searching in many different ways, the importance of the subject categories assigned by the cataloger has decreased and the ease of finding materials has increased. The importance of the cataloger's consistency in recording names, dates, and subjects remains.

There are a number of tools and services that have traditionally helped librarians create catalog records. MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging) records are available for most titles in the Library of Congress and are used by large libraries. However these are not easy for a small library to adapt. Unfortunately, although the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information are cataloging most of the materials for their own databases and libraries, the cataloging data is not presently available to other libraries. If you can share cataloging data with a colleague using a similar computer system or obtain the data from a large AOD library, utilize it.

Many libraries and information centers that have created in-house databases are not using traditional library cataloging tools. This does not mean to imply that creating an online catalog or in-house database is easier. It's definitely not, it's just that a very different set of problems is presented.

Before a center can start cataloging it must confront the tasks of selecting a computer system, planning for its implementation, and training those who will be entering and searching the data. These tasks can be formidable.

***Subjects, Descriptors or
Controlled Vocabulary***

Once a computer system has been installed, the center must think about controlled vocabulary – the descriptors or subject terms that it will use to describe the materials. Descriptors should allow users to find materials using the words they usually think of. Although one can only put a document in one place and assign one classification number it, the number of descriptors assigned is theoretically unlimited. One of the important things to avoid is choosing random descriptors. This leads to chaos for the searcher. The result could be the need to search with 20 *different* descriptors merely to find all the materials on *one* subject. Basically, one should use a preselected list to avoid using synonyms in choosing descriptors for an automated system. A center can develop its own list by selecting descriptors from one of the Thesauri listed on

page two of Appendix A. Adapting a group of preselected descriptors from the NIAAA's *Thesaurus* is another way to help ensure consistency of descriptors while at the same time providing descriptors that are the same as those used for other many other databases.

Creating and Using Databases

If there is one activity or theme which encompasses an information center/library's essential functions, it is *organization*. The center must have an easy to use and reliable means for retrieving information. The basic purpose behind both classifying and cataloging materials is to make such retrieval possible.

Historically this has been the function of the card catalog. The card catalog, in fact, is a kind of database. Increasingly libraries and information centers are converting manual catalogs and library management systems to computerized systems. It is, without a doubt, much more cost-effective to organize a new center based on computerized systems. *Section 4* describes the many different ways in which computers are being used to handle many of the routine tasks of information centers in a fashion that is efficient and avoids redundancy.

What Is A Database?

The term *database* can refer to any systematized compilation of information. A database is simply a body of information that is gathered together in a systematic fashion. Thus, a telephone directory, library card catalog, and the directory of videotapes at the neighborhood video rental outlet all qualify as databases. It doesn't matter how the information is stored, whether it's on index cards, a series of typed lists, or on a computer. The fundamental element is that the information is arranged for rapid search and easy retrieval. Many libraries have converted their old databases, or catalogs, to computerized databases because these are, in fact, considerably less expensive to maintain and more efficient to use than the card catalog.

A telephone "directory" which contained all of the exact same information, but organized it differently – for example, having an alphabetical listing of only names, followed by a separate list of just addresses, and then another list strictly of telephone numbers – would no longer be a database. Such an arrangement would represent nothing more than a series of lists and be essentially useless, because the pieces of information were not linked together.

Although any collection of information which meets the criteria enumerated above is technically a database, in practice, the term is now used to refer to computerized systems which store and retrieve information. The introduction of computers has introduced possibilities for finding information which go far beyond the capacity of printed formats.

Quite possibly the databases that are most familiar are those maintained by virtually every establishment that rents videotapes for home use. Before one can rent a tape for the first time, there is some basic information that has to be provided. This information constitutes the computerized *record*. All databases are built upon records, which contain the information relevant to the particular database. Each different kind of information within the *record* constitutes a *field*.

For the videotape rental database, the record generally includes name, address, telephone number, names of family members who are able to rent on that account, listings of tapes currently rented along with titles and dates due, and a listing of unpaid late fees. The size of a database is often described in terms of the number of records. The way in which a database can be searched to find information is dependent upon the specific fields that are created for each record.

Usually the video store owner has a second database that lists all the tapes in the store. On that database there would be a separate record for each tape. The fields of information which each record might contain would be title, date of purchase, purchase price, number of times rented, loan status, category (family/action/drama /comedy/classic) and its audience rating, such as G, PG, PG-13, R, or NC-17.

It becomes apparent from the description in the box above that the videotape store has many features in common with a library.

Many libraries are converting their card catalog databases to computerized databases which are easier and less expensive to maintain and search. A library database is composed of a record for each item in its cataloged collection. Newspaper clippings, pamphlets and other items in the *vertical file* (also called the *subject file*) are customarily not cataloged and are not included in the database. Figure **xx** below outlines some of the fields that might constitute a record in an information center's database.

In-house Databases.

Those information centers that use a computer to record classification and catalog information specific to their collection are creating *in-house databases*. It is important that the center decide how detailed its in-house database will be. One can decide to enter only materials that stand on shelves and to exclude materials in subject files, for example. This is the choice that many centers make because news clippings and brochures are often only of current value and not saved indefinitely. Should the center decide to subject index individual chapters within edited volumes? This can multiply many fold the amount of work needed to add a book to the database. The personnel costs can become very high. If the chapter or other information is found on a publicly available database it may well be more economical and as convenient to use that database instead of duplicating the information in-house. As part of the decision to create one's own versus using an existing database, it is highly recommended that actual searches should be conducted for a range of materials so that the librarian fully understands what is included and excluded in each database and the time lag involved. If the results are less than satisfactory, then the librarian can appropriately defend his/her decision to invest resources in an in-house database.

Processing Materials

Accessioning. It is important that the center have a complete record of all materials in the collection. Accessioning is one way to do this. Each new document is assigned a unique number that is 1) written on the reverse side of the title page and 2) also recorded in the center's record keeping system. Accession numbers are not assigned to issues of serials that are a part of a subscription.

The accession number often includes digits that indicate the date of acquisition. If a manual system is used the number is recorded in a notebook called the *accession book*. If the center is using a computerized system the accession number would appear as a field in the computer record. Some programs assign the number automatically using the next available number and the current date. This provides the center with a chronological listing of acquired materials.

The next step is to place materials in the collection so they can be easily found and correctly replaced after use. Different kinds of documents are processed differently.

Books. To process a book, first stamp the name of the information center on the title page and on the last page to show the center owns it. Then assign a classification number to the book, selecting a number from the center's classification system. Next, either type the call number on a label or write it on the spine of the book. Finally, record the pertinent information in the center's computer record system or in the accession book.

Reports. Those with stiff covers or that are thick enough to “stand up” can be treated exactly as books – processed and then shelved. Thinner reports with floppy covers can be stored either in shelf file boxes or in a subject file cabinet as described below. Reports of importance to the center should be placed in a document binder and stored on the shelves, fully catalogued and classified. When reports are placed in shelf file boxes, they are assigned classification numbers. Write the classification number in the upper left corner of the soft cover, or on a label as for books if the binding is thick enough.

Documents of only temporary value are *not* processed as a part of the permanent collection. They are housed in the *subject file*. In file cabinets, arrange these documents in folders by subject heading. Write the selected topic from a list of standard subject headings on the upper left corner of the soft cover. This will allow the item to be returned to the proper place after it is used. Again, write or stamp the name of the information center on both the front page and the last pages as a mark of ownership.

Serials. Record the arrival of each new issue of a serial in the serial computer record or in the *serial record book*. This verifies its arrival. It also allows easy checking to claim missing issues. It answers the question, “Did the issue arrive and then get misplaced, or did it never arrive?” Stamp the name of the information center on the front cover and on the last page.

Pamphlets and Journal Articles . Stamp the name of the information center on the first and last pages. Next, choose a subject for the document using the guidelines in *Setting up Subject Files* below. Write the selected topic from a list of standard subject headings on an upper corner of the first page. This will allow the item to be returned to the proper place after it is used.

Setting Up Subject Files

The materials in the center that are not considered to have long term value should not be classified and cataloged. Such items include “floppy documents,” meaning those without stiff covers such as pamphlets, newspaper clippings, or catalogs — often items of only transient interest. Such items are typically stored in what are termed *subject* or *vertical files*, i.e. uncataloged materials on a specific topic, stored simply by subject. These are placed in hanging files in file cabinets.

The words selected for organizing these files are *subject headings*. These subject headings must not be selected willy-nilly but should be chosen from a *controlled vocabulary*. The creation of new folders with new subject headings can be executed as the need arises. A new folder is only created when one is certain that there is not already an appropriate folder in the file. The controlled vocabulary for the subject file can be selected from one of the *thesauri* described in *Appendix A*. These headings become the “guide” or “map” of the

file. The *subject file* can be made accessible to users as well as staff.

Setting Up Subject Files. The initial steps are relatively straight-forward.

- * Select the subject headings to use.
- * Create an *authority file* of the subject headings with index cards or on a computer.
- * Use one hanging folder for each subject heading.
- * Type the heading on the folder label.
- * Place the folders in a file cabinet in alphabetical order.

When materials coming to the center are to be stored in the subject file, processing them is relatively easy.

- * Stamp the item with the name of the center. Put this on the cover page.
- * Assign a subject heading considering the kinds of questions the document might be used to answer. If a new subject is selected create cards for the authority file.
- * Write the selected subject on the upper left corner of the front page. This is important to assure that the document is returned to its proper place after it is used.
- * Place the document in the appropriate hanging folder.
- * Do not assign an accession number (accession numbers are not used for items stored in the subject files because they are expected to have only temporary value).

There is one situation that makes this a bit more complicated. That is when a document covers more than one subject. Thus, it could easily be placed under several subject headings. Even if extra copies are available it is unwise to place the full document in more than one file because space soon becomes a concern in any library/information collection. Rather, choose one of the several possible subject headings and place the document in *that* file.

To allow finding the item when browsing other files, there are two options. The first is to make a note for the other files. For each additional subject heading, instead of the article itself, place a cross reference sheet in the file. Write the subject heading at the top, list the other documents of interest citing author, title, and subject heading under which the document is filed. Another alternative is to photocopy only the first page of the document and write the subject heading of the secondary or additional subject in an upper corner. This assures that the single page note will always be re-filed correctly. Write the subject heading the full document is filed under on the bottom of the page.

Selecting Subject Headings. In selecting subject headings, many of the same issues arise as in selecting descriptors for documents which are cataloged. Again, it is important to avoid *similar subjects* and synonyms. When choosing subject headings avoid creating two different files for documents about the same topic. Often, there is more than one word that can be used for a subject.

For example, one can use *elderly* or *aged*; *youth* or *adolescents*. It doesn't really matter which of these is selected – what is important is that you don't use both. If both are used, documents on the same subject will be filed in two different places, making it difficult to locate all the of them later.

The words used for subject headings should be chosen by one person such as the director, or by someone who knows the file well and fully appreciates the problems which arise if subject terms are selected randomly.

Authority File. The authority file is a system that is used to keep track of the choices a center makes when it selects subject terms. It is important to have a record of which subject headings the center decides to use and which subject headings the center decides not to use. A card or computer entry in the authority file is made for the subject words not chosen as well as for the ones that are. For each of the words not being used, the authority file directs users to the word that has been adopted for that subject instead. For example:

elderly *SEE* AGED

This means that documents about the “elderly” are found in the subject file titled “aged.”

Since the number of topics that might be developed is virtually limitless, broader categories are often used to include more specialized information as well. This too is noted in the authority file. For example, if a user looks for the subject *driving accidents* a card might be found that says:

driving accidents *SEE* ACCIDENTS.

This means that information about the subject “driving accidents” is filed under the broader topic “ACCIDENTS”.

The authority file also includes references to other subjects that are used in the file that may have relevant information.

WOMEN
SEE ALSO
FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

This means that additional information about WOMEN may be found under the subject heading FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME.

Note. The convention used by librarians for making an Authority File of subject headings is to use CAPITAL LETTERS for the subject headings. Words *not* used as subject headings are typed in small letters.

If a word processing program that allows alphabetical sorting is used to

create the authority file, then printing an alphabetical master list of all subject headings becomes an easy task.

Organizing the Folders in the Subject Files. When alphabetizing the folders ignore all signs of punctuation, such as hyphens. Also ignore “the” when it is the first word. When subject files grow too large and finding things becomes difficult, then the files are broken down by the important sub-topics. In this case, when labeling the new files you will still want to have them grouped next to one another. This can be taken care of by retaining the general heading as the first part of the title for the folder. For example, the file “Cocaine” might be sub-divided as follows:

Example: Cocaine
Cocaine - Economic Aspects
Cocaine - Medical Effects
Cocaine - Use in Schools

The file which is labeled only “Cocaine” will include all the cocaine-related information that doesn’t fall into any of the special areas.

Subject Files for Organization. If a center keeps information about organizations that focus on addictions, it can incorporate this material in the subject file, filing it alphabetically by the organization name. Or, depending on the amount of information on organizations and the use of these materials, the other approach is to develop a separate file system of organizations. If more than one filing system is used, hanging folders of different colors should be chosen to simplify replacement in the proper drawer. Material kept in *organization* files might include: general pamphlets and articles about the organization, resource catalogs or annual reports. Do not include topical reports or articles published by the organization. Those will most likely be sought by *subject*, not by the organization that funded the report. On the other hand, a magazine or newspaper clipping about the organization *should* be filed under the organization’s name in the file.

Expanding and Revising Subject Headings. As noted above, subject files are always evolving. As files begin to bulge and categories begin to appear too broad, create new subject headings as appropriate.

For example, what started out as a file on “Alcohol Use,” might eventually need to be broken down into a set of more specific files such as:

Example: Alcohol Use - Adolescents
Alcohol Use - Elderly
Alcohol Use - Physicians
Alcohol Use - Nurses
etc.

Some subjects might be subdivided by geographical area, country, or region.

Example: Alcohol Legislation - Michigan

Create subheadings if a subject has a large amount of material in one folder. Folders should not become so large that one cannot quickly see what is available.

Maintaining Subject Files. Each time a new item is added to a subject folder, the other items should be scanned so that outdated materials are discarded. For example, only the most recent annual report and publications catalog should be retained unless the center has a policy of keeping older materials. It is not pleasant for a user to open a file of worn and torn pages interspersed with outdated clippings and reports. Weeding is just as important as regularly adding new material to the file.

The Alcohol and Other Drug Thesaurus - An Important Tool for the Center

When thinking about subject headings, *The Alcohol and Other Drug Thesaurus: A Guide to Concepts and Terminology in Substance Abuse and Addiction* can be a very useful aid. First published in 1993, the *Thesaurus* is becoming the standard for information specialists and others working in the field. Although the *Thesaurus* contains more than 10,000 descriptors and again as many lead-in terms (synonyms) on 570 pages with a 300 page alphabetical index and can appear overwhelming at first glance, those who spend some time browsing through it will be well rewarded and will have acquired a tool that provides a usable structure to what might have seemed to be chaos. Some creative ways of using it are presented below¹.

Keep in mind that you most likely will not need all 10,000 descriptors! It is not difficult to select *only* the terms appropriate to your center. If a word you wish to use is not found you can just add it to the structure. The *Thesaurus* is arranged in hierarchical fashion with the terms organized or arranged in successive levels, each level being a sub-division of the one above.

The following demonstrates the different levels or subdivisions:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Term</u>
1	. TREATMENT FACTORS
2	. . PATIENT TREATMENT FACTORS
3	. . . Patient compliance
3	. . . Patient mental stability
3	. . . Patient motivation
2	. . ENVIRONMENTAL TREATMENT FACTORS
1	. TREATMENT ISSUES
2	. . TREATMENT COMPLICATIONS
2	. . TREATMENT RISK-BENEFIT ANALYSIS
2	. . TREATMENT COST

¹Material adapted from a presentation by Dagobert Soergel, Ph.D. and Samantha Helfert, M.L.S. at *SALIS Annual Meeting*, San Francisco, CA on October 6, 1993.

1 . TREATMENT OUTCOME

If different age groupings are important in the center, for example, the *Thesaurus* already has a ready-made list (see box). From it you might select the age categories that fit the center's interests.

There are a number of advantages to using the *Thesaurus*, beyond just providing a list of terms. For one, the vocabulary is consistent. This means you are less likely to run into problems as files grow. Also the *Thesaurus* has "scope notes," for descriptors that might be ambiguous. "Scope" refers to the definition of a term – what it includes and does not include. Thus it defines the range or "scope of" the category. Also, the *Thesaurus* includes cross-references to narrower terms, broader terms, and to related descriptors and synonyms. In addition, there is a complete alphabetical index that even includes key words out of context to help you quickly find any word that might be in your head. Just about every category you need is here. You can find a section on body parts, occupations, religions, languages, geographic locations, and many other topics.

In addition to assisting in the selection of subject headings the *Thesaurus* provides a list of words that can be adopted by the center as descriptors for its own in-house database. If the center chooses to do this, contact the database manager at the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information for suggestions on how best to go about it.

The *Thesaurus* can also be helpful when searching other databases. If one were to search for "youth" and not find the materials hoped for, one could look up "youth" in the alphabetical index of the *Thesaurus* and find other words that can be used to mean the same thing — "adolescent," "junior high school student," or "high school student" for example. Similarly it suggests other ways to find materials about "nicotine." Ask for "cigarette," "cigar," or "smoking."

It might also be used to prepare multiple-choice forms when compiling a directory of treatment organizations. It allows you to quickly select ages served, kinds of services, special populations, types of drugs, treatment methods, sponsors, etc.

Most database software allows searching with *Boolean operators* (AND, OR, NOT) meaning that two or more descriptors can be combined in a search. AND means a record must have *both* search terms in it, OR means it can have *either* term, and NOT means it *cannot* have the specified term. This is one of the important reasons that the use of descriptors in databases improves searching capability so much.

With the *Thesaurus* in hand, your own creativity is the only limit to the ways it can be used to help organize the information in your center. Do invest the

time and ask your colleagues in the field or at NCADI how *they* are using it.

Tip: Use only those subject headings useful to your center. Even if using a list developed by others, or descriptors from a *Thesaurus*, alter subject headings to reflect the nature of *your* collection and to conform to local use.

Designing a Circulation System

Purpose. If materials in a collection can be borrowed by users, then the center is said to have a circulating collection. A system must be adopted to track all materials on loan. If a book is missing from the shelf, it is useful to be able to know if it has been borrowed and when it will be returned, or if a book is lost or misplaced. The center's circulation system should provide this information.

A circulation system needs to be able to handle the following tasks:

- * identify borrower(s)
- * identify materials borrowed
- * record due dates
- * identify over-due materials

Beyond knowing who has what materials so that they can be retrieved if not returned when due, data in the circulation system has other important uses. It helps a center determine some characteristics of its clientele. The data can identify the major borrowers and may allow the center to profile the kinds of materials and topics of particular interest to users. The center can track the demand for materials in specific subject areas. This information can offer direction to the center in selecting the materials it collects and wishes to have readily available for users.

The confidentiality of *individual* users must be securely protected. There are very important ethical considerations in terms of user confidentiality which must always be honored. Specifically, who borrows what kind of information from a library is *always* considered confidential information. A bit of thought about this makes it apparent why this is the case. Clearly, an individual's use of a library reflects not only professional interests but also can reflect personal and private concerns and issues.

Policy. Beyond having a system in place to allow the checking out of books or other materials, the center needs to have a clear policy as to whom such privileges can be extended. Who may borrow what kinds of materials? What is the length of time for which materials may be borrowed? Is it important to make distinctions between different types of users as to what they can borrow and for what length of time? A circulation policy may include specific borrowing privileges for different groups of users, different loan periods for dif-

ferent types of materials, and different over-due fine schedules for different groups of users and materials.

Circulating materials are easy to retrieve within an office where people and the documents they borrow can be quickly located. Documents loaned to people who cannot be easily located can be time-consuming or impossible to retrieve. A well-organized circulation record facilitates the pursuit of overdue materials.

To ensure that the services provided by an information center are consistent with its mandate, circulation policies are often established with attention to several factors. One factor is the needs of primary clients, another is the importance of a book as a part of the basic reference collection. Finally, policies need to take into account the level of demand for an item. Therefore, in recognition of differing client needs, a policy may be adopted which affords agency staff members priority borrowing privileges for certain materials. There are also some materials that should never leave the center. These would include materials used frequently for responding to reference questions and those that are hard to replace and/or expensive such as special reports or multi-media kits. The level of demand for certain items may also be taken into account. In that case, for example, a policy might be written that states that the most recent issue of a periodical will not circulate.

Types of Systems. A *manual circulation system* is the least complicated in terms of organization and equipment needed. It only requires a book pocket, book card, and date due slip, similar to the system many of us remember from our own school library days. To assist borrowers, the due date should be clearly stamped and attached to the item. The book pocket and date due slip are often secured to the inside of the front cover of the book. File the book cards alphabetically by author or title, or file them in order by call number. Filing book cards in order of date due makes finding a specific book card very difficult.

An alternative to the manual system is a *computer-based circulation system*. Computer-based systems, in terms of the technology, are not dissimilar to the systems many of us have become familiar with in grocery stores. In a store, a machine reads a bar code, which identifies the item being purchased and its price. In a library, the electronically readable “bar code” on materials to be borrowed, as well as on borrowers’ library cards, identifies which books are checked out and by whom. These automated systems offer features that go beyond what would be part of a manual method. For example, the computer system can be programmed, to provide the following:

- * a client file with full information on patrons, their check-out records, overdue materials, and reserves.
- * delinquent borrowers who have overdue materials or owe fines.
- * the ability to search by author, title, borrower’s name, or due date.
- * ready-to-mail overdue notices.

- * statistical information concerning collection use and circulation activities.

Whether one adopts a manual circulation system or a computer-based system depends on a number of factors. Some of the questions that need to be considered are the size of the collection, the number of books on loan at any given time, and the funds available. While a computer system may be a definite asset, it is wise to remember it may not be cost-effective for a given collection.

Resources

The Librarian's Yellow Pages .

Larchmont NY: Garance, Inc. 1995 250 pp. Free.

Phone: 800/235-9723

E-mail: database.carl.org@internet

An annual publication that lists thousands of publications, products, and services for libraries and information centers. Each entry includes name, address, phone, fax, descriptive information and a topical category for the service provider. The 1995 print edition contained more than 200 pages of ads for products used by libraries. It is also available on the Internet where it is updated monthly.

Sources of Library Supplies and Equipment

See the list of suppliers at the end of *Section 2*.

Subscription Services

Dawson Subscription Service

1001 West Pines Road

Oregon, IL 61061-9570

Phone: 800/852-7404; 815/732 9001

Fax: 815/732-2123

EBSCO,

P.O. Box 1943, Birmingham, AL 35201.

Phone: 205/991-6600.

Fax: 205/995-1636.

Suggested Reading

Addresses for organizations listed as publishers can be found in *Appendix A*.

Cataloging

Gorman M. *The Concise AACR2, 1988 Revision*. Chicago, IL :

American Library Association, 1989. 161 pp. \$20 (Members \$18). ISBN 0 8389 3362 9.

Easy to understand for libraries using only the first very basic level of description. Especially useful for anyone doing cataloging for a small, specific collection.

Palmer J. *Cataloging and the Small Special Library*. Washington, D.C. : Special Libraries Association, 1992. 49 p. \$28 (Members \$22.50) ISBN 0 87111 370 8.

Based on a survey of cataloging trends in randomly selected special libraries. Provides a basic overview of common cataloging approaches and their difficulties, as well as software and online catalogs most often used.

Marin Institute. *Marin Institute Thesaurus*.. San Rafeal, CA : Marin Institute, 1995. \$50. ASCII version must be ordered with print version \$10.

More than 1000 alcohol, tobacco and other drug descriptors for prevention materials from the social sciences, business and health fields.. Arranged alphabetically with scope notes. "Rotated" and hierarchical lists and a list of vertical file headings are also included.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Alcohol and Other Drug Thesaurus: A Guide to Concepts and Terminology in Substance Abuse and Addiction. Part 1: Hierarchical List; Part 2: Alphabetical Index*. Second Edition. 1995. \$25.

Developed jointly by the NIAAA, CSAP, NIH, SAMHSA. Loose leaf notebook format. Available from the National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NCADI). Systematizes the language of the many scientific and scholarly disciplines relating to research on alcohol and other drugs and the prevention and treatment of problems associated with their use. A subset of the *Thesaurus* serves as the controlled vocabulary for ETOH the database produced by NIAAA and for information systems at NCADI.

Canadian Subject Headings. Third Edition. Ottawa, ON : National Library of Canada, 1992. 550 pp. Semiannual supplements. ISBN 0 660 57311 2. Can \$22+shipping and handling. Can \$26.40 foreign. Available from: Canada Communication Group, 45 Sacre-Coeur Blvd., Hull, PQ K1A 0S9, Canada. PHONE 613/956-4800; FAX 613/994-1498.

Provides in-depth coverage of Canadian topics. Emphasizes general compatibility with Library of Congress Subject Headings.

Repertoire de vedettes-matiere. Tenth Edition. Quebec, PQ : Bibliotheque de l'Universite Laval in collaboration with the National Library of Canada, 1988. ISSN 0705 5455. Microfiche only. Subscription: Can \$150 2/year updates; Can \$100 1/year update. Available from: Repertoire de vendettas-metiere, Bibliotheque, Pavillon Bonenfant, Universite Laval, Quebec (Quebec), G1K 7P4, Canada.

An amalgamation of two major subject analysis systems — Library of Congress Subject Headings and Canadian Subject Headings. Translated into French.

Purchasing Books, Serials and Equipment

Basch NB; McQueen J. *Buying Serials: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians. How-To-Do-It Manuals for Libraries. Number 10*. New York : Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 1990. 198 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 1 55570 058 6.

Includes detailed descriptions of jobbers, subscription service companies.

Eaglen A. *Buying Books: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians. How-To-Do-It Manuals for Libraries. Number 4*. New York : Neal-Schuman Publish-

ers, Inc., 1989. 166 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 1 55570 013 6.
Glossary and annotated bibliography.

Hirshon A; Winters BA. *Managing the Purchasing Process: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians*. New York : Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 1993. 150 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 1 55570 081 0.

The Librarian's Yellow Pages . Annual. Larchmont NY. Free. Phone: 800/235-9723.

The 1994 edition contained more than 200 pages of advertisements for products used by libraries.

Miller HS. *Managing Acquisitions and Vendor Relations: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians*. New York : Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 1992. 196 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 1 55570 111 6. \$35.

Robinson JS. *Tapping the Government Grapevine: The User-Friendly Guide to U.S. Government Information Sources, 2nd ed.* Phoenix, AZ : Oryx Press, 1993. 240 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 0 89774 712 7. Phone: 800/279-6779.