Coder Dojo

Kids Coding in the Library
Pilot Project at Calgary Public Library

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Why teach coding?

I think everybody in this country should learn how to program a computer because it teaches you how to think (Steve Jobs-The Lost Interview)
Why in the library

- Libraries play a crucial role in growing digital literacies
- Libraries have always worked to minimize the digital divide
- Libraries have the space, infrastructure, and accessibility to make it work.
Coder Dojo and Library Programs

- Fixed Program period for children’s programs
- Fixed registration system
- Limited access on public computers
Library’s the Place

- Library Space
- Libraries are expert at sourcing volunteers
- Libraries are a go to place for programs
In a technology driven world Coder Dojos provide a safe, fun, and welcoming environment for children and youth to become more familiar and expert with computer and web applications. Dojos provide a dynamic forum for developing computer coding skills that lay the foundation for web app, and game design. These skills engender a deeper understanding of information technology and create more informed and savvy information users.

Volunteers with some coding expertise and a strong aptitude for working with children in an unstructured environment guide participants in the development of projects.
Purpose

To provide a forum for youth to develop programming and coding skills since, aside from summer camps, there is a void of extracurricular activities for Calgary youth interested in computer programming. Public libraries are suited to provide these opportunities because of their role in information literacy. Helping youth develop a knowledge of computer programming enriches their understanding of information technologies and therefore builds information literacy. Public libraries also have strong infrastructures that can support the community connections, and volunteer selection and engagement, that is needed to make this program operate successfully.

Dojos are an incubator for young programmers to develop and understand electronic games, mobile and web applications and sites.
Goal

The long term goal of the program is to establish a successful program model to support interested youth develop strong coding skills. The can be easily duplicated and facilitated with minimal staffing time.

The short term goal is to plan, facilitate, and run two cycles of a Coder Dojo program. The first session will be implemented in the winter 2014 term and the second in the spring or summer term of 2014.

The review of and final evaluation of the pilot program being implemented in May 2014.
The Experience
Bringing the Outside In
Challenges

- Hotspots but not so hot
- Finding the right volunteers is challenging
- Inverting the classroom
- Involving parents within the library paradigm
Going Forward

- Develop short curriculum modules.
- We need to have ways to motivate kids to move to next project.
- Keep more advanced participants involved—possible partnership with University of Calgary.
- Limit the age range. Reduce class size. Reduce length of program.
Questions
References
Links referred to on What program fits slide:

- http://www.codecademy.com/
- http://learninglabs.org/
- http://code.org/
- http://codeclubworld.org/
- https://coderdojo.com/

CPL Coder Dojo Video-https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CucgDjsk_Y0

What Most Schools Don’t Teach-https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKIu9yen5nc

President Obama Asks Americans to Learn How to Code https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XvmhE1J9PY


Boyle, A. (2014). You (yes, you) are smart enough to <code>. Quill, 102(1), 16-22.
Thank you for Listening