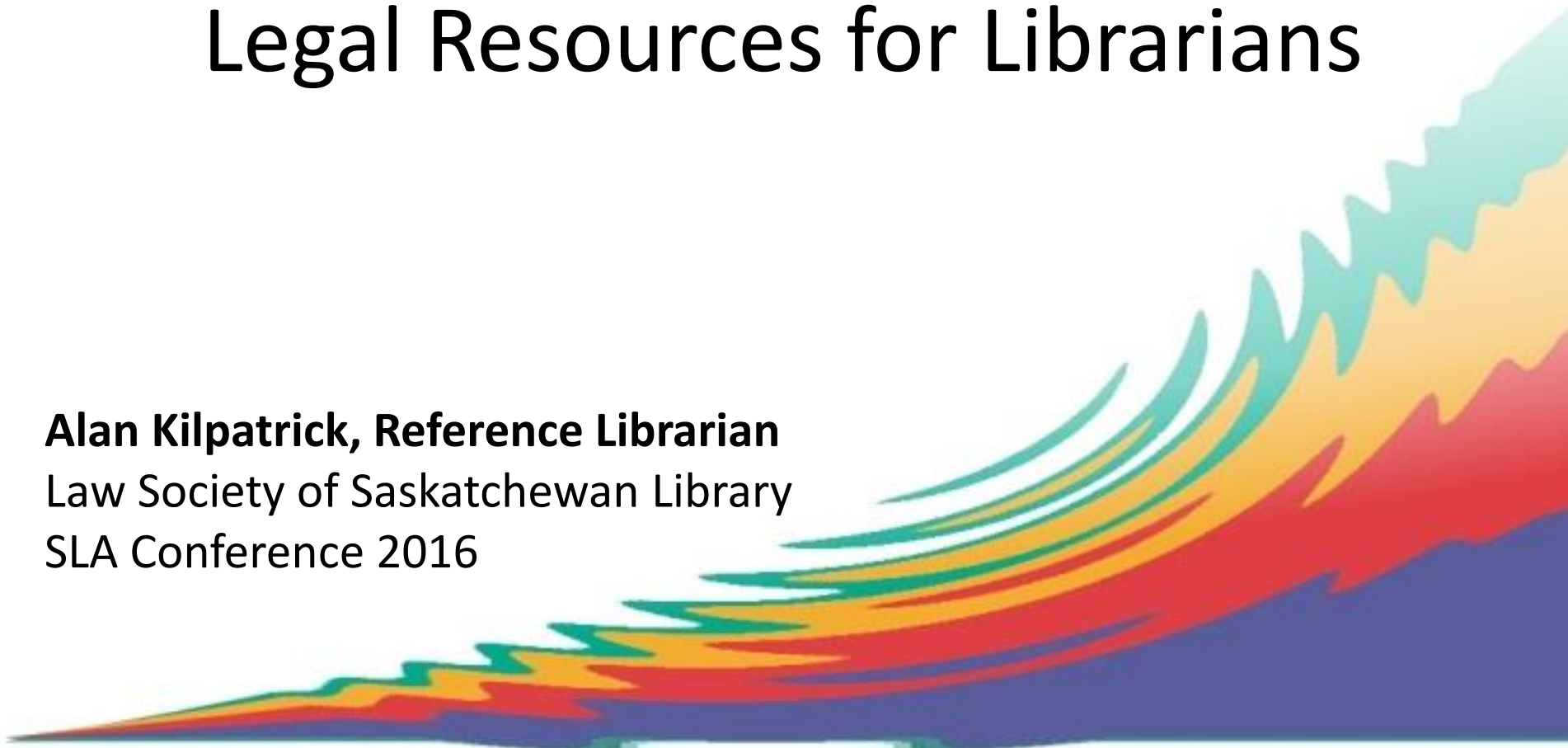


Fence at the Top of the Cliff: Legal Resources for Librarians

Alan Kilpatrick, Reference Librarian
Law Society of Saskatchewan Library
SLA Conference 2016



Overview

- Access to justice in Canada
- How can libraries help improve access to justice?
- The LawMatters program
- Responding to legal reference question in your own library

Access to justice in Canada



Access to justice in Canada

- Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters. *Access to Civil and Family Justice: A Roadmap for Change*. Ottawa, 2013.
 - Access to justice in Canada is abysmal
 - Gaps in accessibility prevent many from accessing justice
 - “Too complex, too slow, and too expensive”

Access to justice in Canada

- Nearly 12 million Canadians will face at least one legal problem in a 3 year period
- As a result of the inaccessibility of justice:
 - Many legal needs remain unmet
 - An explosion of self represented litigants
 - Accompanying social and health problems

Access to justice in Canada

- A fence at the top of the cliff?
 - Focus on the public
 - Focus on education
 - Focus on prevention

How can libraries help improve access to justice?



How can libraries help?

- Libraries are helping improve access to justice:
 - Libraries put the public first and facilitate access to information
 - Libraries can help patrons identify credible legal information
 - Libraries can make accurate referrals to organizations that provide legal assistance

The LawMatters program

The LawMatters program

- A Courthouse Libraries BC initiative
- Estimated in 2010 that public libraries in BC receive at least 35,000 legal reference questions every year
- Works with public libraries to provide British Columbians with access to legal information
- Legal reference question training and collections development guidance

Responding to legal reference questions in your own library



Responding to legal reference questions

- How can you successfully help patrons coming to your library with legal reference questions?
 - Building legal collections
 - Making accurate referrals
 - Providing credible legal information



Responding to legal reference questions

- How can you successfully help patrons coming to your library with legal reference questions?
 - **Building legal collections**
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Responding to legal reference questions

- Building legal collections:
 - Law Books for Libraries
 - courthouselibrary.ca/training/ForThePublic/LawMatters
 - Law Society of Saskatchewan Library
 - lawsociety.sk.ca/library
 - (306) 569-8020
- Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (PLEA)
- plea.org

Responding to legal reference questions

- How can you successfully help patrons coming to your library with legal reference questions?
 - Building legal collections
 - **Making accurate referrals**
 - Providing credible legal information

Responding to legal reference questions

- Making accurate referrals:
 - Legal Aid Saskatchewan
 - Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan
 - Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City (CLASSIC)
 - Family Law Information Centre
 - Family Matters

Responding to legal reference questions

- Making accurate referrals:
 - *Legal Aid Saskatchewan*
 - Legal assistance for low income individuals
 - Family and criminal law only
 - Only those who meet the financial criteria are eligible
- legalaidsk.ca
- (306) 787-8760

Responding to legal reference questions

- Making accurate referrals:
 - *Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan*
 - Advice for those who do not qualify for Legal Aid but are still unable to afford a lawyer
 - All areas of the law
 - Legal clinics throughout province
 - pblsask.ca
 - (306) 569-3098

Responding to legal reference questions

- Making accurate referrals:
 - *Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City (Classic)*
 - Student-run clinic
 - Saskatoon residents only
 - Walk-in and legal advice clinics
- classiclaw.ca
- (306) 657-6100

Responding to legal reference questions

- Making accurate referrals:
 - *Family Law Information Centre*
 - Free family law information for anyone regardless of income
 - Self-help kits and court document assistance
 - Drop-in consultations available
 - justice.gov.sk.ca/Family-Law-Information-Centre
 - (306) 787-5837

Responding to legal reference questions

- Making accurate referrals:
 - *Family Matters*
 - Helping Saskatchewan families going through divorce
 - Information, resources, and assistance
 - Free of cost
 - saskatchewan.ca/family-matters
 - 1-844-863-3408

Responding to legal reference questions

- How can you successfully help patrons coming to your library with legal reference questions?
 - Building legal collections
 - Making accurate referrals
 - **Providing credible legal information**



Responding to legal reference questions

- Providing credible legal information:
 - Law Society of Saskatchewan Library
 - Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (PLEA)
 - Family Law Saskatchewan
 - The Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII)

Responding to legal reference questions

- Providing credible legal information
 - *Law Society of Saskatchewan Library*
 - Research assistance for the public in person, on the telephone, or by email
 - Help the public learn how to search legal resources
 - Suggest resources for further research
- lawsociety.sk.ca/library
- (306) 539-8020

Responding to legal reference questions

- Providing credible legal information
 - *Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (PLEA)*
 - “Exists to educate, inform and empower through law-related education”
 - Plain language legal information for Saskatchewan residents
 - Keyword searchable or browseable by topic
 - plea.org
 - (306) 653-1868

Responding to legal reference questions

- Providing credible legal information
 - *Family Law Saskatchewan*
 - “Everything you need to begin or respond to a family law proceeding in Saskatchewan”
 - Plain language family law information
 - Simple court form wizard
 - familylaw.plea.org
 - (306) 653-1868

Responding to legal reference questions

- Providing credible legal information
 - *The Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII):*
 - Free access to Canadian court cases
 - Easily accessible and fully searchable
 - More than a million court cases and thousands of statutes
 - Canlii.org
 - [CanLII Tutorial Videos](#)
 - [CanLII Presentation](#)

Thank you

If you any questions, please feel free to contact me:

- Email: akilpatrick@lawsociety.sk.ca
 - Phone: (306) 569-8020
 - Twitter: @Alan_Kilpat
 - Blog: Librarycanuck.wordpress.com
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- A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of several overlapping, wavy, curved bands of color. The colors transition from dark blue at the bottom, through red, orange, yellow, and green, to light blue at the top, creating a rainbow-like effect.

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