



Ask Here PA

Anywhere Questions,
Anytime Answers

**DLC/System Meeting
Holiday Inn, Harrisburg/Hershey
September 6-7, 2007**



**anytime
answers.**





Ask Here PA

Live Answers to Your Questions, 24/7

www.AskHerePA.org



anytime answers.



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Benefits

Expand Current Reference Services
Ask Here PA responds to the growing use of online internet access.

Leverage New Technology
Don't let your patrons go online. Ask Here PA provides the right answers they need in the way they prefer.

Reach New Users
Ask Here PA supports information needs of Pennsylvanians who prefer to ask questions online.

Features

- Manage all of your reference (live chat, telephone, e-mail, and in-person) using the QuestionPoint question reference management tool
- Libraries are provided with a unique patron entry point identifying users as yours
- Libraries are provided with detailed usage statistics
- Easy web-based interface for patrons does not require special software
- Libraries use a unique interface to the service that captures local use statistics via links provided from your web site
- Libraries get a completely customizable e-mail submission form to accept incoming requests

“The service is very easy to use. All you do is click on the Ask Here PA button, and you're on your way!”

--a student



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Live answers for patrons, 24/7



About Ask Here PA

- Ask Here PA is a service of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Managed by HSLC/Access PA



What is Ask Here PA?

- Statewide live chat reference service
- Free service for all residents of PA
- Utilizes the speed and convenience of the Internet with the information savvy of librarians



Ask Here PA Status

- 24/7 service activated Sep 6, 2006
- Over 42,000 sessions
- 82 libraries contribute staff
- 19 of 29 District Library Centers are contributing staff
- Service coordinator Vince Mariner is on both the QuestionPoint Users Council and 24/7 Advisory Board



DLC Libraries Contributing Staff

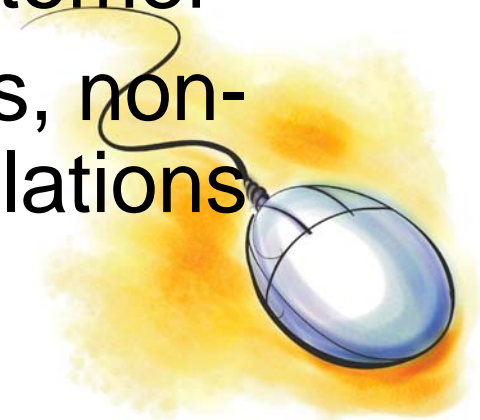
Allentown / Allentown PL
Bethlehem / Bethlehem Area PL
Capital Area / Dauphin County PL
Central PA / Schlow Centre Region Lib
Chester County / Chester County LS
Delaware Co / Delaware County LS
Doylestown / Bucks Co Free Library
Easton / Easton Area PL
Johnstown / Cambria County LS
Lancaster / Lancaster PL
Lebanon / Lebanon Comm Library
Monessen / Monessen PL
Mont Co / Mont Co–Norristown PL
New Castle / New Castle PL
North Central / James V Brown Library
Philadelphia / Free Lib of Philadelphia

Pittsburgh / Carnegie Lib of Pittsburgh
Scranton / Scranton PL
Wilkes-Barre / Osterhout Free Library
York / Martin Memorial Library



Why a Live Chat Service?

- Synchronous – meet users at their point of need
- More library resources migrating online and users turn to Internet to find information
- Meet expectations and offer better service to a 21st century customer
- Serve students, remote users, non-users and underserved populations



How does it Work?

- Users log on to Ask Here PA from any computer with Internet access.
- After you send your question, a librarian will respond by typing an answer and showing you relevant Web sites.
- Logon is anonymous; users are only required to provide a screen name, question, and zip code.



After the Session

- Users have the option to have a copy of their transcript e-mailed to them.
- Transcripts are reviewed for quality assurance by local and statewide Ask Here PA administrators.



What can Ask Here PA provide for residents and students?

- Provide a convenient service that makes using the library even easier
- In addition to the Internet, librarians use databases, electronic journals and other resources to provide the best information
- Cooperative virtual reference service promotes libraries and library services



Web-based Software

QuestionPoint

- Live chat
- Page pushing
- Nothing to install in schools or at home



What kinds of questions can Ask Here PA answer?

- Ask Here PA is designed to answer questions of any kind
 - “I need some help with research for my science fair project.”
 - "How do I get a patent?"
 - “How do I find good magazine articles about Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald?”
 - “What animals in PA are on the endangered species list?”

How long does it take to get an answer?

- Most questions can be answered within 5 - 15 minutes.
- The librarian may simply provide you the information or, if you like, show you how to find the answer for future use.



Training Library Staff

- Focus on...
 - Software
 - Online best practices
 - Customer service
- Over 350 staff trained



Promoting Ask Here PA

Two most important things

1. Prominent links on Web sites
2. Word-of-mouth

Also...

Radio

Bookmarks

Posters

Brochures



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- Reach New Users**
Ask Here PA supports information needs of Pennsylvanians who...

Q: What is Ask Here PA?
A: Ask Here PA is an online information service free for all Pennsylvania residents

Q: Does my library have to pay for my patrons to use Ask Here PA?
A: No. All residents of PA will be a...

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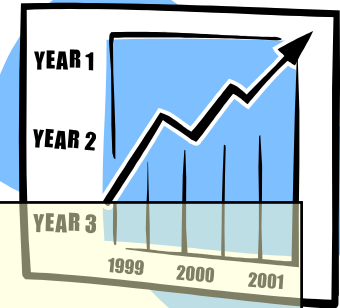
--a student

ACCESS PENNSYLVANIA

anytime answers.

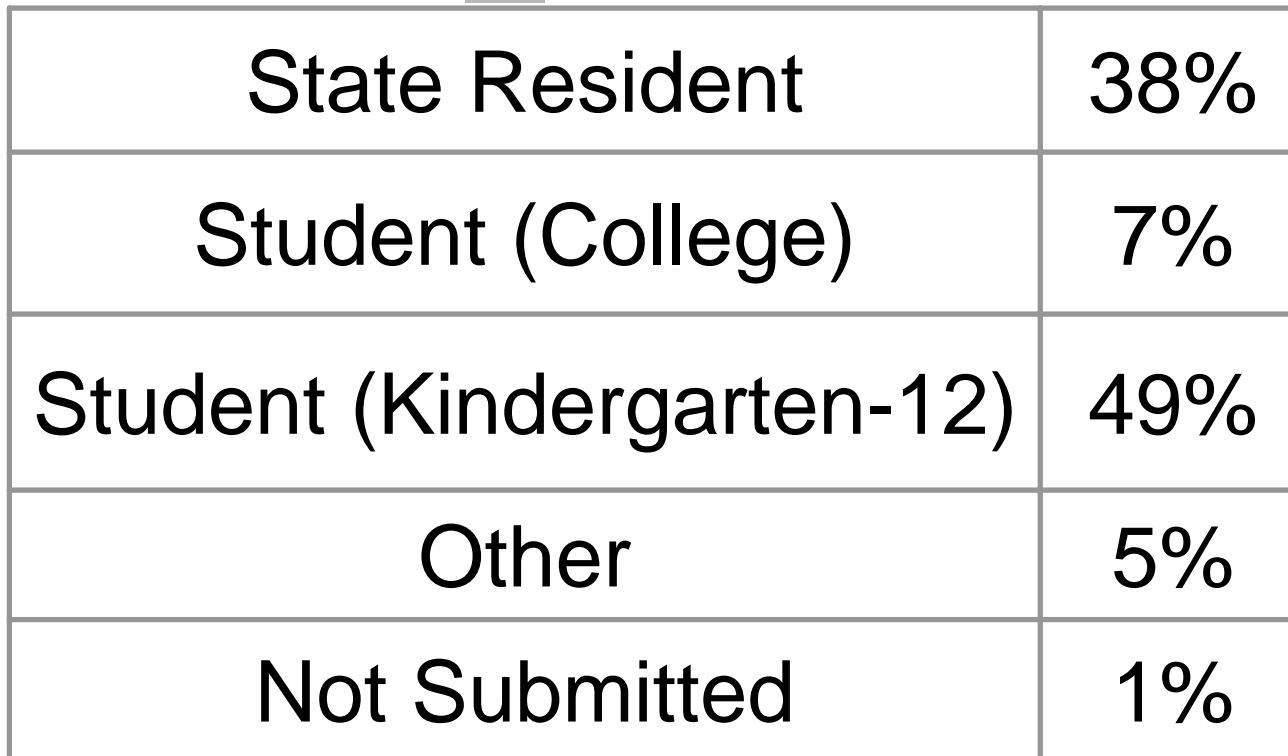
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Ask Here PA Usage



	Chat Sessions	Follow-Ups	Total
2007 Total (Jan - July)	24202	2064	26266
Cumulative Since Inception	38712	3559	42271

AskHerePA.org Users



State Resident	38%
Student (College)	7%
Student (Kindergarten-12)	49%
Other	5%
Not Submitted	1%

Customer Comments

- Librarian 'Susquehanna P.L. Hilary' was so helpful and very nice. I was pleased with her outstanding service!
- Good service, fast and easy to use. I definitely like the convenience.
- This is a great site. I will recommend this site to everyone I know.
- Wonderful service - I spend an hour searching for what I needed and the Librarian found what I needed in 4 minutes - thanks so much!



More customer comments online at:

www.askherepa.org/customer_comments.htm

Linking to Ask Here PA

- Every library and school can provide a link to AskHerePA.org
- Linking instructions online at askherepa.org/logos-links.htm





Questions?