

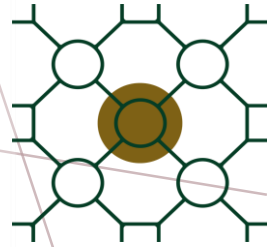


Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries in the Context of Sustainable Development

Oksana Brui, *President of the Ukrainian Library Association,
Deputy Director General of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine*

Oleh Serbin, *Director General of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine,
Vice President of the Ukrainian Library Association*

**34th EBLIDA Council and Annual Conference
Prague, Czech Republic
April 2026**



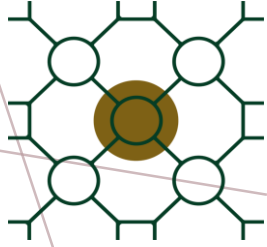
“

12 years of russia's war against Ukraine.

This is the loss of hundreds of thousands of human lives, millions of refugees, the destruction of energy infrastructure, homes, universities, schools, museums, libraries, the destruction of natural ecosystems and irreversible climate change.

All of this serves as evidence that russia is attempting to make Ukraine uninhabitable and wipe out Ukrainians as a people.

This marks 12 years of people living under constant stress, not just surviving but also fighting and winning.

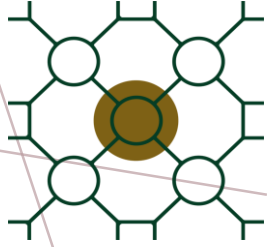


Ukrainian Libraries Respond to Challenges

Mental health and Ukrainians' attitude towards psychological assistance during the war - 2025

- ✓ Dissatisfied with their own psychological state – 64 %
- ✓ High stress level – 83%
- ✓ Anxiety and tension - 58%
- ✓ Sleep disturbance - 50%
- ✓ Exhaustion - 49%
- ✓ Low mood - 49%
- ✓ Emotional instability - 45%
- ✓ Irritation or anger - 44%

(All-Ukrainian mental health program "How are you?")



Ukrainian Libraries Respond to Challenges

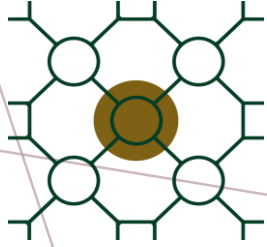
Library for Overcoming Social Challenges in Local Communities - 2025

Survey of local government representatives

What challenges in your community does the library help solve?

- ✓ Psychological stress – 63,3 %
- ✓ Digital illiteracy – 62,9%
- ✓ Social adaptation of vulnerable population groups (veterans, IDPs, etc.) – 50,2 %
- ✓ Disinformation – 37,1 %
- ✓ Declining literacy levels – 33,1 %
- ✓ Information inequality – 32,7%

(The project 'Empowering Libraries for Rebuilding Ukraine' with the financial support of the Swedish Institute)



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

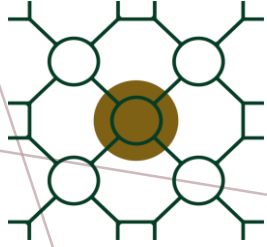
Reading during war: interests, needs, opportunities - **2022-2023**

72% of users go to libraries to relieve stress

Experience of psychosocial support in public libraries in Ukraine - **2024-2026**

- ✓ Reading for psychological relief
- ✓ Art and maker therapy practices
- ✓ Fairy tale and toy therapy methods
- ✓ Animal involvement practices
- ✓ Consultations with licensed psychologists
- ✓ Providing training on mental health issues

(Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine)

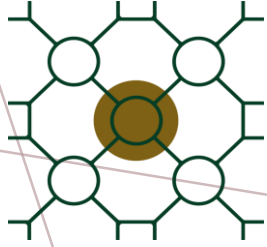


Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Challenges for Libraries

- ✓ Psycho-emotional states of librarians, including those with psychological trauma
- ✓ Lacks sufficient skills in communicating with individuals with psychological trauma



Bibliotherapy session for staff of the
National Library of Ukraine



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

Libraries as a space for psychosocial support – 2024-

UNESCO Office in Ukraine with the financial support of Japan in cooperation with *the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, Coordination Center for Mental Health of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine within the framework of the All-Ukrainian Mental Health Program “How are you?”*

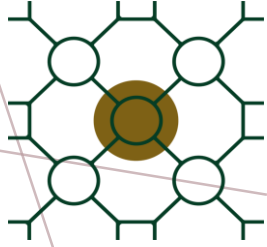
Information and expert support
Ukrainian Library Association and Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine



Trainings for 60 librarians from 32 libraries in Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Odessa, Lviv, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk regions – **2024-2025**

- ✓ methods of psychosocial support
- ✓ self-help tools
- ✓ psychological first aid
- ✓ prevention of professional burnout
- ✓ psycho-emotional relief through creativity and modeling cooperation within the community to support the population's mental health, while considering the core principles of a trauma-informed approach
- ✓ creating a comfortable psychosocial space in the library

Handbook and online training course “Libraries as a space for psychosocial support “ – 2026



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

- ✓ Consultations with licensed psychologists and
- ✓ Providing training on mental health issues



Mental health training for staff of the National Library of Ukraine from the Centre for Phenomenological Psychopathology

Foundation evz Remembrance Responsibility Future Олександрійська міська централізована бібліотечна система Бібліотека для Юнації

єМістечко - простір для твоїх можливостей

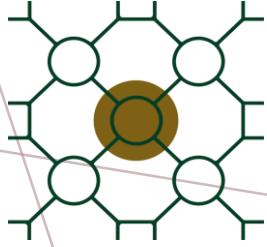
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ВІВТОРОК
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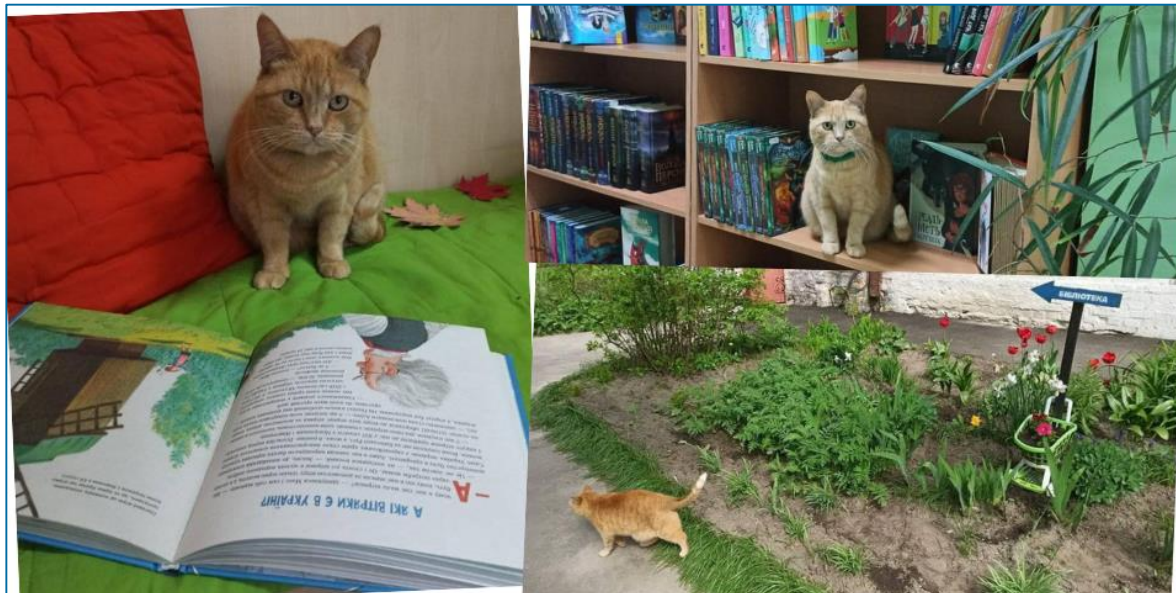
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ЗАПИС ЗА ТЕЛЕФОНОМ: +380 93 485 81 27

Individual consultations with a psychologist in the Olexandria City Centralized Library System



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

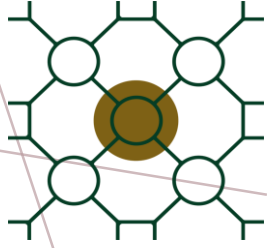
- ✓ Animal involvement therapy practices



Feline therapy session in the Zhytomyr City Libraries



Canister therapy session in the Poltava Regional Library for Youth



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

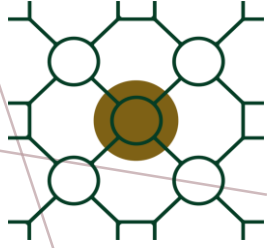
- ✓ Fairy tale and toy therapy practices



Fairy tale therapy project “Visiting Knyhusia” in the National Library of Ukraine



Hibuki therapy session in the Lviv Regional Library for Children



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

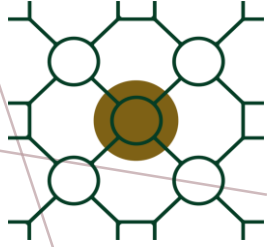
- ✓ Art therapy and maker practices



Candle making workshop in the Zaporizhzhia City Library



Art therapy session in the Novovolynsk City Library



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

- ✓ Reading for psychological relief

Bibliotherapy

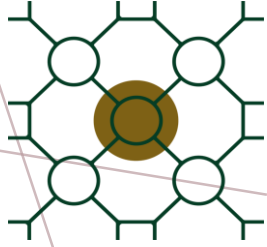
Project “Libraries of Emotions for Good” – **2025-2026**

Bibliothèques Sans Frontiers with the financial support of *Creative Europe* in cooperation with *Ukrainian Library Association and Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine*

Participants – 5 libraries in Kyiv



Bibliotherapy meeting in the Public Library of Solomyanskyi district of Kyiv



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

✓ Reading for psychological relief

All-Ukrainian initiative “The Library of the Ukrainian Warrior” – 2015-

– books to military personnel at the front, in
hospitals, and in educational institutions

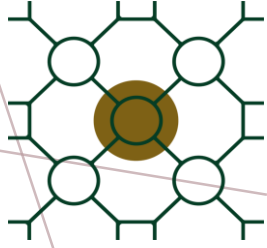
✓ 978 participants

✓ 161 000 books

Coordinator – Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine



Oleh Serbin, Director General of the National Library of
Ukraine hands over books to defenders

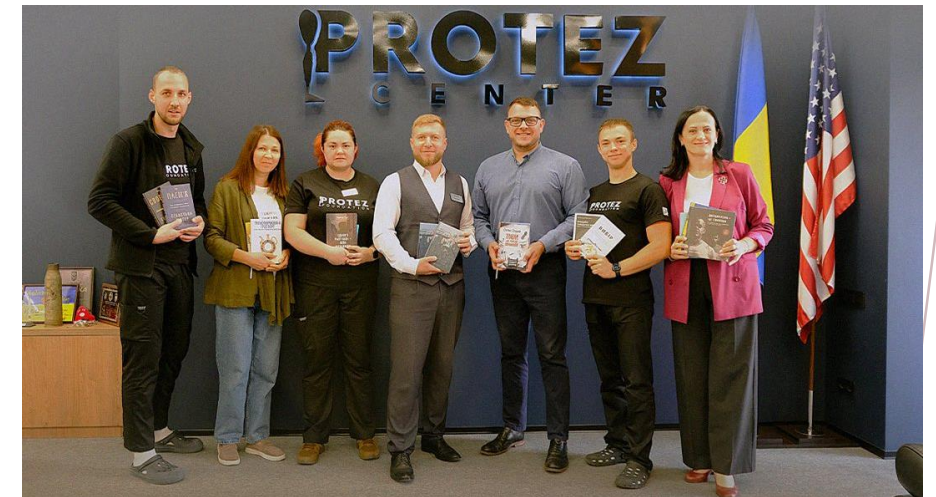


Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

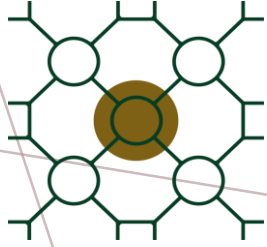
✓ Reading for psychological relief

Project “The Book Heals” – 2024-
– books to hospitals, rehabilitation centers etc.

Coordinator – Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine



Books from the National Library of Ukraine to the prosthetics center “Protez Foundation”



Psychosocial Support in Ukrainian Libraries: Addressing Challenges

✓ Reading for psychological relief

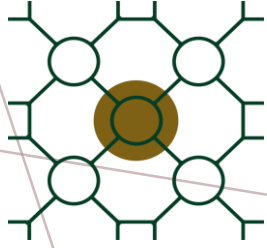
Project “The Book Liberates” – 2024-
– books to penitentiary institutions

- ✓ 15 penitentiary institutions
- ✓ 20 000 books (2024-2025)

Coordinator – Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine



Books transferred to the library in a penitentiary institution

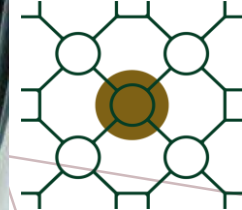


Psychosocial Support for All – Why in the Libraries?

- ✓ Library is the third place and anchor of the community
- ✓ Library is comfort, atmosphere and new books
- ✓ Library is a supportive community of like-minded people
- ✓ You are not judged or condemned in the library
- ✓ People feel safe when they are in the library
- ✓ People trust the library and librarians



Living library meeting in the Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine



STAY MENTALLY HEALTHY WITH YOUR LIBRARY!

