

North Perth Public Library



Policy Title: **Children and Youth Services**

Policy Type: **Operational**

Effective Date: **June 2018**

Policy Number: **OP-12**

Last Review/Revision Date: **Sept 2021**

The North Perth Public Library recognizes that the needs of young people are important in their own right; that their intellectual growth, cultural appreciation and recreational activities should be fostered through quality library service, delivered with consideration and respect.

The Library provides service for young people of all ages as well as parents, guardians and adults who work with children. This policy sets out the services for children and youth as well as related responsibilities for safety.

The North Perth Public Library endeavours to provide this service based on the principles stated in the Ontario Library Association's (OLA) *Children's Rights in the Public Library*, 1998 (Appendix A) and *Teens Rights in the Public Library*, as adopted at the OLA Annual General Meeting June 2010 (Appendix B).

Section 1: Services

1. Collections

- a. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will ensure the maintenance and organization of a comprehensive children's and youth collection based on *OP-01 Collection Development*.
- b. The collections will meet high standards and reflect the changing education needs and personal interests of children and youth, as well as trends in society.
- c. The staff will develop profiles of the collections to define the scope and to address the issues of:
 - i. Canadian authors and content
 - ii. award-winning titles
 - iii. non-fiction material that complement the local school curriculum
 - iv. age appropriate formats

2. Reference and Reader's Advisory

- a. The qualified staff will utilize the full range of collections, technology and methods to answer all users' requests for advice on selecting books and for information, regardless of age and without judgment, with confidentiality and respect.
- b. Library staff should conduct interviews to better understand what each patron wants and needs.
- c. Library staff will point out the variety of resources available in all areas of the library as appropriate.

3. Programs

- a. Following the guidelines set out in OP-11 Programming, the Library will provide programming for children and youth teens, both in and out of the library, to stimulate creative potential and to encourage and facilitate the love of reading, independent learning, and promote use of the library.
- b. Library staff will cooperate with community agencies and schools in providing programs for children and teens.
- c. Whenever possible, staff will invite feedback from teens in order to plan programs that suit their interests and needs.

Section 2: Library Space

1. The Library will provide areas specifically designated for children and youth where space allows.
 - a. The children's "area" will have furniture, shelves and equipment that are designed for and accessible to children.
2. The Library will ensure that signage is clear and age-appropriate.
3. Any designated children or youth area is an interactive learning environment where controlled noise levels are acceptable and where young users are invited to explore the library materials and services in their own way.

Section 3: Staffing

1. The North Perth Public Library Board will support ongoing staff training and professional

development in children and youth services.

2. The CEO will ensure that all staff members assigned to children/youth services receive appropriate training to provide knowledgeable library service.
3. Library staff will assist young people with finding materials, using the internet or attending programs. However, parents/guardians are responsible for their children's use of the library as per library policies.
4. The Library communicates and cooperates with other community groups and agencies devoted to serving children and youth by actively encouraging the continued cooperation of schools and other community groups on the use of the Library.

Related Documents:

- North Perth Public Library *OP-01 Collection Development*
- North Perth Public Library *OP-02 Circulation*
- North Perth Public Library *OP-06 Acceptable Internet Use*
- North Perth Public Library *OP-07 Unattended Children*
- North Perth Public Library *OP-11 Programming*

Appendix A – Ontario Library Association - Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library

OLA Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library

Children in Public Libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom
2. Equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
3. A full range of materials, services and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their needs.
4. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.
5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.
6. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in children's services.
7. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service from birth through the transition to adult user.
8. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of children's services.
9. Library policies written to include the needs of the child.

Adopted at the Ontario Library Association

Annual General Meeting

November 1998

Posted at http://accessola2.com/data/1/rec_docs/380_ola3.pdf

Appendix B – Ontario Library Association - Teen’s Rights in the Public Library

Goals for Library Services for Teens:

Young people are valuable members of our library community who deserve the same respect, dignity and human rights as all library members. This document provides a framework for developing library services to teens that meet the educational, informational, and cultural and leisure needs of young people in ways that are developmentally appropriate. Each public library has a different community to serve and therefore different priorities and needs. Although specific services for teens have not been well established in all libraries, these goals are created in the belief that young adulthood is a unique life stage and that young adults are entitled to the same quality of library services offered to other age groups in the population.

(Adapted from the IFLA Guidelines for Library Services for Young Adults, 2006 and the YALSA Guidelines for Library Services to Teens, Ages 12-18, 2006.)

The goal of library services for teens is to assist with the transition from children’s services to adult services and to provide access to both resources and an environment that meets the needs of young people for intellectual, emotional and social development. Specifically these needs are based on the unique seven developmental needs of adolescents and the five core values of quality service to teens:

Seven Developmental Needs of Teens

- Physical activity
- Competence and achievement
- Self-definition
- Creative expression
- Positive social Interaction with Peers and Adults
- Structure and Clear Limits
- Meaningful Participation

Excerpted from: Dorman, G. (1981). *The Middle Grades Assessment Program: User’s Manual*. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence

Five Core Values of service to teens

- Respecting and responding to unique YA needs
- Providing equal access
- Empowering Youth through participation
- Engaging Teens in active collaboration
- Supporting healthy youth development

Teens in Ontario Public Libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom

The library establishes clear policy statements concerning the right to free access by young adults to library resources and information sources; and respect for the rights of young adults to select materials appropriate to their needs without censorship, The library's teen collection, policies and services should be consistent with the concepts of intellectual freedom defined by the CLA, OLA and Ontario Human Rights code.

2. Equal access to the full range of materials, services, and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their unique needs.

The Library integrates library service to teens into the overall plan, budget and service program for the library. Library service to teens is integrated with those offered to other user groups.

3. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.

The Library incorporates funding for materials and services for teens in the library operating budget and ensures there is equitable distribution of resources to support programs and services for young adults.

4. Collections that specifically meet the needs of teens

The Library provides a wide spectrum of current materials of interest to young adults to encourage lifelong learning, literacy, reading motivation, and reader development. The library endeavors to develop collections that encourage leisure reading, support homework and school success and responds to gender and cultural diversity. The library provides unfettered access to technology including social networking, licensed databases, and other online library resources for teens.

5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.

The Library provides identifiable spaces for teens that are separate from children's spaces where possible, reflects their lifestyle and allows for teens to use this library space for leisure or study, either independently or in groups.

6. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service at every service point.

The Library promotes friendly, positive, non-biased customer interactions with teens, providing staff development and training and ensures that services for teens embrace cultural and gender diversity and economic differences. Library staff will endeavor to respect the teen's need for

privacy and nonjudgmental service and assist young adults in acquiring the skills to effectively access all library resources and become information literate.

7. Library Programs and Services appropriate for Teens

The Library fosters youth development by providing programs for teens that contribute to literacy, life-long learning and healthy youth development. The library endeavors to provide volunteer opportunities for helping others through community service hours including participating on Library Advisory Boards, and other projects that help develop a sense of responsibility and community involvement. The library's teen services initiatives are effectively managed according to best practices in the field of Youth Services.

8. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in teen services.

Library staff is knowledgeable about adolescent development and age appropriate resources for young adults inclusive of those with special needs. The library provides services by teen specialists as well as by others who are trained to serve teens.)

9. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of teen services.

The Library works in partnership with other community agencies and organizations to support all aspects of healthy, successful youth development.

10. Library policies are written to include the needs of the youth.

Adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting June 2010.