

Youth Services

Lake of Bays Township Public Library (The Library) recognizes that the needs of young people are important in their own right: that their intellectual growth, their cultural appreciation and recreational activities should be fostered through quality library service, delivered with consideration and respect. This policy sets out the services to be offered for children and teens.

Rights of Children and Teens

The Library endeavours to provide this service based on the principles stated in the Ontario Library Association's Children's Rights in the Public Library, 1988 (See Appendix A) and in the Ontario Library Associations Teen Rights in the Public Library, 2010 (See Appendix B).

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the term child or children refers to child and tween:

Child: 0 to 9 years of age

Tween: 10 to 12 years of age

Teen: 13 to 19 years of age

Scope

The services described in this policy are intended to meet the needs of children and teens, as well as parents, guardians, caregivers and adults who work with children or are interested in children's literature.

Services

Membership:

Any children from birth forward, who live or study in the Lake of Bays Township are eligible for a Library card. Parents or guardians may apply on behalf of their child, up to and including the age of 14. Once the user is in high school and can provide his/her own identification, he/she may apply without parental consent.

Any child with or without a library card may use the services and collections within the Library facility.

Collections:

The Library provides a wide range of materials in all formats and reading levels to fulfill the informational, cultural, learning and leisure needs of children and teens:

1. The Branch Librarians will ensure the maintenance and organization of a comprehensive children's and teens' collection based on the Collection Development Policy.
 - a. Appropriate priority be given to ensure adequate funds be made available to build a collection that is current, attractive and broad in scope.
2. The children's and teens' collections will meet high standards of quality and reflect the changing educational needs and personal interests of children and teens as well as trends in society.
3. The staff will develop profiles of the collections to define the scope and to address the issues of:
 - a. Canadian authors and bilingual and multicultural content
 - b. Award-winning titles
 - c. Non-fiction material that complement the local school curriculum
 - d. Age appropriate formats

Information Services and Readers Advisory:

Library staff working with children and teens connects them with the materials they require.

1. 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.
2. Library staff should conduct reference interviews to better understand what each child and teen wants and needs. The reference interview is an opportunity to assist children and teens in the development of information and research skills.
3. Library staff will point out the variety of resources available in all areas of the library as appropriate.
4. While library staff will assist a young person in finding materials, they do not act in place of a parent, guardian or caregiver. Parents,

guardians, or caregivers are responsible for supervising all aspects of their own children's library use.

5. The Library offers free internet access to children and teens in accordance with the established Board approved *Technology Policy*

Programmes:

The library will provide programming for children, teens, parents, guardians, and caregivers, both in and out of the library, to stimulate creative potential and to encourage and facilitate the habit of reading, independent learning and use of the library.

1. The library will provide educational, entertaining and literature-related programmes and support for children and teens, such as:
 - I. Programmes for parents, guardians, adults, and caregivers that will educate them on the importance of early literacy, the role of the library in their children's lives, and the support the library can offer them
 - II. Programmes for classes, children's groups, etc., depending on age, will emphasize early literacy, library orientation, technological literacy and current trends that encourage reading for leisure, or highlight various aspects of the collection
 - III. Programmes for summer, school breaks and professional development days will highlight various aspects of our collection while encouraging reading for pleasure or leisure activities.
2. The staff will actively involve teens in planning and implementing programmes for this age group.
3. The number of participants for all programmes will be restricted based on size of the facility, fire department limits, staff supervision available, etc.; this will be enforced by the children's programmer in charge.
4. Some programmes may limit the age of children or teens and the number of children per accompanying adult. This limit may be enforced by the staff as the programme is designed for maximum benefit to the child/parent/guardian through one on one interaction. Leniency is given to parents, guardians or caregivers of more than one child.

Technological Literacy:

The Library provides children and teens with the opportunity to learn and develop emerging technological literacy skills.

Library Space

The library will provide well-planned areas for children that are distinct from the adult areas.

1. These areas should be visually stimulating so that children are able to readily distinguish their own space from the rest of the library.
2. These areas will have furniture, shelves and equipment that are designed for and accessible to all children.
3. The library will ensure that signage is clear and age appropriate.
4. The children's area is an interactive learning environment where controlled noise levels are tolerated and where young users are invited to explore the library materials and services in their own way.
5. The area must be clearly visible to staff.

Staffing

The Library provides trained staff who have a rapport with and understanding of children and teens:

1. The board will support a programme of ongoing staff training and professional development in children's and teens' services within the context of each staff persons training needs.
2. The Branch Librarian will ensure to the extent possible that all staff members assigned to children's and teens' services receive appropriate training to provide knowledgeable library service.
3. While library staff will assist young people with finding materials, using the Internet or attending programs, they do not act "in loco parentis". Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for their children's use of the library.

Conduct and Behaviour

The Youth Services Policy on noise levels and conduct of behaviour is an adjunct policy to the Library Board's current Sharing of Library Space Policy.

1. Parents, guardians or caregivers are responsible for the behaviour of their children while in the Library
2. Library staff will stop a child (or adult) from a behaviour if:
 - a. It affects the enjoyment of the Library for others;
 - b. It disrupts a programme;
 - c. It presents a dangerous situation for that patron, any other patron or staff; or
 - d. It affects library equipment or a library facility.
3. When the staff member stops behaviour, he/she will explain why the behaviour is not acceptable.
4. If a staff member's attempts to correct the situation are unsuccessful, he/she is to confer with the Branch Librarian or in his/her absence, the senior staff member in attendance.

Unattended Children

The Library is a public place and parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for their children's supervision at all times. According to the Ontario's Child and Family Services Act, children under 16 must never be left without "provision made for their supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances". When an unaccompanied child is found in the library, and if the parent, guardian or caregiver cannot be located, staff may contact the Children's Aid Society (CAS) or the Huntsville OPP

Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect

The entire staff of the Lake of Bays Township Public Library, as members of society, as members of the public and as professionals who work with children, is obligated under the Ontario Child and Family Services Act to report suspicions of physical, emotional and sexual abuse to children under the age of 16. The reporting must be done promptly and immediately by the individual who witnesses or suspects that a child has experienced harm or is at risk of being harmed.

Advocacy for Teens and Children

The library will advocate for children's and teens' library services in the community by:

1. Collaborating with agencies to promote early literacy, love of reading, lifelong learning and children's and teens' health and well-being

2. Seeking support for children's and teens' library services from community organizations, fundraising, donations, etc.
3. Networking with other agencies who provide library service to children and teens in the community, region and province
4. Communicating with principals, teacher librarians and teachers in the community
5. Promoting the children's and teens' services and collections to groups who could benefit from them (schools, daycares, etc.)
6. Welcoming class visits and orientation for school children and home schooled children

Intellectual Freedom

Children have the right to intellectual freedom and are entitled to open access to all information and services throughout the library within the context of Provincial and Federal law.

1. All children will have equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
2. The full range of qualified staff skills, collections, equipment and methods will be utilized to answer all customer requests, regardless of age.
3. In accordance with the 1998 Ontario Library Association's *Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the individual*, staff will not censor material. This is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or caregiver.
4. All children's requests will be answered without judgment, with confidentiality and with respect.
5. While library staff will assist a young person in finding materials, they do not act in place of a parent. Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for supervising all aspects of their own children's library use.

Related Documents:

Collection Development Policy

Technology Policy

Unattended Children Policy

Circulation Policy

Sharing Library Space Policy

Membership Policy

Signature of the Chairperson _____

APPENDIX A – 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).

APPENDIX B - OLA Position on Teen Rights in the Public Library

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:

7 Developmental Needs of Teens	5 Core Values of Services to Teens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity, • Competence and achievement, • Self definition, • Creative expression, • Positive social Interaction with Peers and Adults, • Structure and Clear Limits, • Meaningful Participation <p>Excerpted from: Dorman, G. (1981). <i>The Middle Grades Assessment Program: User’s Manual</i>. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting and responding to unique YA needs, • Providing equal access, • Empowering Youth through participation, · Engaging Teens in active collaboration, · Supporting healthy youth development. <p>Core Values excerpted from Jones, P. (2002). <i>New directions for library service to young adults</i>. Chicago: American Library Association.</p>

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 programs 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)