

Hanover Public Library POLICIES

Policy Title: **Children and Youth Services Policy**

Policy type: Operational

Revision date: July 24, 2014

Signature of Chair:

Purpose:

To ensure that quality services are offered to children and youth in the library recognizing their particular needs.

Statement:

The Hanover Public Library welcomes and encourages children and teens to use the library and the full spectrum of services offered.

The library recognizes that the needs of children and teens vary greatly. The library will offer services, materials and programs that are age appropriate for those aged 0-19. Services offered to children and teens are as important as those offered to adults.

The library supports the Ontario Library Association's (OLA) Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library, as well as the OLA's Position on Teen Rights in the Public Library. See attached as Appendices A and B.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy the term child/children refers to both child and tween.

A child: aged 0 to 9

A tween: aged 10 to 12

A teen: aged 13 to 19

Staffing:

The library will hire and employ a qualified, knowledgeable, and personable individual to work with children and youth.

Staff (and occasional volunteers) over 18 working with children will be required to provide a clean Police Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening.

The library will support staff attendance at workshops and conferences to keep their knowledge of child and teen development and services current and relevant.

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Areas & Resources:

The library acknowledges that children and teens are best served by having their own distinct areas and collections. As far as possible these areas will have furnishings and decorations that are appealing and functional for children and teens.

The children and teen areas will be fully accessible.

All resources provided in the children and teen collections will meet the guidelines laid out in the Materials Selection Policy. Funds will be provided to purchase materials for the children's and teen collections.

Children and Teens will each have their own separate collections. These collections will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

The materials provided will be laid out in a well organized manner allowing materials to be easily found.

There will be materials to satisfy informational as well as the recreational needs of both children and teens.

Intellectual Freedom:

Children and teens have the right to intellectual freedom. They have the right to access all materials and services offered within the library. Their inquiries will be answered without judgement, in confidence and with respect. Staff may suggest materials appropriate to meet the needs of children or teens, but will not censor materials or services.

Programmes:

The Library will ensure that there are programmes organized throughout the year for children and teens furthering the informational, cultural, learning and leisure interests of all ages. Some may be offered on a cost recovery basis.

The library will work with community organizations, agencies and schools in providing children and teen programmes.

Appropriate library staff will be responsible for the development, implementation and overseeing of all the children and teen programming, under the direction of the Children and Youth Services Librarian.

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Rights and Responsibilities of the Parent /Guardian:

The Hanover Public Library respects the freedom of the individual and the rights and obligations of parents and guardians to develop, interpret and maintain their own code of values in their children. The library therefore expects parents to monitor and guide their child's use of the collections and services offered in the library.

Parents and guardians of children under the age of 10 must comply with the library's Unattended Children Policy which states that "children under the age of 10 years must have a parent or responsible caregiver in the immediate vicinity unless they are participating in a library programme."

Library Membership:

Children aged 12 and under registering for membership must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian. The adult is required to sign the child's registration card and is responsible for the materials borrowed on the card and any fines, damages or lost items.

Library Use by Children and Teens:

The Library does not have filters on Internet use computers. Library staff will not monitor, censor or restrict children's access to the internet, in accordance with the Intellectual Rights policy. Children under 10 using the Internet computers must be signed in by their responsible caregiver. Computers are provided in the Children's area of the library that are preloaded with games appropriate for children and do not have internet access.

It is expected that children and teens will abide by the Acceptable Internet Use Policy.

Children and teens will be expected to adhere to the Hanover Public Library's Code of Conduct, Patron Bill of Rights, and all other library policies, municipal policies and legislation.

Library conduct policies permit all library users to "talk and enjoy the company of friends without being noisy", provided that they respect other people's enjoyment of the library. Recognizing that young people may express themselves with enthusiasm, they will not be required to be quiet unless their behaviour is causing disruption or an unsafe situation.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect:

The staff of the Library is obligated under the Ontario Child and Family Services Act, Section 72 (1) to report suspicions of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect, to children under the age of 16.

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Appendix A

THE ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION POSITION ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE 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
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Adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting
November 1998

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Appendix B

TEEN'S RIGHTS IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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.

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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.