
Policy Type:	Operational	Policy Number: OP – 12
Policy Title:	Children and Teens Services Policy	
Previous versions:	2014, 2021	
Last review/revision date:	November 15, 2024	Next review due: 2028

OP – 12 Children and Teens Services Policy

Purpose:

This policy sets out to ensure that services are offered to children and teens in the Hanover Public Library (the library) that are appropriate to their particular needs. The library endeavours to provide this service based on the principles stated in the Ontario Library Association’s *Children’s Rights in the Library*, 1998 (See Appendix A) and its *Teen’s Rights in the Public Library*, 2010 (See Appendix B).

Definitions:

Caregiver means a person assigned by the parent or guardian of a child or teen to be responsible for their care, well-being, safety and supervision. Such a person could include, but is not limited to, the child or teen’s teacher or tutor.

Child means a person between the ages of 0-12 years.

Teen means a person between the ages of 13-17 years.

Parent or Guardian means a person who is directly responsible for the care, well-being, safety and supervision of the child, ward or teen.

Unattended means a child or teen without visible supervision by their parent, guardian or caregiver.

Policy Statement:

The library recognizes that the needs of children and teens are important in their own right: that their intellectual growth, cultural appreciation and recreational activities should be fostered through library services, delivered with consideration and respect. The library will endeavour to offer services, materials and programs that are age-appropriate for the needs of children and teens.

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

Intellectual Freedom:

Children and teens have the right to intellectual freedom as outlined in the library's policy titled *Intellectual Freedom* (FN-04). They have the right to access all materials and services offered within the library. Library staff will point out the variety of resources available in all areas of the library to meet the needs of children and teens and will not censor or restrict their use of library materials or services.

Library Space:

The library will provide a well-planned area for children and teens that is distinct from the adult area with signage that is clear and age-appropriate. These areas should be visually stimulating with furniture, shelves and equipment that are designed for children and teens and accessible to all.

The children and teens areas are understood to be interactive learning environments where controlled noise levels are tolerated and where children and teens are invited to explore library materials and services in their own way. Children will be allowed to express themselves with enthusiasm without restriction unless their behaviour is causing a disruption or creating an unsafe situation, or another reason that staff feel the need to intervene. Children and teens will be expected to show courtesy and respect to all other library users and staff and to adhere to the library's *Code of Conduct Policy* (OP-02) and *Patron Bill of Rights Policy* (OP-01).

Collections:

The CEO/Chief Librarian will direct qualified staff to ensure the maintenance and organization of a comprehensive collection for children and teens in accordance with the library's *Collection Development Policy* (OP-07).

Children and teens will each have their own separate collections. Each collection 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.

The collections will be laid out in a well-organized manner allowing materials to be discovered easily.

Reference and Readers' Advisory:

Library staff will utilize the full range of collections, technology and methods to answer all requests, regardless of age and without judgement, with confidentiality and respect.

Internet use:

The library provides free public use of computers with internet access and free wireless internet access for all library members and other visitors as outlined in

the library's *Internet and Computer Use Policy* (OP-14). Library staff will not monitor, censor or restrict children and teens from accessing the internet.

Applying for library membership:

The library believes that children and teens should have their own library membership in order to encourage a love of reading and responsible use of library materials. Therefore, the library will not restrict children and teens from having a library membership. The library will endeavour to remove or reduce barriers children or teens may face in applying for their own library membership as outlined in the library's *Membership Policy* (OP-04).

Programs:

The library will provide age appropriate programming throughout the year for children and teens. The goal of this programming is to stimulate creative potential, provide social connection, and foster a love of literacy within our community's youth.

The library will work with community organizations, agencies and schools in providing children and teens programs.

The Children and Youth Services Librarian will be responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of all children and teens programming, under the direction of the Branch Manager and in accordance with the library's *Programming Policy* (OP-10).

Staffing:

The library will hire and employ a qualified, knowledgeable and personable individual to work with children and teens as the Children and Youth Services Librarian. The CEO/Chief Librarian will ensure that all library staff assigned to children and teens services receive appropriate training to provide knowledgeable library service. The library will support staff attendance at workshops and conferences to keep their knowledge of child and teen development and services current and relevant.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian/Caregiver:

Responsibility for the safety, welfare and behaviour of children and teens using the library ultimately rests with the respective parents, guardians or caregivers. Library staff will be guided by and apply as necessary the library's *Unattended Children Policy* (OP-13).

It is the responsibility of the parent to oversee materials checked out or viewed in the library.

Duty to report:

The library will comply with the provisions of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* (the Act). Under section 125 of the Act, every person has a responsibility for the welfare of children. Under that section, members of the public, including professionals who work with children, have a legislated obligation to report promptly to the Children's Aid Society (the CAS) if they suspect that a youth aged 18 or less, is or may be, in need of protection. Under the Act, a child in need of protection includes, but is not limited to, a child who is suspected of having suffered physical harm or emotional harm, is suspected of having been sexually abused or sexually exploited or is suspected of being subjected to neglect or risk of harm. For the purposes of section 2 (1) of the Act, *child* means a person aged 18 or less.

When a library staff member has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child under the age of 18 is, or may be, in need of protection, the staff member will advise the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate (Branch Manager). The staff member (with the support of the CEO/Chief Librarian) will promptly report their suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the local CAS, as required under section 125 (1) of the Act. Bruce Grey Child and Family Services can be contacted at 1-855-322-4453.

Related Documents:

Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 17, Sched. 1

Hanover Public Library. *FN-04 - Intellectual Freedom*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-01 - Patron Bill of Rights*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-02 - Code of Conduct Policy*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-04 - Membership Policy*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-07 - Collection Development Policy*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-10 - Programming Policy*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-13 - Unattended Children Policy*

Hanover Public Library. *OP-14 - Internet and Computer Use Policy*

Ontario Library Association. *Children's Rights in the Library* (OLA AGM, November 1998)

Ontario Library Association. *Teen's Rights in the Public Library* (OLA AGM, June 2010)

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

Appendix B

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:

7 Developmental Needs of Teens	5 Core Values of service 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><small>Excerpted from: Dorman, G. (1981). The Middle Grades Assessment Program: User's Manual. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.</small></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><small>Core Values excerpted from Jones, P. (2002). <i>New directions for library service to young adults</i>. Chicago: American Library Association.</small></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 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 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.

(Reproduced as originally published by the OLA, with updating.)