

	<b>THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF LAMBTON LAMBTON COUNTY LIBRARY POLICY MANUAL</b>			
	Subject:	<b>Teen Services Policy</b>	<b>Section R02</b>	<b>Index #07</b>
	Effective Date:	November 1, 2023	<b>Approved By:</b> Lambton County Council	
	Revision Date:	September 6, 2023		
	Drafted on:	January 1, 2020		

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that teens accessing the materials, programs and services of Lambton County Library (the Library) are treated safely, consistently and fairly while providing an accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all ages. Lambton County Library endeavours to provide teen services based on the Ontario Library Association Position Statement on Teens' Rights in the Public Library, 2010 (see Appendix A), which Lambton County Library endorses.

**POLICY**

Lambton County Library recognizes that the needs of young people are important in their own right; teenagers' intellectual growth, 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 to teens in the library, and also sets out responsibility relating to safety, truancy and missing persons.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Manager, Library Services, Community Library Supervisor, Assistant Library Supervisors, Technical Services Supervisor, Public Services Coordinators, and front line Library staff.

**DEFINITIONS**

**"Parent"** is any person who is either the natural, adoptive, foster parent, or legal guardian of the child / teen.

**"Teen(s)"** are individuals aged thirteen (13) to seventeen (17).

## REGULATIONS

### 1. General Principles

- 1.1. The unique needs of teens will be taken into account in all areas of library services including, but not limited to; furniture, shelving, materials, programs, design of library space, rules, procedures, policies and staff training.
- 1.2. Lambton County Library adopts the principles included in the Ontario Library Association Position Statement on Teens' Rights in the Public Library.
- 1.3. Lambton County Library will strive to ensure its programs and spaces are inclusive.

### 2. Privacy

- 2.1. Teens have the same privacy and access rights as adults with one exception. Section 54(c) of MFIPPA provides that a person who has lawful custody of the individual may exercise the rights of access of an individual less than 16 years of age. Accordingly, if a teen under 16 would be entitled to access, so would his or her custodial parent. Therefore a parent may request a list of their teen's overdue materials, the value of overdue fees, number of lost items or have mail or email notifications sent in care of the parent if the teen is less than sixteen (16) years of age.
- 2.2. Teens, sixteen (16) and older, have the same rights of privacy and access as an adult.

### 3. Advocacy

- 3.1. The library will advocate for teens' services in the community by:
  - 3.1.1. Collaborating with agencies to promote literacy, love of reading, lifelong learning, and teens' health and well-being;
  - 3.1.2. Seeking support for teens' services from community organizations;
  - 3.1.3. Networking with other agencies who provide services to teens in the community, region and province;
  - 3.1.4. Communicating with principals, teacher librarians and teachers in the community;
  - 3.1.5. Promoting teens' services and collections to groups who could benefit from them (schools, youth groups, etc.);
  - 3.1.6. Welcoming class and homeschool visits, and orientations for teens.

### 4. Access

- 4.1. Teens are encouraged to obtain a library card in their name. Parents are ultimately responsible for the fees (overdues, lost, or damaged items) incurred by their teen, if the teen is under 16 years of age.
- 4.2. Library staff will provide readers' advisory services, and use professional knowledge to develop collections and programs for teens. Requests for advice on selecting books and for information will be answered by staff utilizing the full range of the collections and technology available, regardless of age and without judgment, with confidentiality and respect.

- 4.3. The Library does not filter or restrict legal Internet access, or access to any of the physical or digital collections. It is the prerogative of the parent to limit access to the library collections or equipment or censor the reading, viewing or listening of their teen under sixteen (16) years of age. This is not the role of the Library staff, even if requested to do so by the parent.
- 4.4. Reference interviews will be used to better understand what each teen wants and needs. Library staff will explain the variety of resources available in all areas of the Library as applicable to the teen's request.
- 4.5. Where possible, a separate area in the Library will be dedicated for teen use with shelving, furniture and collection formats that meet teens' specific needs. This area will be an interactive learning environment where controlled noise levels are tolerated. Access to this collection is not limited by a specific borrower card type.

## **5. Programming**

- 5.1. The library will provide programming for teens 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.
- 5.2. Teen programming will adhere to the Lambton County Library Programming Policy.

## **6. Teen Safety and Supervision**

- 6.1. As a public facility, the Library does not monitor the activities of its patrons unless behaviour violates Lambton County Library Rules of Conduct Policy or a child is left alone as outlined in the Lambton County Library Children's Services Policy. There are three situations for teens which require specific guidance:
  - 6.1.1. Truancy - If a school-age teen is noticed to be spending considerable time in the library during the school day, staff may check with the teen and ask that a parent confirm with the library that he / she is aware of the teen's whereabouts. This applies to those up to the age of sixteen (16).
  - 6.1.2. Missing Persons - Library staff will not give information to any person over the telephone as to whether an individual is currently in the library or has recently attended the Library. In the case of a missing person, Library staff will inform the Community Library Supervisor or his / her designate and with management's approval, will share information with the law enforcement agency requesting specific personal information.
  - 6.1.3. Duty to Report - The Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA) (Section 125) recognizes that professionals who work with children, have a legislated obligation to report promptly to the Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they suspect that a child or youth under the age of 16 is, or may be, in need of protection. The CYFSA defines the phrase "child in need of protection" as including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, and risk of harm.

- 6.2. Library staff who are concerned that a 16 or 17-year old is, or may be, in need of protection may make a report to Children’s Aid Society (CAS) and the CAS is required to assess the reported information.
- 6.3. When Library staff members have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or youth is, or may be, in need of protection, they will advise the Community Library Supervisor or his / her designate and together they will promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the local CAS, as required in the CYFSA s.136 (1).

**ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

Lambton County Library Collection Development Policy  
 Lambton County Library Circulation Policy  
 Lambton County Library Internet Services Policy  
 Lambton County Library Programming Policy  
 Lambton County Library Rules of Conduct Policy  
 Lambton County Library Teen Services Policy Appendix A  
 MFIPPA, Section 54 (c)  
 Ontario Library Association Position Statement on Teens' Rights in the Public Library  
 Ontario Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)

**POLICY HISTORY**

REVISION	DATE	PREPARED BY
Revised	September 6, 2023	Manager, Library Services
Created	March 1, 2020	Manager, Library Services

## APPENDIX A

### Ontario Library Association - Position on Teens' 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.

**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 endeavour to respect the teen's need for privacy and non-judgmental 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, lifelong learning and healthy youth development. The Library endeavours 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.