



Standards for Public Library Services to Young Adults in Massachusetts



Youth Services Section 2005

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Massachusetts Library Association

Youth Services Section

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Table of Contents

Preface.....	1
Using the Young Adult Standards.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Service Principles.....	4
Service Bibliography.....	5
Staff Principles.....	7
Sample Job Description.....	10
MLA Salary Recommendation.....	12
Collection Principles.....	13
Core Collection Checklist.....	15
Collection Development Bibliography.....	16
Facilities Principles.....	17
Facilities Bibliography.....	19
Programs Principles.....	20
Program Planning Worksheet.....	22

Programming Bibliography.....	24
Sample Volunteer Policy.....	25
Appendices:	
Confidentiality Law.....	26
Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations.....	27
Intellectual Freedom Bibliography.....	34

PREFACE

Standards for Public Library Service to Young Adults in Massachusetts was developed as a companion document to the *Standards for Public Library Service to Children in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts Library Association, 1987, 1995). These standards were written in recognition that young adults have particular needs and that they too often receive limited library service as they make the transition from being served by the Children's Department to achieving full use of the Reference and Adult Services Departments.

The Children's Issues Section (CIS) of the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA), having fostered discussion and sponsored conference programs on young adult services issues, appointed a committee in 1994 to develop this set of standards. Representing public libraries across the state, the committee members included library directors, children's and young adult librarians and consultants from each of the three regional library systems. A small group of library directors and young adult librarians in each region reviewed the draft standards to assure their usefulness prior to their approval by the CIS Executive Board, adoption by the MLA Executive Board and endorsement by the MLA membership. In late 2003 the Youth Services Section (formerly CIS) Executive Board voted to appoint a subcommittee to review and revise the standards document. This committee's charge was as follows:

- Review the existing standards.
- Review American Library Association's and other state associations' existing competency statements regarding young adults' access to and use of information media.
- Scan and summarize young adults' services needs of the Massachusetts Library community.
- Decide the extent and content of the revisions.
- Prepare draft documents for approval of the MLA YSS Board.
- Conduct periods of public comment and town meetings on the document.
- Suggest implementation strategies to the YSS Board.
- Keep the YSS Board up to date on the progress of the document.

The *Standards for Public Library Service to Young Adults in Massachusetts* is intended to guide the local library in its ongoing evaluation and development of young adult services as a strong unit within the overall services and planning structure. It is meant to be used in conjunction with other planning documents, including: the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) regulations governing public libraries, the service plans of the regional library systems, Virginia Walter's *Output Measures and More: Planning and Evaluating Public Library Services for Young Adults* (ALA, 1995) and Sandra Nelson and June Garcia's *Creating Policies For Results: From Chaos to Clarity* (ALA, 2003). Full implementation of these standards requires special planning and cooperation at the local, regional and state level. It is intended that the *Standards for Public Library Service to Young Adults in Massachusetts* will be reviewed for needed revisions every five years.

The standards formulated here continue to follow the pattern of other library standards in recent years in being outcome based. They describe the philosophy and principles underlying good library service to young adults and define essential characteristics of such service. Planning designated allocation of library resources for serving young adults, responsiveness to user needs and evaluation of services are fundamental principles upon which all sections of these standards were constructed.

USING THE YOUNG ADULT STANDARDS

These standards have been developed for use by:

- *Young Adult Librarians* to support requests to Library Directors and Boards for increased resources.
- *Library Administration* to advance young adult services with local and state governments and Boards of Trustees.
- *Trustees* to increase awareness of and support for young adult services.
- *Regional Administrators and Regional Youth Services Consultants and Coordinators* to strengthen existing services and create new ones.
- *The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners* to develop an action plan for implementation on a state level and to consider when formulating funding policy for Massachusetts libraries.
- *The Massachusetts Library Association* to advocate for young adult services in the professional community at large.
- *Library School Faculty* to strengthen the professional education of young adult librarians.
- *Citizens* to increase awareness of young adult library needs in their communities.
- *Government and Local Officials* to increase knowledge of the importance of library services to teens and the need for funding these services.
- *Teens and Teen Advisory Boards* to help develop a vision for services in their libraries and communities.

INTRODUCTION:

YOUNG ADULTS AS LIBRARY USERS

According to the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), the term “young adults” refers to young people ages 12 to 18 who no longer see themselves as children but are not recognized by society as adults. The terms “YA,” “teens,” “teenagers,” “adolescents,” “youth,” and “students” also identify young adults and will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

As teens struggle to find their place in the family and society, they must work out new relationships with parents, peers and others. They experience rapid physical, emotional and social changes while developing their intellectual capabilities and personal values, understanding and accepting their sexuality, and identifying their educational and occupational options.

Young adult library users deserve to be taken seriously and to have their requests treated equitably and their confidentiality preserved. Direct, respectful communication with them is the most effective means of engaging their interest in library services. A cornerstone of young adult library services is the principle that young adults must be actively involved (often referred to as youth participation) in decisions regarding collections, services and programs intended for them. Their active participation ensures that the needs and ever changing interests of teens are being addressed. Young adults become lifelong library users and supporters when they are enthusiastically engaged in planning and decision-making. They play a key role in attracting their peers to the library.

Public libraries must provide more than token services to young adults. Since adolescents are not generally advocates on their own behalf, it is important that the library director, staff, and trustees understand their responsibility to give equal consideration to the needs of young adults in planning and implementing library and information services. Youth advocacy begins with the policies, procedures, space, collections and services within the library. It also extends to the networks and coalitions library staff develop with schools and other libraries and community agencies.

These standards are constructed in the belief that “by fully supporting library service to young adults, the library community is much more likely to retain members of this age group as library users who will, as adults, become lifelong learners and library supporters.”¹ The standards are based on the philosophy and definitions of library services established in three basic documents of the Young Adult Library Services Association: *Directions for Library Service to Young Adults* (2nd edition, 1993), *New Directions for Library Service to Young Adults*, (ALA, 2002), and *Young Adults Deserve the Best: Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth*, (ALA, 2004). The Search Institute’s [Forty Developmental Assets](#) as well as the Intellectual Freedom documents of the American Library Association (ALA), particularly the [Library Bill of Rights](#), are also fundamental to quality service to young adults.

¹ *Directions*, p.1.

SERVICE

Quality library service to young adults is provided by staff who understand and respect their unique informational, educational and recreational needs. In accordance with the principles expressed in the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and *Free Access to Libraries for Minors (Intellectual Freedom Manual, 6th edition, ALA, 2001)*, teenagers must have access on an equal basis with adults to all the services and materials the library provides. Cooperation among public, school and other libraries in the community is essential to serving young adults well.

I. PRINCIPLES

Services to young adults in each public library must be based on a written policy outlining philosophy, goals and objectives consistent with established roles as stated in the library's long-range plan. The Young Adult Services staff and the library director should review both this essential document and its corresponding action plan on a regular basis to determine its effectiveness in serving the needs and interests of young adults in the community. The policy should be based on the following principles:

- Young adults need and are entitled to free and equal access to all library services and resources, including programs, information services, technology, reserves and interlibrary loan, virtual and remote services.
- Young adult department service hours will be no less than those of adult services, and staff will be available to serve young adults all the hours that the library is open.
- Young adults have the right to privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the principles expressed in the American Library Association's *Statement of Professional Ethics* and Massachusetts State Laws regarding confidentiality.
- Public library services for young adults complement but do not take the place of school libraries in the community.
- Each public library has the responsibility to make access to electronic resources, such as online databases and unfiltered Internet access, equally available to people of all ages.

II. PRACTICES

To ensure that young adults are provided with the materials and information they need for school assignments, personal pleasure, and responsible decision-making each library must:

- Develop procedures for involving young adults in planning space, collections, services and programs.
- Establish a physical space for young adult collections, which creates an environment that invites teen use.
- Employ at least one qualified librarian who is responsible for planning and supervising services to young adults.
- Develop and maintain a collection of diverse and current materials in various formats.
- Develop and provide reference services, including homework assistance, personal, career and college information. This reference service also extends to telephone and electronic information and referral.
- Plan and implement a variety of programs that promote library use.
- Provide reader's advisory assistance.
- Provide library orientation and skills instruction.
- Develop meaningful volunteer opportunities for young adults within the library.
- Publicize the resources and services offered to young adults.
- Collaborate and cooperate with schools and other community agencies serving teenagers.
- Create and maintain a web presence specifically geared towards the needs of youth.
- Participate in resource sharing among networks and regions.
- Allocate sufficient funding to accomplish a complete service package including programming, collections, staffing, and facilities.

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STAFF

The library acknowledges the distinct needs and characteristics of young adults by designating a staff member who will have professional expertise and responsibility in planning and supervising services for them. The library director and young adult librarian will work together to provide leadership that assures good library service to young adults, seeking additional expertise from the Regional Youth Services Consultant as needed. It is also essential that all staff members convey a service commitment to young adults since they are expected to use the full range of public library services. The goal of each library will be to employ a young adult librarian who has earned a master's degree from an ALA accredited program with course work related to young adult materials and services.

I. COMPETENCIES

In order to be an advocate for young adults and an effective provider of library services, the librarian serving this age group must possess a wide variety of competencies and personal qualities.

As a person who is expected to attract young adults to the library, the librarian must have:

- Genuine respect for teenagers and an ability to establish rapport with them.
- Communication skills to involve young adults in planning and implementing services intended for their benefit.
- The ability to elicit the input of young adults on library programs and services and to present their ideas to the library administration and staff.
- Interest in and ability to learn new technologies and adapt them for use in young adult services.
- Interest in seeking out new trends in services to young adults.

As a professional librarian who is expected to develop services appropriate to this age group, the librarian must have:

- A broad and current knowledge of young adult literature, audio and visual materials, electronic resources, and emerging technologies.
- A broad knowledge of the intellectual, emotional, psychological, and physical development of adolescents.

As part of the management team of the library in which young adult services are valued, the librarian must have:

- A knowledge and understanding of the library's mission, goals, objectives, and policies.
- The ability to plan and implement programs and to participate in the overall management and evaluation of library activities.

As an effective advocate for young adults, the librarian must have:

- The ability to communicate the needs of teenagers to library staff and administration.
- An awareness of current issues affecting adolescents in that community and society.
- The ability to communicate and collaborate with school personnel and other community agencies serving young adults.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUNG ADULT LIBRARIAN

The young adult librarian must assume a wide variety of responsibilities in the areas of management, service, community outreach and professional development.

As a manager the young adult librarian will:

- Plan and implement activities to achieve short and long term goals and objectives for young adult services as part of the overall library planning process.
- Assess budgetary needs of the young adult department and work with other library personnel to plan and implement the budget.
- Advocate for young adults in library discussions of policy-making and implementation of budget priorities.
- Work with library administration to seek supplementary funding to enhance library services.
- Train, supervise, and evaluate staff and volunteers.
- Identify, collect and interpret statistics as needed.

As a service provider the young adult librarian will:

- Select, evaluate, maintain, and discard young adult materials based on the preferences of young adults and the use of a variety of review sources.
- Provide reference, reader's advisory, and library orientation services to young adults.
- Promote information literacy skills by providing instruction in and access to electronic databases, the Internet, and other emerging technologies, and using those technologies to communicate with teens virtually.
- Involve young adults in planning and implementing services and selecting materials for their age group.
- Recognize diverse groups of young adults and develop programs and acquire materials appropriate to their needs.

As coordinator of outreach services the young adult librarian will:

- Establish contacts and collaborate with schools and other agencies to serve young adults.
- Promote, publicize, and represent young adult services and the library to the community and local agencies in cooperation with other library departments.

As a professional, the young adult librarian will:

- Participate actively in professional associations, take advantage of continuing education opportunities, and read professional literature related to libraries, youth services, and adolescent development.
- Identify current trends and issues affecting young adults and incorporate these findings into overall services to this age group.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADMINISTRATION

The library administration will ensure quality services to young adults by supporting the young adult librarian in the provision of these services and working with the young adult librarian in maintaining contacts with other community agencies serving youth. In addition, the administration will:

- Provide written job descriptions, which are regularly reviewed, for all staff responsible for young adult services.
- Assure regular performance evaluations are conducted using the job descriptions along with the goals and objectives set by each staff member.
- Designate a professional position in the library that will include responsibility for young adult services in the event the young adult librarian's position cannot be full-time.
- Develop a specific budget for young adult materials, programs and services, with the young adult librarian's input.
- Assure scheduled time in the designated librarian's workweek that allows the librarian to serve young adults effectively.
- Allocate time for community outreach to schools and other agencies, for development of appropriate networks for serving young adult information needs, and for job-related professional activities.
- Compensate the young adult librarian with a salary commensurate with the formal qualifications mandated by the library and equivalent to that of other staff within the library who have similar levels of responsibility. The Massachusetts Library Association provides minimum salary recommendations.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Each regional library system, in its plan of service, must include:

- A consultant with expertise in young adult services who provides advisory services to staff in local public libraries.
- A program of service to those working with young adults.
- Continuing education programs on young adult services.
- Opportunities for regular meetings between local young adult services staff and regional consultants.

TOWN OF ANYWHERE
Job Description

Young Adult Librarian

Definition

Professional, administrative and supervisory work in planning and managing the activities of young adult services in the library and all other related work as required.

Supervision

- Works under the general direction of the Library Director or Coordinator of Youth or Adult Services.
- Performs responsible functions requiring considerable judgment and initiative in planning and overseeing services to young adults both within the library and the community.
- Supervises two part-time employees and an active volunteer program.

Job Environment

- Performs work under typical library conditions; library hours may require evening and weekend work.
- Makes frequent contacts with the public, schools, other libraries, social service agencies, civic organizations and other professional organizations.
- Uses computers, peripherals, current technologies and other standard office equipment.

Essential Functions

- Plans, organizes, implements, supervises and evaluates services to young adults.
- Participates as part of the management team in developing goals, policies and procedures as relating to young adults.
- Advocates for young adults and young adult services with other community agencies.
- Initiates, plans and conducts a variety of programs and activities to encourage the use of the library by young adults between the ages of 12 to 18.
- Involves young adults in planning and implementing services for their age group.
- Selects, evaluates, maintains and discards young adult materials based on professional judgment, preferences of young adults and acknowledged review sources.
- Provides reference and readers' advisory services, and library orientation to young adults.
- Collaborates with schools and other agencies to serve young adults.
- Promotes, publicizes and represents young adult services and the library to the community and local agencies in cooperation with other library departments.
- Works with library administration to seek supplementary funding to enhance library services, including state and federal grants.
- Trains, supervises and evaluates staff and volunteers.
- Identifies, collects and interprets statistics as needed.

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience

Master's Degree in Library Science from an ALA accredited school; two years of professional experience, including supervisory and administrative experience, experience with young adults (ages 12 to 18) is preferred.

Knowledge, Ability and Skills

- Broad and current knowledge of young adult literature, digital and multimedia materials, and electronic resources, including communication tools such as email and instant messaging.
- A broad knowledge of the intellectual, emotional, psychological and physical development of adolescents is essential.
- Genuine respect for young adults and an ability to establish rapport with them.
- Ability to administer and direct the work of staff and volunteers.
- Ability to express oneself orally and in writing.
- Flexibility, initiative, energy, patience and tact to deal effectively with the public.
- Excellent people and reference skills.
- Planning and organizational skills needed.
- Has access to a limited amount of confidential information.
- Errors could result in lower standards of library service, waste of public funds and poor public relations.
- Familiarity with online circulation systems and online searching is required.

Physical Requirements

- Light physical effort required in carrying and shelving books, and in performing other typical library functions.
- Frequent standing, walking, bending, reaching and climbing.
- Ability to operate a keyboard at an efficient speed.
- Frequently required to sit and talk or hear, use hands to operate objects, tools or controls, and reach with hands and arms.
- The employee must regularly lift and/or move materials weighing up to 40 pounds.
- Vision and hearing at or correctable to "normal ranges."

Adapted from: *Standards for Public Library Service to Young Adults in Massachusetts*, Massachusetts Library Association, 1997

SALARY RECOMMENDATION FOR THE YEAR 2002

MLA SALARY RECOMMENDATION

The Personnel Committee Salary Recommendation for the year 2004 is \$47,957².

This figure is based on Massachusetts teachers' salaries with a master's degree and is derived by applying the following formula:

	\$36,120	The statewide recommended average beginning annual salary for a teacher with a Master's Degree (in September 2001)
x 22%	\$7,950	Adjusting the salary for the for 230-245 work days librarians typically work compared to 180-190 work days per year for a teacher.
x 3.7%	\$1,037	Adjustment for Consumer Price Index
=	\$45,107	Salary Recommendation for the year 2002
x 3%	\$1353	Adjustment for Consumer Price Index
=	\$46,560	Salary Recommendation for year 2003
x 3%	\$1,397	Adjustment for Consumer Price Index
=	\$47,957	Salary Recommendation for year 2004

Librarians can use a similar formula in their own community by using the starting teacher's salary from the School Dept., and then determining the difference in the number of work days to use the percentage increase. The CPI (which changes from year to year) is useful if a year or more has elapsed since the salary figure has been used.

Revised 14FEB05

² Massachusetts Library Association, <http://www.masslib.org>, April 15, 2005

COLLECTIONS

The young adult collection represents the unique needs and interests of adolescents in the community. Resources selected for teenagers should contribute to their intellectual and emotional growth as well as appeal to their popular, current and recreational interests. Both the public library and the school library collections are necessary for meeting the educational needs of young adults.

This collection is the bridge for adolescents making the transition from juvenile collections and services to adult collections and services. It should contain materials appropriate for a wide range of abilities and maturity levels. Therefore, the collection may include items commonly found in either the adult or children's collections. In accordance with the [*Library Bill of Rights*](#) and its interpretations, young adults must have access to all areas of the library's collections.

I. POLICY

Every public library's collection development policy, endorsed by the library's governing board, must define the purpose of the young adult collection by stating the following:

- Responsibility and criteria for selection and evaluation.
- General and specific populations and interests to be served.
- Level of curriculum and homework support.
- Roles of young adults in collection development.
- Relationship between the young adult collection and other collections in the library.

II. CONTENT

Personal interest materials reflecting the needs and interests of teenagers are the primary focus of the young adult collection. Materials should be available in a variety of formats and subject areas, and the collection should meet the needs of teens of various ages and levels of maturity as well as reading abilities. No limit should be made on the availability of any material to all patrons.

Paperbacks, graphic novels, magazines and popular music recordings are included in any collection for this age group. Other media such as DVD's, web sites, computer/video games and recorded books are also popular.

The young adult collection must reflect the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the community and acknowledge the emotional and informational needs of teens of all sexual orientations. It should serve the needs of the visually and hearing impaired, learning disabled, and non-English speaking populations.

Collection development also encompasses the full range of electronic resources available through the library website.

III. BUDGET

A portion of the library budget must be designated for young adult materials. Evaluation of the usage patterns of the library's entire collection, as well as a variety of statistics and output measures supplied by the young adult librarian, should determine budget allocations. The young adult librarian should have full responsibility for expending the young adult materials budget. When the public library also serves as the school library, arrangements must be made for reimbursements from the school department budget.

IV. SELECTION

The young adult librarian will:

- Select materials (in a variety of formats) intended primarily for young adults, consulting a variety of professional selection and evaluation aids.
- Involve young adults in the selection process.
- Communicate with other library departments selecting materials used by young adults to determine the best location for these materials.
- Ensure prompt processing and full cataloging of young adult materials.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the collection on a regular basis.
- Discard worn and outdated materials.

V. PROMOTION

To promote the collection effectively, the young adult librarian will:

- Identify the needs of the community, its teens, and its young adult service providers.
- Be familiar with materials in the collection in order to provide expert guidance to young adult and adult users.
- Encourage the independent use of the collection by using marketing strategies and reader's advisory tools such as booklists, displays, signage, and an active web presence to help youth locate materials they will find enjoyable and suited to their developmental needs.
- Work with schools and community groups to keep teens and adults abreast of materials in the collection.
- Maintain and update a web page devoted to the library's young adult services which publicizes materials to teens both inside and outside the library and encourages use of online databases.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS

The regional library systems are responsible for assisting member libraries in collection development by providing:

- Patron access to online databases that meet the informational needs of young adults.
- Access to a collection of professional resources.
- Continuing education programs.
- On-site consultations.
- Supplementary collections/deposits of young adult materials for public libraries under 25,000 population may be available.

CORE COLLECTION CHECKLIST

Though school assignments motivate teenagers to visit the library, a dynamic young adult collection focusing on popular, high interest materials will keep them coming back. Teen input is essential in developing a collection that reflects the interests and needs of a community's young people, and affords young adults the opportunity to become involved in library decision-making. Your YA collection **should** include:

- Series books.
- Fiction:
 - ◆ Horror.
 - ◆ Realistic teen novels.
 - ◆ Mystery/suspense.
 - ◆ Romance.
 - ◆ Science fiction.
 - ◆ Fantasy.
 - ◆ Sports.
 - ◆ Adventure/survival.
 - ◆ Historical fiction.
 - ◆ Short stories.
 - ◆ Classics in paperback editions.
 - ◆ Multicultural fiction.
- Comics and graphic novels.
- Media tie-ins.
- Magazines.
- Non-fiction:
 - ◆ Recreational, e.g. rock and rap music, skateboarding.
 - ◆ Informational, e.g. health and sex education.
 - ◆ Educational, e.g. careers and college.
 - ◆ Reference, e.g. encyclopedias, student dictionaries, atlases.
- Non-print:
 - ◆ Musical media.
 - ◆ DVD and video.
 - ◆ Computer/video games
 - ◆ Learning tools.
 - ◆ Audio books.
- Pathfinders, both print and web-based.
- Website/collection of links.

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Collection Development Journals for the Young Adult Collection:

KLIAAT

33 Bay State Road
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VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

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School Library Journal

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<http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/booklist.htm>

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FACILITIES

Every public library must have a clearly defined, separate area designated for young adults. This young adult area should be accessible to all adolescents, easily visible, functional and flexible in design. An environment that is comfortable and arranged to accommodate noise and movement will make young adults feel welcome. The design and graphics should make it evident that the area is for teens. Young adult involvement is essential in establishing an effective, dynamic young adult area.

I. SPACE

The young adult space should be established in a location that is easily supervised without making young adults feel intimidated. Because young adults need access to reference materials and assistance, proximity to reference services is important. The space should not be adjacent to the children's service area. If the young adult area is unable to house programs and activities, teens should have equal access to other program facilities within the library. The space itself should be in compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. The area should accommodate:

- Leisure reading, socializing, and snacking.
- Individual and group study.
- A public service area and workspace for the young adult librarian.
- Sufficient shelving for a diverse collection.
- Displays and exhibits.
- Computer access proportional to teen population.

II. FURNISHINGS

Furnishings should be flexible so that as needs and activities change the area can be adapted accordingly. The young adult area will include:

- Shelving for materials in various formats.
- Comfortable and durable seating and tables.
- Directional and informational signs.

The young adult area should include or be in proximity to:

- A public service desk, clock and telephone.
- Listening and viewing equipment.
- Computers and peripherals.
- Display equipment such as bulletin boards, display cases and slat-wall shelving.

III. INFRASTRUCTURE

Services for young adults must take advantage of new methods to deliver the most effective access to information, learning and leisure pursuits. The library's infrastructure should support changing technology and ensure adequate lighting, ventilation, temperature controls, and acoustics. Items to consider in the young adult area include:

- Electrical outlets in a variety of locations.
- Adequate wiring, including wireless capability, with flexibility to reposition and upgrade.
- Connections for in-house and external telecommunication resources.
- Soundproofing as required.
- Telephone jacks with convenient access.
- Trash receptacles.

IV. WEB PRESENCE

Just as libraries set aside physical spaces in their buildings for young adults, so should they set aside web spaces by creating and maintaining a page or pages specific to the interests and developmental needs of young adults. An attractive and functional page should be designed with young adult input, evaluated regularly by young adults, and have interactive features. The page may include but is not limited to:

- General contact information for library and specific contact information for the young adult librarian.

- A collection development policy for website content and links that includes a procedure for addressing challenges to controversial websites.
- Library programs and activities for young adults.
- Annotated booklists and book reviews, or links to young adult literature sites that provide reader's advisory services.
- Promotion of young adult collections and resources.
- Informational and recreational links.
- Opportunities for teens to post reviews of materials.
- Interactive content that helps teens learn how to use library resources.
- Opportunities for teens to connect with each other.
- Opportunities for teens to connect with librarians who can assist them with research needs.
- Opportunities for taking part in programs virtually.

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PROGRAMS

Successful library programs support teens by meeting their developmental needs. They foster a sense of ownership and provide a structure for meaningful participation. Programming should be as varied as the needs and interests of young adults themselves and encourage use of the library. It is crucial that programs presented for this age group include teenagers in planning and implementation. Teens who are involved in the programming process are essential advocates and promoters of a library's young adult services.

I. PRINCIPLES

Programs can range from informal activities to formally planned events and are intended to connect teens and libraries. The following principles govern the development, organization and management of library programs for young adults:

- The philosophy, goals and objectives for young adult programming should be included in the library's written program policy and long-range plan, and should be revised as necessary.
- **All programs should be created and developed with youth input**, since the most successful programs are the ones in which the young adults themselves participate in planning and executing.
- A specific proportional budget should be designated for planning, publicizing, and presenting young adult programs.
- The young adult librarian must be provided with time and opportunities to establish relationships with teen users and to plan, prepare for, and carry out young adult programming.
- Ongoing communication and collaboration with schools and other community agencies serving young adults is essential in developing successful programming.

II. PRACTICES

The young adult librarian, with the support of the administration and other staff members, will assume the responsibility of implementing the library's young adult programs. To ensure success, the following practices are necessary:

- Scheduling informational, cultural and recreational programs for young adults, parents, and community members who work with teens on a regular basis.
- Developing personal contacts with young adults and encouraging promotion among teens themselves in order to publicize programs.
- Utilizing high-quality print media, email notification or "blasts", and website publicity to create visibility in the community.
- Evaluating programs and maintaining statistics unique to the young adult department to ensure continued improvement of and support for programming.
- Providing refreshments is an essential part of programming for teens.

III. PROGRAM CONTENT

Programming for young adults can be a rewarding and stimulating part of library service to adolescents. Library programs can attract new teen users to the library and increase awareness of resources and services provided by the library for young adults. As teens strive for competence, programs that allow them to showcase skills are important.

Youth participation programs give teens opportunities to become involved in library decision-making and should address a genuine need of both adolescents and the library. If the library discusses the creation of responsible roles and tasks for young adults and solicits their opinions, then the administration must be sincere in its efforts to implement reasonable recommendations. Examples of youth participation programs include young adult advisory councils, teen trustees, teen Friends groups, young adult book review groups and literary magazines. Teens should also be active participants in the creation and maintenance of the library's web pages for teens. The following is a list of different types of youth participation programs with examples of each.

- **Educational** programs offer support for formal education and curriculum needs. Examples include SAT workshops, school booktalking programs, college application workshops and library skills orientation/tours.
- **Cultural** programs excite and involve teenagers in literature and the arts. Examples include art shows, photography exhibits, theater productions, poetry coffeehouses or “slams,” book discussion groups and writers’ workshops.
- **Informational** programs provide needed knowledge on a variety of subjects and may fill a void in the community. They also provide opportunities to form partnerships with other youth agencies. Examples may include substance abuse programs, career programs, babysitting workshops, craft classes, modeling seminars and forums on minors’ legal rights.
- **Recreational** programs are purely entertainment-oriented. Examples include role-playing or computer/video game tournaments, “battle of the bands” concerts, talent shows or “open-mic” nights.
- **Intergenerational** programs feature projects in which teenagers interact with and gain appreciation for younger and older members of the community. Examples include theater groups, a senior/teen book discussion group, community gardens and storytelling for young children.
- **Volunteer** programs in libraries foster self-confidence, self-esteem and dignity in young adults. Opportunities for volunteerism should include work that matters, not simply “busywork. Examples include summer reading program volunteers and computer instruction for younger and older patrons.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Regional library systems are responsible for assisting member libraries in program development by providing:

- Continuing education programs for librarians on effective young adult programming.
- Consultations, including on-site visits, to address specific needs.
- Professional resources to assist the young adult librarian in programming efforts.

PROGRAM PLANNING WORKSHEET

LIBRARY: _____ LIBRARIAN: _____

PROGRAM TITLE: _____

Brief description of program

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM: _____

DATE: _____ DAY: _____ START TIME: _____ END TIME: _____

Date checked on library calendar

Date checked on school calendar

Date checked on community calendar

LOCATION FOR PROGRAM:

Library meeting room

YA area

Other

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Children

YA

Adult

All

EXPECTED ATTENDANCE:

Children

YA

Adult

BUDGET

ESTIMATED COST:

Speaker's cost (fee, travel, meals, other)

Supplies and equipment (materials purchases, rentals, other)

Staff time (programmer hours x wage, PR department hours x wage)

Public relations (fliers, poster, bookmarks, press releases, mail outs, postage)

Other costs (display books, refreshments, follow-up mailings, miscellaneous)

FUNDING SOURCE:

Budget line- general revenue

Grant funds

Friends of the Library

Corporate sponsorship

Outside donations

Other

PROGRAM APPROVED:

Preliminary planning should be approved at this point before proceeding any further.

Approved by supervisor

Approved by director

Off desk planning time approved

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: *(make arrangements to rent, if necessary)*

SPEAKER CONFIRMATION:

Contract sent

Contract returned and executed

Follow-up call(s)

ROOM SET-UP: *(preliminary plan)*

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION:

All library staff informed

Program information posted to library website

Fliers distributed to schools, community groups, businesses and other libraries

Media releases to local newspapers, school newspapers, radio, TV, Friends of the Library newsletter, etc.

Visits to schools planned and approved

Book displays

Email or direct mailings to YAs, school and community liaisons

PROGRAM DETAILS:

Room set-up

Equipment and supplies

Refreshments

Speaker's introduction

Speaker's check

Evaluation form and pencils

Fliers for next program

Room clean up

Other

This program information sheet was adapted from one provided by Patrick Jones during his workshop on *Alternative Young Adult Programs*, and is a great checklist of necessary but often forgotten elements in planning.

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SAMPLE VOLUNTEER POLICY³

The library often has uses for volunteers. These volunteers can fulfill permanent or temporary needs. Volunteers and their supervisors must adhere to the following when performing duties:

1. Anyone wishing to learn, have a direct impact on the library, and become more involved in the community is encouraged to volunteer at the library.
2. Any teenager who is legally old enough to work may volunteer at the library. This includes anyone over the age of 14. Any volunteer under the age of 16 must comply with Massachusetts Child Labor Laws⁴. This includes, but is not limited to, not working after 7 pm on a school night⁵, more than three hours on a school day⁶, and more than eighteen hours a week during the school year⁷.
3. Volunteers can be asked to perform a variety of duties at the discretion of the volunteer supervisor. Temporary duties include working at programs, or helping with a planning process. Teenaged volunteers are especially encouraged to become involved in writing any policies related to their needs and services.
4. Volunteers will not be asked to perform duties also performed by paid staff. This includes working at public service desks. Adolescent volunteers should not be required to do identical work as high school pages.
5. Those who are volunteering on a temporary basis, such as during a program, a Friends of the Library event, or on a planning committee are not expected to perform duties not related to that event.
6. Volunteers who will be helping on a more permanent basis will set up a regular schedule with the volunteer supervisor. Volunteers are welcome to terminate the arrangement at any time. Volunteers are free to take vacations or days off, although they are asked to please give notice to the volunteer supervisor.

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⁶ MGL 149:61 “Minors Under Sixteen”

⁷ MGL 149:62 “Minors Under Eighteen”

CONFIDENTIALITY LAW
Chapter 78, Section 7 of the Massachusetts General Laws,
as amended by Chapter 180, Acts of 1988:

G.L.c. 78, § 7. Establishment by cities and towns; records.

Section 7. A town may establish and maintain public libraries for its inhabitants under regulations prescribed by the city council or by the town, and may receive, hold and manage any gift, bequest or devise therefor. The city council of a city or the selectmen of a town may place in such library the books, reports and laws which may be received from the commonwealth.

That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record as deemed by clause Twenty-six of section seven of chapter four. Library authorities may disclose or exchange information relating to library users for the purposes of interlibrary cooperation and coordination, including but not limited to, the purposes of facilitating the sharing of resources among library jurisdictions as authorized by clause (1) of section nineteen E or enforcing the provisions of sections ninety-nine and one hundred of chapter two hundred and sixty-six.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS⁸

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources available to other users violate the [Library Bill of Rights](#). The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the [Library Bill of Rights](#) states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess [First Amendment](#) rights, including the right to receive information in the library. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.¹ Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether material is not constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents. As "[Libraries: An American Value](#)" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents—and only parents—have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children—and only their children—to library resources. Parents who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

⁸ Adopted June 30, 1972; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council. [ISBN 8389-7549-6]
Standards for Public Library Services to Young Adults in Massachusetts © 2005

¹See [Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville](#), 422 U.S. 205 (1975)-"Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable [422 U.S. 205, 214] for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors. See [Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.](#), *supra*. Cf. [West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette](#), 319 U.S. 624 (1943)."

The Freedom to Read Statement⁹

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

⁹ This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers. Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee. A Joint Statement by the [American Library Association](#) and [Association of American Publishers](#)

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

STATEMENT ON LABELLING¹⁰

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Labeling is the practice of describing or designating materials by affixing a prejudicial label and/or segregating them by a prejudicial system. The American Library Association opposes these means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library materials for the following reasons:

1. Labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes and as such, it is a censor's tool.
2. Some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable. However, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association opposes the establishment of such criteria.

¹⁰ Adopted July 13, 1951. Amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990, by the ALA Council.

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3. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library.

A variety of private organizations promulgate rating systems and/or review materials as a means of advising either their members or the general public concerning their opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, or other materials. For the library to adopt or enforce any of these private systems, to attach such ratings to library materials, to include them in bibliographic records, library catalogs, or other finding aids, or otherwise to endorse them would violate the [*Library Bill of Rights*](#).

While some attempts have been made to adopt these systems into law, the constitutionality of such measures is extremely questionable. If such legislation is passed which applies within a library's jurisdiction, the library should seek competent legal advice concerning its applicability to library operations.

Publishers, industry groups, and distributors sometimes add ratings to material or include them as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse such practices. However, removing or obliterating such ratings—if placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation, which is also unacceptable.

The American Library Association opposes efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge. This statement, however, does not exclude the adoption of organizational schemes designed as directional aids or to facilitate access to materials.

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