



Ajax Public Library Board Position Statement

Children and Teen Rights in the Public Library

1. POSITION STATEMENT

- 1.1. Ajax Public Library welcomes and encourages children and youth of all ages to enjoy Library services, programs, collections, and spaces.
- 1.2. Ajax Public Library Board endorses the Ontario Library Association (OLA) statements on Children's Rights in the Library adopted at the OLA Annual General Meeting and the Teen's Rights in the Public Library adopted at OLA Annual General Meeting.

2. APPENDIX 1: Ontario Library Association, Children's Rights in the Library

3. APPENDIX 2: Ontario Library Association, Teen's rights in the Public Library

APPENDIX 1:

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.

Adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting.

APPENDIX 2:

Ontario Library Association Position on 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>Excerpted from: Dorman, G. (1981). <i>The Middle Grades Assessment Program: User's Manual</i>. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respecting and responding to unique YA needs• Providing equal access• Empowering Youth through participation• Engaging Teens in active collaboration• Supporting healthy youth development. <p>Core Values excerpted from Jones, P. (2002). <i>New Directions for library service to young adults</i>. Chicago: American Library Association.</p>

Teens in Ontario Public Libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom

The library establishes clear policy statements concerning the right to free access by young adults to library resources and information sources, and respect for the rights of young adults to select materials appropriate to their needs without censorship. The library's teen collection, policies, and services should be consistent with the concepts of intellectual freedom defined by the CLA, OLA, and Ontario Human Rights code.

2. Equal access to the full range of materials, services, and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their unique needs.

The Library integrates library service to teens into the overall plan, budget, and service 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 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, lifelong 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.