



SUBJECT: YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

Policy No: 2020-28

Date: October 19, 2020

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Pages: 7 (including appendices)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the criteria and guidelines of the Innisfil Public Library Board in providing service to Youth to enrich their lives, invoke curiosity, stimulate the imagination, and encourage life-long learning and literacy. All programmes, events, and services will provide age-appropriate content and experiences to meet the diverse informational, entertainment and recreational needs of Innisfil's youth. This policy also provides a framework for how the Library achieves its goals and strategic priorities when serving youth.

POLICY:

General

Services for youth are a vital and integral part of the Library's mandate, and contribute to ongoing growth and development. The Library is committed to providing the best possible services and opportunities for youth and fully endorses the *Ontario Library Association's (OLA) statement on Teen's Rights in the Public Library* adopted at the OLA Annual General Meeting, June 2010 (Appendix 1).

Application

All Staff, youth ages 12 to 18, their parents/guardians, and those who work with youth.

Definitions

A **Youth** is defined as any person between the ages of 12 and 18 years.

Guidelines

Intellectual Freedom/Access to Information

Youth have the right to intellectual freedom and are entitled to open access to all information and services throughout the Library.

- All youth will have equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
- Any young person from birth forward, who lives, works or attends school in the Town of Innisfil is eligible for a library card. Parents/guardians may apply on behalf of their child, up to and including the age of 13 years. Once the customer can provide their own identification, they may apply without parental consent.
- Any youth with or without a library card may use the services and collections within all library facilities, unless use of the service or space specifically requires a card (i.e. Digital Media Lab, public computer use, etc.).
- The full range of qualified staff skills, collections, equipment, and methods will be utilized to answer all customer requests, regardless of age.
- In accordance with the *1998 Ontario Library Association's Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual* adopted by the Library (see Appendix 2), Staff will not censor material. This responsibility rests with the parent/guardian.
- While Library Staff will assist youth in finding materials, they do not act in place of a parent (in loco parentis). Parents/guardians are responsible for all aspects of their own youth's library use.
- All requests made by youth will be answered without judgement, with respect and according to the Library's confidentiality guidelines.
- The Library provides unfiltered Internet use for youth in accordance with the Library's current Internet Service Policy.

Space for Youth

The Library strives to dedicate a flexible area for youth and their respective collections in each branch. These areas will offer a friendly, inviting atmosphere that promotes communication, respect and acceptance. Youth are actively encouraged to use all spaces in the Library for both leisure and study, either independently or in groups. Furthermore, the Library will consider the needs of youth in the planning of public spaces, including areas such as the hackLAB, thinkLAB, and Media Lab.

Staff

The Library employs qualified Staff dedicated to the provision of excellent service for youth, and who are committed to ongoing training and professional development. Library Staff seek to engage with youth in Innisfil, and to work collaboratively with them to provide programming, materials and services that meet their own needs, as well as those of the community.

Collections

The Library provides a wide range of materials in all formats and reading levels to meet the informational, cultural, educational, and leisure needs of youth. The Library will maintain a fresh, comprehensive, up-to-date collection for youth that complements the local school curriculum and reflects the constantly evolving interests of youth. This is accomplished by an ongoing evaluation of resources and consultation with youth. Additions to the collection will be made in accordance with the Library's current Collection Management Policy.

Programming

The Library will strive to provide relevant activities and programmes for youth which support the Library's mission, values, goals and strategic priorities. Programmes for youth will encourage the use of library collections and resources, promote services, facilitate collaboration, and enable the sharing of knowledge and expertise, when appropriate. The Library will proactively engage youth in the co-creation of programmes based on their passions and interests.

Registration & Attendance

- Most library programmes will require advance registration and the number of participants is restricted based on the format of the programme, the size of the facility, occupancy limits, available Staff supervision, etc. and will be enforced by the Staff member in charge of the programme.
- Participants who habitually miss registered programmes without advising Staff in advance may be asked to forfeit their spot to an individual on the waiting list.

Charging for Programmes

- The Library places a high priority on serving customers regardless of their financial situation. Fees associated with programmes are charged to offset the cost of specialized supplies, performers etc. Should youth or their parents/caregivers be concerned about programme fees, they are encouraged to speak with Library Management to explore possible options.
- If a participant attends a programme with an associated cost with a support person, there will be no charge for the support person to attend.

Marketing

- Programmes will be fully promoted using various channels of communication through community partnerships, local media, and in-house publications and displays, including the Library's website and social media.
- Youth may be consulted in the placement of advertising to ensure that it is appropriately placed to reach the broadest numbers in the community.

Volunteering

The Library offers youth volunteering opportunities through the Community Service Volunteer Programme for Students. This programme provides an opportunity for students living and/or attending school in Innisfil to work towards obtaining the necessary community service hours required to receive their secondary school diploma. Students' interests and previous experience is given consideration when offering volunteering opportunities, though not all students will be able to volunteer exclusively based on their interests. Volunteer hours are offered to those students who apply and are accepted to the programme as the need for volunteers arise.

Advocacy & Outreach

The Library is committed to providing the best possible services for youth and has adopted the *OLA Teen Rights in the Library, 2010* (appendix 1).

The Library will take an active role in youth advocacy by engaging with youth to better understand their needs, interests and passions, discovering opportunities to involve youth in community wide initiatives, and promoting youth as key community stakeholders.

Partnerships and outreach opportunities support the Library in identifying appropriate options for youth to become engaged, and effective approaches to connecting with youth and supporting their needs/desires. The Library will:

- collaborate with local service agencies to emphasize the needs of youth;
- actively seek support for youth services from community organizations, including fundraising, donations, etc.;
- network with others who provide services to youth locally, provincially and beyond;
- communicate and collaborate with principals, teacher librarians, and teachers in our community, as well as with staff at the School Board;
- provide class visits for local school classes and home schooled youth;
- participate in local events, i.e. parades, fairs, Family Fun Day, Light Up Night;
- develop local business contacts, including agencies that support youth employment.

Conduct and Behaviour

Youth are expected to comply with the Library's Rules of Conduct Policy to ensure the comfort and protection of all persons who use the facilities of the Library. The cooperation of all youth who attend the Library is required to maintain an environment conducive to study and the enjoyable and productive use of the facility.

Unattended Youth

The Library is a public place and parents/guardians are responsible for their children's supervision at all times. According to the *Ontario's Child and Family Services Act*, children under 16 must never be left without "provision made for their supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances".

Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Library Staff, as members of society, as members of the public and as professionals who work with children, is obligated under the *Ontario Child and Family Services Act* to report suspicions of physical, emotional and sexual abuse to children under the age of 16. The reporting must be done promptly and immediately by the individual who witnesses or suspects that a child has experienced harm or is at risk of being harmed.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix #1 – *Ontario Library Association Teen Rights in the Public Library, 2010*

Appendix #2 – *Ontario Library Association Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual, 1998*

RELATED POLICIES:

Borrowing Policy

Collection Management Policy

Internet Service Policy

Rules of Conduct Policy

Volunteer Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, October 19, 2020

Motion Number: 2020.80

Supersedes Policy #2016-17, approved October 17, 2016, Motion #2016.81 &

Policy #2013-21, approved December 9, 2013, Motion #2013.110 &

Policy #2010-11, approved May 17, 2010, Motion #2010.40 &

Policy #2005-09, approved November 14, 2005, Motion #2005.54 &

Policy #2001-12, approved November 9, 1998, Motion #98.40

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.

**ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT ON
THE INTELLECTUAL RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

In affirming its commitment to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following propositions:

1) That the provision of library service to the public is based upon the right of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality.

2) That intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general, and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular.

3) That freedom of expression includes freedom for a creator to depict what is ugly, shocking and unedifying in life.

4) That free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen and view is fundamental to such free traffic.

5) That it is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in the selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings, and other materials, and in the provision of access to electronic sources of information, including access to the internet.

6) That it is therefore part of the library's service to its public to resist any attempt by any individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view and listen by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.

7) That it is equally part of the library's responsibility to its public to ensure that its selection of material is not unduly influenced by the personal opinions of the selectors, but determined by the application of generally accepted standards of accuracy, style and presentation.