



OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICY MANUAL

Board Motion Number:	2015-08	Date of Review:	
Date Approved:	March 16, 2015	Chairperson's signature:	

CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT SERVICES

BACKGROUND

Oxford County Library offers many services and programs for the benefit of children and youth, parents/guardians, grandparents and caregivers. These programs aim to build community, foster literacy, and promote use of the public library.

Programming refers to recreational, educational or cultural events or activities sponsored by the library. They can take place in the library, and/or in the community, and/or online. They can be ongoing, in a series, or one-time events. Programs are used to provide information, increase awareness and promote use of the library's services. (Source: Ontario Public Library Guidelines, 6th ed.)

Levels of service vary between branch tiers, as outlined in the *Service Delivery Policy*.

PURPOSE

Oxford County Library will provide appropriate materials, resources, and reader's advisory services to children and young adults to meet their informational and recreational needs. Services to children and young adults will be based on the principles stated in the Ontario Library Association's *Children's Rights in the Library (1998)* and *Teen's Rights in the Public Library (2010)*.

PROCEDURES

Oxford County Library creates client-centred services and works to support the unique nature and needs of our individual branch communities and the various age groups served. To that end, user populations, including children, young adults, and parents, will be consulted on an ongoing basis, as appropriate and as resources allow, to ensure that programs and services are meeting needs.

Section 1: Collections

- a. The CEO/Chief Librarian will ensure the maintenance and organization of comprehensive children's and young adults' collections based on the Oxford County Library Collection Development Policy.
- b. The children's and young adults' collections will meet high standards of quality and reflect changes in society and the evolving interests of children and youth.
- c. In the selection of materials, staff librarians will give consideration to:



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- i. Canadian authors and content
- ii. Award-winning titles
- iii. Non-fiction material that complements the local school curriculum
- iv. Age appropriate formats.

Section 2: Library Space

- a. The library will dedicate areas for children, young adults, and their collections in each branch. These areas will include appropriate furnishings and amenities that will provide a welcoming atmosphere.

Section 3: Programs

- a. The library system will provide programming for children, teens, and parents, both in and outside of the library, to stimulate creative potential and to encourage and facilitate a culture of reading, independent learning and use of the library.
- b. Number of participants is restricted for all programs based on the size of the facility, fire department limits, available staff supervision, etc., and will be enforced by the staff person in charge of the program.
- c. There may be a limit on the number of children per accompanying adult. This limit may be enforced by the program staff, as the program may be designed for maximum benefit of one-on-one interaction. Leniency is given to parents with more than one child in the same age group.
- d. Library programs may require advance registration. Participants who miss two consecutive weeks without advising program staff in advance may be asked to forfeit their reservation to another interested individual.
- e. Parents/guardians must remain in the library building while their child is participating in a preschool program.

Section 4: Access to Information

- a. All children will have equal access to the full range of services available to other users.
- b. Any child is eligible for an Oxford County Library card. Parents/guardians may apply on behalf of their child, up to and including the age of 12. Once the individual has reached the age of 13, and can provide their own identification, they may apply without parental consent.
- c. Any child with or without a library card may use the services and collections within all OCL branches.

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- d. The full range of qualified staff skills, collections, equipment and methods will be utilized to answer all customer requests, regardless of age.
- e. In accordance with the 1998 Ontario Library Association's *Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual*, staff will not censor material. While library staff will assist a young person in finding materials, they do not act in place of a parent. Parents/guardians are responsible for supervising all aspects of their children's library use.
- f. All children's and young adults' requests will be answered without judgment, with confidentiality and with respect.

Section 5: Advocacy for Children and Young Adults

The library will advocate for children's and young adults' services in the community by:

- a. Collaborating with agencies to promote early literacy, a culture of reading, life-long learning and children's and young adults' health and well-being
- b. Seeking support for children's and young adults' services from community organizations, fundraising, donations, etc.
- c. Networking with other agencies who provide service to children and young adults in the community, region and province
- d. Communicating with principals, teacher librarians and teachers in the community
- e. Promoting services and collections to groups/agencies which could benefit from them (schools, daycares, etc.)
- f. Welcoming class visits and orientation for school children and home schooled children.

Section 6: Unattended Children

The Library is a public place and parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for children's supervision and behaviour at all times. Staff members are not caregivers and do not assume responsibility for children in the library. Library staff are obligated to call the police or the Children's Aid Society if they believe a child to be in need of protection and parents are not available.

Section 7: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

The entire staff of Oxford County Library is obligated under the Ontario *Child and Family Services Act* to report suspicions of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of children under the age of 16. According to law, 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.



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Related documents:

Oxford County Library Board. *Service Delivery Policy.*

Oxford County Library Board. *Collection Development Policy.*

Oxford County Library Board. *Rules of Conduct.*

Ontario Library Association. *Position on Children's Rights in the Library.*

Teen's Rights in the Public Library.

Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual.

Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council. *Ontario Public Library Guidelines, 6th ed. Sections 4.5 and 4.6.*