



CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY

Adopted Date: September 2004

Revision Date(s): Oct. 2005, Dec. 2005, Dec. 2007, Dec. 2009, Nov. 2011, Nov. 2013, Nov. 2015, Nov. 2017

Review Date: November 2019

Purpose of the Policy

The intellectual growth of children, their cultural appreciation and recreational activities shall be fostered through quality library service, delivered with consideration and respect.

Groups to be Served

1. Children & Youth: Children up to the age of 12 and youth up to the age of 17 are the primary users of children's services and materials.
2. Parents: Parents are the first access point for library service to infants, toddlers and pre-school children. In addition, parents need activities that involve them with their children. Parents themselves may need information on a variety of topics such as parenting, child development and special concerns (e.g., hyperactivity, sex education, divorce, adoption, etc.).
3. Professional groups: Professionals who work with children often use the resources of the public library. Teachers, staff members in day-care centres, camp leaders or Scout/Guide leaders often need songs, games, read-aloud books, storytelling materials, puppetry and subject-related information.
4. Special interest groups: There are a number of special interest groups who may require special formats and materials including:
 - a) Children with disabilities/specific health issues
 - b) Children doing remedial work
 - c) Ethnic groups
 - d) Literacy groups
 - e) Adult students of childhood education classes
 - f) Home schoolers
5. Library staff: Resources are needed to generate ideas and support programs in children's services and assist in the selection of materials.

Children's Area

1. The children's service area shall be distinct from the adult area. It is understood that children's areas are no longer places of silence, but interactive learning environments with allowance for noise.

2. The furnishings should be sturdy, washable, painted with non-toxic materials and should be designed with children in mind. The height of shelves, chairs, tables, etc. must correspond to the height of the users. Consideration must be given to the disabled.
3. The children's area should be visually stimulating. Children should be able to readily distinguish their own area from the rest of the library.
4. Displays, posters, and other decorative elements shall be used to define the children's area, to promote library materials and programs and to make the library inviting.
5. The children's area shall allow for access by strollers, baby carriages and wheelchairs.

Materials Selection

1. Materials for children shall be chosen in accordance with the library's overall collection development policy.
2. There shall be an emphasis placed on collecting award-winning children's titles and titles by Canadian authors.

Collection Components

1. Children are entitled to:
 - a) a separately purchased collection which is designed to meet their needs from infancy to the end of childhood;
 - b) a balanced collection to serve a wide variety of users and special needs of the community;
 - c) a collection that is up-to-date, in good condition and generally attractive, and is organized for easy access and with children's capabilities in mind;
 - d) a collection that includes literature of the highest quality to satisfy the wants and needs of children and to develop their potential.
2. Book and non-book materials shall be available representing:
 - a) Canadiana;
 - b) traditional literature including folklore and myths to convey a cultural heritage;
 - c) popular and ephemeral literature that reflects the constantly changing environment of children;
 - d) literature designed to serve special groups such as disabled and gifted children, and beginning, reluctant and slow readers.
3. The collection shall include a variety of formats:
 - a) picture books; fiction in both hardcover and paperback; non-fiction on a variety of subjects; non-circulating reference collection of encyclopedias, standard reference works; indexes and other bibliographic aids;
 - b) periodicals specifically written for children;

- c) audio-visual materials, including story-books on tape, videocassettes, DVDs, CDs, CD-ROMs, etc;
 - d) computer(s) and Internet access
4. A collection of adult materials on children's literature and reading, child development and other information relevant to the world of children.

Collection Maintenance

See Collection Maintenance section of Collection Development Policy, Board approved September 2005; November 2011.

Organization of the Collection

1. Fiction material shall be separated into Easy Readers (ER), Juvenile Picture books (JP), Juvenile (J) and Young Adult (YA) materials. They shall be organized alphabetically by author. The spines of the books shall be marked by ER, JP, J and YA to denote the categories noted above. Material may also be separated by format (hardcover, paperback, storybooks on tape, CD-ROMs, etc.).
2. Non-Fiction material shall be organized according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System (DDC).
3. All materials in the children's area should be listed in the library's automated catalogue.

Reference Service

Reference service is a major responsibility of library staff working with children. Staff must be patient and receptive to the many questions asked by children. Library staff should conduct reference interviews to help understand what each child wants and needs. It is the responsibility of library staff to point out the variety of resources available in the library.

Programming

The CEO shall be responsible for overseeing development of a well-planned set of children's programs throughout the calendar year. Such programs shall be conducted with the intent of bringing children and their parents into the library, promoting library services and fostering a love of reading. Examples of such programs include: pre-school story programs, summer reading program, class visits, etc.

Use of the Library Collection

1. All children shall have equal access to all materials in the system, with the exception of videocassettes and DVDs. Access to these items will be limited as defined by the Canadian Rating System for Home Videos (For details, see *Patron Group Privileges* and *Limit* sections of the Circulation Policy). If a parent or guardian wishes to limit their child's access to library materials, they should make this known to the child. The library cannot withhold age-appropriate circulating materials from any patron.
2. A parent or guardian, by signing the child's card (library membership), recognizes that a card will be issued to their child and that the parent or guardian is responsible for the materials borrowed on that card. (See Circulation Policy for further information.)
3. A parent or guardian also accepts responsibility for any loss incurred through the use of that library card. He or she also accepts that the applicant will obey all rules and regulations of the Wainfleet Township Public Library.

Unattended Children

While the Wainfleet Township Public Library welcomes children using its services, parents and guardians of children under the age of 10 are reminded that small children must not be left unattended on or about the premises. See Unattended Children Policy for further information.

Public Library / School Liaison

1. The information needs of school-aged children are influenced to a large extent by their school studies. Although the school library holds the primary responsibility for the provision of curriculum-related support material, the public library shall endeavour to provide additional resources and assistance when called upon. Cooperation and communication should exist between the public library staff and school staff to ensure that the best interests of children are served.
2. The public library can best acquaint students, teachers and school librarians with its resources and services by inviting classes to the public library for orientation visits.
3. Where time and staffing permit, visits to schools by public library staff will reinforce the public library's informational and recreational relevance to students.
4. Public library staff should keep local schools informed of forthcoming child-oriented programs and events.

School Curriculum Support

1. The Wainfleet Township Public Library's policy is to acquire a broad range of general information resources. It may occur that these materials meet the demands of school projects, but this is not the reason for their purchase. In view of the fact that the library does not buy multiple copies of books for school projects, efforts are made to ensure that alternate sources such as electronic databases, Internet access, materials on local history and reference books are available.
2. The extent of help offered on school-related projects does not normally include the research for school projects, which is expected to be part of the learning process. However, staff members will give necessary assistance required to enable students to find their own materials.