

Canadian Library Association / Association canadienne des bibliothèques Position Statement on Young Adult Services in Public Libraries Position Statement

Approved By: Executive Council ~ March, 1987

Preamble

Young Adult Services is a viable component of the total public library spectrum. As such, it should be similar in structure to Adult Services and Children's Services, yet it should acknowledge the developmental needs of young adults. These include: the planning of life goals; the mastery of a rapidly changing body; the psychological, social, and financial separation from parents; the acceptance of self-chosen; appropriate sex role; and the integration of the young person into the larger community.

Many institutions are currently seeking to define a strategy for ensuring quality service for young adults, while at the same time taking into account the unique characteristics of local adolescent populations. It is timely to reinforce the Association's commitment to Young Adult Services by offering guidance to individual institutions who are developing or reviewing their policies and practices.

Staffing

The Canadian Library Association endorses the provision of Young Adult Services as an integral part of the basic library service within public libraries. The Association recommends that, where possible, a fully trained staff member with a general understanding of adolescence and an interest in and knowledge of young adult literature be acquired to plan, develop, strengthen, and promote Young Adult Services.

Services and Publicity

The Canadian Library Association recommends that each public library establish goals and objectives for Young Adult Services in conjunction with existing goals for library service. The statement of goals and objectives should identify the type of services that the institution intends to provide and the needs (recreational, educational, cultural, etc.) the services are designed to address.

A definition of materials collections should identify the types of formats (books, periodicals, AV) that will be provided. The housing of these collections will be dependent on the physical facility; however, regardless of that issue, young adults should have free and equal access to all library materials and services.

In order to develop Young Adult Services that will be dynamic and effective, with definite appeal to teens, it is essential to encourage the participation of local users in defining and developing this service. This participation can take the form of teen advisory board or council that can work with staff to plan and develop services such as programming.

Promotion is an integral part of any developmental plan. An aggressive promotional campaign of services to agencies, schools, and institutions that service young adults will be of great assistance in attracting new users and retaining existing ones.

Once a level of service has been determined, a methodology should be developed that evaluates the service by monitoring statistical data in order to assess user satisfaction.

The foundation of any developmental plan is a regular budgetary allocation. In order to ensure development and continuity of service of Young Adult Services, it is important that a financial commitment be made on a regular basis.