

# Chapter 11 (Youth/Young Adult Services)

Service for youth is the provision of all library services to young people ages 0 through 18 in the library and the community. Youth services should meet recreation and education needs with programs, print and digital collections, reader's advisory, reference, outreach, library space and furniture, and library staff.

All Illinois public libraries should provide services to youth.

## Youth/Young Adult Services Standards

1. All basic services are available to all youth regardless of age, ability, gender, or sexual orientation when the library is open. For the purpose of this document, basic services are circulation, reference, reader's advisory, and computer/Internet access. If services are provided to youth and adults from two separate points, then the library provides adequate staffing at both locations at all hours the library is open.
2. The library has competently trained staff with thorough knowledge of the various developmental needs of youth, and offers services including collections and programs to reflect these needs.
3. The library has board-approved policies towards serving youth developed by administration and staff who serve children and/or young adults, which is reviewed every two years.
4. The library actively promotes respect for cultural diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful library atmosphere that embraces diversity.
5. The library strives to provide staff trained in serving youth to meet the needs of patrons who have challenges with disabilities, language, and literacies, including support for use of adaptive equipment and software.
6. The library seeks to eliminate barriers to provision of services and information access to youth and families, including examining content restrictions, library card signup, and Internet policies.
7. The library evaluates its services to youth for popularity, effectiveness, accuracy, timeliness, and patron ease at least once annually.
8. The library provides developmentally-appropriate educational, cultural, recreational, and entertainment programs for youth that reflect community needs and interests. Programming is designed to address the diversity within the community. Community members should be encouraged to offer suggestions.
9. Library programs should strive to be free of charge.
10. Provisions should be made to enable persons with disabilities to participate in programs. The availability of these provisions is noted with other information about the program.
11. The library considers community demographics, special populations, and the availability of resources from social, cultural, and recreational organizations in the community when planning and evaluating library services. Libraries are encouraged to partner with community organizations to offer programs.
12. The library provides services to instruct youth in research and to develop information literacy. This may include tours, training sessions, or one-on-one instruction.

13. The library is aware of the importance of accuracy and currency in reference and reader's advisory service, including knowledge of popular authors, and relies on information sources of demonstrated authority.
14. Youth staff has access to a telephone and a computer to receive and respond to requests for information and materials and to contact other agencies for information, and to accept and respond to reference requests received in all formats, including electronic, print, and phone.
15. Staff responsible for collection management are given access to a variety of reviews and tools for selecting youth materials.
16. The library will include at least one current resource for each nonfiction subject area created and intended for youth. Electronic resources may fulfill this requirement.
17. The library will provide computer access for all ages, and strives to provide guidance on digital literacy and technology use by informed, qualified, and trained staff.
18. The library provides outreach services for youth to increase the awareness and use of library services, to attract new users, and to better reach underserved populations.
19. The library is encouraged to partner with and support all schools, teachers, school libraries, and students of all types in their communities, including private schools and homeschooling families, to provide multifaceted educational opportunities for children. The library should strive for direct partnership and coordination with school librarians in providing these services.
20. Staff members responsible for youth services in their library should attempt to attend as many workshops or continuing education events as possible to stay current.
21. The library provides space allocated for use by children and families. Shelving should be appropriately sized.
22. The library provides services and programming for children and families focused on early literacy skills, including regular storytimes.
23. The library provides programming to facilitate play and fun, and strives to provide toys and other interactive materials for use in the library, during programs, and at home.
24. The library provides a summer reading opportunity to encourage reading and learning during the summer.
25. The library provides a flexible and welcoming environment for young adults both individually and in groups.
26. The library provides developmentally appropriate programming and services for young adults that fosters the development of self-concept, identity, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with peers and adults, while also encouraging socialization and having fun.
27. The library provides materials produced for a young adult audience that is designated and intended for young adult use.
28. The library fosters young adult leadership and civic engagement.
29. Libraries are encouraged to partner with teens to create and implement teen activities. This can be done with a young adult volunteer group or advisory board.

## Youth/Young Adult Services Checklist

- All basic youth services are available when the library is open.
- The library provides staff trained in serving youth.
- The library has policies towards serving youth which it reviews at least every two years, and youth staff have input in these policy revisions and creations.
- The library actively promotes respect for diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful library atmosphere for all patrons.
- The library provides staff trained in assisting youth with disabilities, language, and literacy barriers.
- The library provides staff trained to assist youth with adaptive equipment and software as needed to for accessibility of resources.
- The library strives to eliminate barriers of service for youth, including regularly reviewing any content restrictions, library card requirements, and Internet policies.
- The library regularly, and at least annually, evaluates its services for youth with regard to popularity, effectiveness, accuracy, timeliness, and patron ease. The library seeks input from staff serving youth—as well as the community—regarding these services.
- The library provides programming for youth which is developmentally appropriate and meets the needs of the community.
- The library's programming is designed to reflect the needs and interests of youth in the community.
- Library programs are provided free of charge or on a cost-recovery basis.
- The library makes provisions that enable persons with disabilities to attend programming, and lists these provisions with other programming information.
- The library considers community demographics, special populations, and the availability of resources from social, cultural, and recreational organizations in the community when planning and evaluating library services for youth.
- The library strives to partner with youth-facing organizations in the community.
- The library provides youth with research and information literacy instruction through tours, training sessions, and one-on-one interactions.
- The library has staff who have knowledge of popular authors, titles, and resources to provide these services.
- Youth staff have access to a telephone and computer to receive and respond to requests for information and to contact other agencies.
- Youth staff responsible for collection management have access to review journals and tools specifically targeting youth materials.

- The library includes at least one current resource created and intended for youth for each subject area. Electronic resources also fulfill this requirement.
- The library provides computer access for all youth, and provides guidance on digital literacy and technology use to youth.
- The library provides outreach services towards youth to increase awareness of services, attract new users, and reach underserved populations.
- The library strives to partner with and support local schools, including private schools and homeschoolers.
- Staff members are encouraged to attend as many continuing education workshops and events as possible to stay current on trends and best practices for serving youth.
- The library provides a space specifically for use by children and families.
- The shelving used for housing children's materials is appropriately sized to allow for easier access.
- The library provides early literacy programming, including regular story time, for children and families.
- The library provides programming which facilitates play and fun for children and families.
- The library provides toys and interactive materials for use in the library, during programs, and/or at home that facilitate play, fun, and imagination.
- The library provides a summer reading opportunity to encourage reading and learning during the summer.
- The library provides a welcoming environment for young adults both individually and in groups.
- The library provides developmentally appropriate programming for young adults that encourage self-identity and positive interactions while providing opportunities to socialize and have fun.
- The library provides materials both physical and digital for young adults that are intended for them.
- The library partners with young adults in the community to provide opportunities for leadership such as a young adult (or teen) advisory board, volunteer group, or other formal or informal opportunities.