

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Philadelphia
January 24 – 28, 2014

Topic: Draft Programming Guidelines

Background: In 2013 Jack Martin appointed a taskforce to create a set of guidelines for planning, implementing and evaluating teen services. Chris Shoemaker, the chair, has provided an initial draft for board feedback.

Action Required: Discussion

Draft Guidelines for Teen Programming

1.0 Solicit teen feedback and input in the design and creation of programs offered.

Active teen participation is essential for the design and successful implementation of teen programs. Involving teens in the planning, selection, and marketing of teen programs ensures that teen interests and needs are addressed, and provides a built-in audience for those programs.

- 1.1 Develop programs that meet the needs of teens in the community by asking teens to play a role in the planning process.
- 1.2 Solicit teen feedback in the types of programs offered, as well as in the planning and implementation of those programs.
- 1.3 Solicit teen feedback in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the program, both educational and entertainment

2.0 Provide library activities that encourage emotional, social and intellectual development of teens.

Teens have an enormous range of activities to choose from as to how they spend their after school time. Libraries must compete with many other agencies and factors to provide programs and activities that are entertaining, enriching, and encompassing of a broad experience. Programs should help teens explore and shape their identity, their skills set, and their intellect.

- 2.1 Appeal to both teens who regularly attend library activities and those who do not
- 2.2 Provide a positive and productive use of time
- 2.3 Incorporate a variety of types of interaction, such as one on one engagement, small group discussion or activities, or large group events.
- 2.4 Connect youth with mentors, guides, or positive adult role models and educators
- 2.5 Provide teens with workforce development skills, such as problem solving, critical thinking, communication and collaboration.
- 2.6 Enable teens to develop skills in multiple, critical, and digital literacies.

3.0. Provide library activities for teens that reflect the community in which they live.

Twenty-first century teens have the ability to select and engage in communities of their choice based on interest and identification with cultural, social and knowledge groups. A public library must provide a space for teens that builds upon the culture and size of the teen community and facilitates user-friendly engagement in the space.

- 3.1 Incorporate cultural activities to allow teens to experience a range of cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds
- 3.2 Enable teens to network with peers
- 3.3 Address educational and entertainment needs of the teens in the community
- 3.4 Provide programs in multiple languages
- 3.5 Recruit community partners, such as other non-profits, community based organizations, and other institutions to provide programs and reach the teen community

4.0 Provide and promote programs that support the educational and entertainment needs of teens.

Libraries are a key location for teens as they learn throughout the day. As places of inquiry, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity, libraries are uniquely suited to combine educational content with entertaining programs to enrich the lives of teens. Programs for teens must be developed based on teen interest, and pair them with professionals that will encourage them to explore content after the initial program ceases.

- 4.1 Ensure teen programming is balanced between entertainment and enrichment activities

- 4.2 Develop programs that address the unique emotional, intellectual, and social maturity of middle and high-school age adolescents.
- 4.3 Provide program opportunities that support and address the interests and needs of teens in the community.
- 4.4 Incorporate formal learning and mentoring with programs to foster bridges between teen peer culture, library environment, and program
- 4.5 Utilize outcome based planning to demonstrate skills learned or knowledge gained
- 4.6 Provide a risk-free environment for teens to learn
- 4.7 Collaborate with schools and educational institutions to connect library programming with school topics and coursework

5.0 Ensure teen programs have appropriate acceptable attendance and behavior policies to make teens feel welcome and safe.

Teen programs should be designed for the intellectual and entertainment needs of customers age 12-18 years old, to provide them activities that will expand their sphere of knowledge, connect them with peers, and empower them to learn and grow.

- 5.1 Clearly state audience and ensure age appropriate discussions and activities
- 5.2 Formalize behavior expectations to foster a safe environment for discussing personal or controversial topics
- 5.3 Invite at-risk or marginalized youth to be active participants in the programs.