



YALSA Teen Services Evaluation Tool

This is a tool for evaluating a public library's overall level of success in providing services to teens, aged 12-18. Potential users of this tool include library administrators, library trustees, teen services librarians, and community members and job-seekers hoping to assess a library's commitment to teen services. The tool is not intended to be an evaluation of an individual teen services librarian, but rather of an institution's program; however, of necessity some things will apply specifically to teen services staff. The areas for evaluation are derived primarily from YALSA's Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth: Young Adults Deserve the Best (YALSA, 2010). Not every element of the rubric will apply to every library situation, but the tool can serve as a place to begin the conversation about what constitutes excellent public library service for teens.

**Young Adult Library Services Association
Adopted by the YALSA Board January 8, 2011**

Leadership and Professionalism

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Equitable funding and staffing levels	Library maintains line items in the budget for YA materials and staff at levels proportionate to YA usage and circulation.	Line item for YA materials budget; at least one librarian FTE devoted to YA services for each branch.	Line item for YA materials budget. Some staff (professional or paraprofessional) devoted to YA services.	No line item for YA materials or staff.	YALSA White Paper: The Benefits of Including Dedicated Young Adult Librarians on Staff in the Public Library <i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action</i> , Chapter 1 "Defending the YA Budget," by Audra Caplan, <i>YALS</i> , Fall 2009
Commitment to Professionalism & Ethical Behavior	All library staff demonstrates extensive knowledge of ALA Code of Ethics, ALA Bill of Rights, YALSA Competencies and Guidelines for Service to Teens. The library defends YA services and the rights of teens to privacy and access. YA staff are actively involved in at least one professional organization on the national, regional, state or local level. Subscriptions to appropriate professional journals are provided by library and accessible to all interested staff.	YA staff demonstrate knowledge of ALA Code of Ethics, ALA Bill of Rights, and YALSA Competencies and Guidelines for Service to Teens; defend YA services and the rights of teens to privacy and access. YA staff belong(s) to a professional organization and reads appropriate professional journals.	YA staff read appropriate professional journals.	Library staff, including the YA staff, are uninformed about Code of Ethics, Bill of Rights, Competencies, etc. YA staff do not read professional journals or belong to professional organizations.	<i>School Library Journal</i> <i>VOYA</i> <i>Journal of Research on Libraries & Young Adults</i> <i>YALS</i> YALSA issue paper : The Importance of a Whole Library Approach to Public Young Adult Library Services. Institutional membership to YALSA. Active involvement includes committee responsibilities, writing for professional journals, presentations at conferences
Plan for personal & professional growth and career development	Written professional development plan in place for the YA staff that is updated yearly. At least one professional development activity (course, conference, etc.) is completed each year. Library supports and pays for all professional development.	YA staff have a professional development plan and have regular opportunities for professional development, at least some of which are paid for by the library.	YA staff have no professional development plan but do have occasional professional development opportunities.	YA staff have no professional development plan or opportunities for professional development.	YALSA Webinars University classes Workshops ALA Annual Conference State and regional association library conferences
Develop & supervise formal youth participation	Library has ongoing teen advisory group, teen volunteers, and opportunities for teen employment	Library has ongoing teen advisory group OR teen volunteers OR teen employees	Library uses teen advisors on an ad hoc basis	No teen input to programs or services	Ladder of Young People's Participation: freechild.org/ladder.htm
Implement methods to attract, develop & train staff working with young adults	Library routinely includes information about YA services in all staff development activities, including regular staff meetings. Staff at all levels are encouraged to learn about working with teens.	Library occasionally includes information about YA services in staff development activities and staff meetings. YA staff are supported in professional development and encouraged to share their knowledge with other staff.	Library staff are aware minimally of YA services but are not encouraged or trained to work with young adults.	Library staff are not offered opportunities to learn more about young adults.	<i>YALS</i> is routed to entire staff. Library offers workshops or presenters specific to working with teens. YALSA Speaker Database

Knowledge of Client Group

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Familiarity with developmental needs	All staff members receive training in youth development and understand that every library employee serves youth. YA staff know adolescent development theory. Staff receive training to ensure they are familiar with the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets.	All staff understand that every library employee serves youth. YA staff know adolescent development theory and are familiar with Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets.	YA staff know adolescent development theory and are familiar with Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets.	Library staff working with young adults possess no training in adolescent development.	YALSA e-courses YALSA in stitutes Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets for Young Adults <i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action, Chapter 2</i>
Current knowledge of technology and popular culture	Library supports current knowledge in the areas of technology and popular culture through formal professional development as well as the time necessary to read print/online resources (blogs, websites, journals, etc.) and test out tools that teens may want & need to use. Library collects data on an annual basis from young adults through surveys, observations or focus groups as to their interests in technology and popular culture.	Library supports current knowledge in the areas of technology and popular culture for the YA staff through formal professional development and the time necessary to read online/print resources. Library collects data every several years from young adults.	YA staff are aware of print/online resources regarding technology and popular culture and attempt to keep current. YA staff participate in at least one professional development opportunity each year on these topics.	YA staff are unaware of print/online and professional development opportunities regarding technology and popular culture.	YALSA blogs Teen Tech Week and Teen Read Week resources Teen-oriented magazines Popular culture websites and blogs
Demonstrated respect for diversity	Library completes formal, annual community studies at a schedule appropriate to the rate of changes within the community. Library collection, programs, and strategic plan reflect the variety of cultures in the community and around the world. YA staff reflects diversity of the community.	Library conducts occasional formal community studies. Library collection, programs, and strategic plan reflect the variety of cultures in the community and around the world.	Library conducts incomplete or informal community studies. Library collection, programs, and strategic plan only recognize the largest demographic populations in the community.	Library collection, programs, and strategic plan only recognize the largest demographic populations in the community.	Programs, services, materials in multiple languages Popular culture needs/desires of different ethnic cultures (e.g., telenovelas, Bollywood, magazines)
Special needs patron issues addressed	Library community studies thoroughly address the question of services to young adults with special needs. The library cooperates with organizations devoted to young adults and special needs clients to provide appropriate library services. Young adult library spaces are ADA compliant. Young adult strategic plan includes services needed for special needs patrons.	Library community studies incompletely address the question of services to young adults with special needs. The library strives to cooperate with organizations devoted to young adults and special needs clients to provide appropriate library services. Young adult library spaces are ADA compliant	Library community studies partially or informally address the question of services to young adults with special needs. Young adult library spaces are ADA compliant.	Young adult library spaces are ADA compliant.	Americans With Disabilities Act homepage: www.ada.gov .

Communication, Marketing, and Outreach

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Form appropriate professional relationships with young adults	Library supports a culture where all staff act as role models to young adults, following the guidelines of the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets: interacting in a caring, encouraging manner with young adults, modeling responsible behavior and providing clear rules and consequences.	Library supports a culture where YA Staff act as role models to young adults, following the guidelines of the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets: interacting in a caring, encouraging manner with young adults, modeling responsible behavior and providing clear rules and consequences.	YA Staff act as role models to young adults.	YA Staff interact positively with young adults.	Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets
Develop relationships and partnerships with young adults, administrators and other youth-serving professionals in the community	Library creates a culture in which all staff are encouraged to develop community partnerships and collaborate on programs and services and given work-time to attend meetings and work on collaborative projects with other community groups.	Library creates a culture in which YA staff are encouraged to develop community partnerships and collaborate on programs and services.	YA Staff communicate occasionally with community partners.	YA Staff do not have relationships with community partners.	<i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action</i> , Chapter 3
Advocate for young adults and effectively promote the role of the library in serving young adults	Library policies and public relations emphasize the importance of young adult services for both young adults and the community. All staff are encouraged to advocate for teens within the community.	YA staff encouraged to advocate internally and in public relations for the value of services to young adults for both the young adults and the community.	YA staff work to establish a culture of advocacy both internally and in public relations.	YA staff do not advocate for young adults either internally or in public relations.	YALSA's Speaking up for Library Services to Teens: a Guide to Advocacy YALSA Advocacy Toolkit
Design, implement, and evaluate a strategic marketing plan	Library has a marketing plan tailored to young adult services, including promotion within the library, schools, youth-serving agencies, in web-based venues used by teens, and the community at large.	Library references young adult services in their institution-wide marketing plan.	Library markets young adult services on an ad hoc basis, without a unifying marketing plan.	Library does not market young adult services.	Ohio Library Council: Marketing the Library (http://www.olic.org/marketing/index.html)
Establish an environment in the library wherein all staff serve young adults with courtesy and respect, and all staff are encouraged to promote programs and services for young adults	Library rules and behavior codes are enforced fairly without regard to age. Customer service training for staff includes component on serving young adults. Staff are aware of young adult programs and services and frequently recommend them to teens and talk about them in the community.	Library rules and behavior codes are enforced fairly without regard to age. Customer service training for staff includes component on serving young adults. Staff are aware of young adult programs and services but do not regularly recommend them to teens or the community.	Library rules and behavior codes are not consistently enforced across demographics. Customer service training does not include a component on serving young adults. Staff rarely serve customers outside the age range they feel comfortable and/or are assigned to work with regularly..	Library rules and behavior codes are not enforced fairly across demographics. Staff are not trained on serving young adults and do not feel comfortable with or do not feel the need to provide young adult services.	Rules regarding noise, food, number of people at one table or computer

Communication, Marketing, and Outreach

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
<p>Identify young adult interests and groups underserved or not yet served by the library</p>	<p>On a regular schedule and at least once a year, library combines informal inquiries with formal research methods to identify gaps in service and new and emerging trends. Young adults are involved in identification efforts.</p>	<p>Library identifies gaps in service along with new and emerging trends through occasional usage of information inquiries and/or formal research instruments.</p>	<p>Library investigates gaps in service through informal inquiries.</p>	<p>Library does not use any methods, formal or informal, to identify gaps in service.</p>	<p>Focus groups Print or online surveys Community demographics research Crowdsourcing</p>
<p>Promote young adult library services directly to young adults</p>	<p>Library uses a variety of communication tools, both high-tech and low-tech, to reach young adults directly with regular updates on programs and services. The library web presence includes section devoted to young adult services. The library uses technologies currently used by teens. YA staff visit schools and community agencies virtually or face-to-face at least twice a year.</p>	<p>Library uses at least one communication tool in addition to a web presence and print flyers to provide regular updates on programs and services. YA staff visit schools and community agencies virtually or face-to-face at least once a year.</p>	<p>Library uses the web presence and print flyers to provide information about programs and services. YA staff occasionally visit schools and community agencies face-to-face.</p>	<p>Library does not market directly to young adults.</p>	<p>Teen services mobile app Library Facebook/MySpace page Library Twitter feed</p>

Administration

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Develop a strategic plan for library service with YAs based on their unique needs	Library has created a YA mission statement or strategic plan with goals that connect to the overall institutional mission statement with input from YA staff that is subject to ongoing (at least annually), output-based evaluation.	Library mission statement addresses teen services. A separate YA mission statement or strategic plan is in development with input from YA staff.	Library mission statement and strategic plan do not specify teen goals or services.	Neither library nor YA department has a strategic plan. YA staff operate in isolation.	YA Strategic Plan with short-term and long-term goals. YA Mission Statements is a guide to serving young adults in the community. <i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action, Chapter 4</i>
Design and conduct a community analysis and needs assessment	Programs and services are offered on the basis of needs articulated in a written community analysis and needs assessment. Young adults are involved in development of Needs Assessment.	Library has a Community Analysis and Needs Assessment that includes some data on young adults.	Community analysis and needs assessment is in development.	Neither library nor YA department has a current community analysis or needs assessment.	Community Analysis and Needs Assessment Document. Circulation and population statistics.
Develop, justify, administer and evaluate a budget for YA services	YA department has a budget proportionate to young adult usage and circulation. Annual reports show young adult circulation, usage, materials spending, etc. Funding sources are identified and available for additional services and programs.	YA department has adequate funding for materials, staff, technology, facilities. Spending is planned annually. Special projects can be funded through separate requests to administration or other funding sources.	Young adult materials and staffing are funded as part of the overall library budget, but not recorded or tracked separately.	Inadequate funding for YA materials, staff, and programs.	Funding for materials in multiple formats. Funding for staff. Funding for programs and additional services. Funding for spaces
Develop written policies that mandate the rights of YAs to equitable library service.	All library policies and practices reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom and equitable access. Policies and procedures are examined annually and developed collaboratively and ensure that collections, resources, and services are available to all teens.	All library policies and practices reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom and equitable access. Policies and procedures are addressed on an ad-hoc basis with the help of YA staff when requested.	Most library policies and practices reflect a commitment to equitable access for teens. Policies are not reviewed.	Young adults are limited in access to certain materials, services, or areas.	Collection development policy. Challenged materials policy. Patron confidentiality policy & practice. Internet access policy. Absence of barriers to access.
Document YA programs and activities	Library maintains thorough documentation of all young adult programs and activities, including information on presenters, statistics, evaluations, notes about successes and failures. Reports with abundant data and statistics are shared at least quarterly and published widely within the library and the community.	YA department maintains statistics on young adult programs and services. Information is reported periodically, at least annually, to library administration.	YA department provides a basic report annually to the library administration.	Little or no reporting with regard to young adult services and programs is required.	Annual report to administration & library board. Articles for professional journals. Output data.

Administration

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
<p>Use the skills, talents, and resources of YAs in programs and services.</p>	<p>Teens are involved at every level of planning and presenting young adult programs and services. Teens are encouraged to use their skills in creating and implementing programs and services, volunteering, and applying for employment in the library.</p>	<p>Teens are involved in some aspects of planning and presenting young adult programs and services.</p>	<p>Teens are occasionally consulted when the library is developing young adult programs and services.</p>	<p>Teens are never or rarely consulted in the development of programs and services.</p>	<p>Teen Advisory Group One-time or short-term focus groups. Online polls.</p>
<p>Dedicated spaces for Young Adults</p>	<p>The library includes a dedicated space for young adults that is open and staffed all hours that the library is open. This space is equal or greater than the percentage of the full square feet of the library as the percentage of teens in the community.</p> <p>The young adult space has been planned and is updated regularly with the assistance of young adults.</p> <p>The young adult space includes at a minimum print fiction, print nonfiction, media, technology and devices, and comfortable seating</p>	<p>The library includes a dedicated space for young adults. The young adult space has been planned and is updated regularly with the assistance of young adults. The young adult space includes at a minimum print fiction, print nonfiction, media, technology and devices, and comfortable seating.</p>	<p>The library includes a dedicated space for young adults.</p>	<p>There is a young adult collection located in the library.</p>	<p>YALSA White Paper: The Need for Teen Spaces in Public Libraries YA Spaces of Your Dreams (VOYA column) <i>Teen Spaces</i>, by Kimberly Bolan for YALSA, (ALA Editions)</p>

Knowledge of Materials

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Collection Development Policy	Library maintains a YA Collection Development Policy that is consistent with the parent institution's mission statement and strategic plan, includes materials in a variety of formats including print and digital, is reviewed annually, and YA staff have significant input into this plan.	Library maintains a separate YA collection development policy that is reviewed biennially with some input from YA staff. Policy includes plans for collecting materials in a variety of formats, including print and digital.	Library maintains a collection development policy but does not have a separate document for young adults.	Library does not have a formal collection development policy.	<i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action</i> , Chapter 5
Knowledge of YA Literature & selection sources	YA staff show a deep knowledge of young adult literature by reading two or more YA books per month and participating in multiple literary professional activities; reviews for a journal, writes a review blog, participates in a Mock Printz or other workshops each year. Library subscribes to multiple review sources which are shared with all interested staff.	YA staff show a good knowledge of young adult literature by reading 1-2 YA books per month and participating in one other professional activity. Library subscribes to at least 2 different review sources and shares them with YA staff.	YA staff read ten YA books or less a year. Library subscribes to at least two review sources.	YA librarian does not read YA literature and the library does not subscribe to a review source for YA literature.	<i>School Library Journal</i> <i>VOYA</i> <i>ALAN Review</i> <i>Booklist</i> YALSA selected lists and awards YALSA literature blog
Collection of materials in a variety of formats, reading levels, and languages	Young adult collection represents a wide variety of formats including print and digital. The entire collection is continually evaluated & weeded. Collection reflects languages other than English that reflect the library community. YA staff is familiar with all types of materials that teens consume in all types of formats.	Young adult collection consists of print books, periodicals, and at least two other formats. Collection reflects the languages spoken in the library community. All areas of the YA collection have been weeded in the past 1-2 years.	YA collection consists of print books, periodicals and one other format. YA collection has been weeded in the past 2-3 years.	YA collection consists mainly of print books and periodicals. The collection is out-of-date and hasn't been weeded in 3 or more years.	Formats may include: print, audio, video, video games, e-books, graphic novels, periodicals, downloadable music, etc.
Serve as a resource, liaison, & partner with schools, parents & caregivers	YA staff visit area schools virtually or face-to-face at least once a year and together they work to collaborate on programs and services to young adults. YA staff regularly attend school events to liaison with teachers and parents.	YA staff visit area schools virtually or face-to-face at least once a year. YA staff attend one or two events at the school each year	YA staff communicate with area schools to ensure they are aware of library services and programs.	YA staff have no relationship with area schools and/or PTAs.	Monthly newsletter to teachers and school librarians. School events include: open houses, back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, science fairs.

Access to Information

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Organize the collection for ease of access	Library organizes physical and virtual collections to maximize easy, equitable and independent access to information by all young adults. Library consistently, at least annually, reevaluates the organization scheme to make sure it is still relevant to young adults	Library organizes physical and virtual collections to provide easy and independent access to information by young adults and evaluates the scheme every two to three years.	Library has organized physical and virtual collections but needs to reevaluate and update to accommodate new or growing collections.	Library has organized physical and virtual collections but they are not easy to use and the Library has not reevaluated the organization structure.	Using consistent labels and tags on both print and online collections to make transition between print and virtual collections as seamless as possible. <i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action</i> , Chapter 6
Merchandise and market the collection	Library uses up-to-date merchandising and promotional techniques, including displays, print marketing and online tools to attract young adults to use the collection. Library consistently evaluates the organization scheme to make sure it is still relevant to young adults.	Library uses merchandising and promotional techniques including displays and print marketing in the Library to attract young adults to use the collection. Promotional materials are updated regularly.	Library uses promotional techniques like displays and print marketing in the Library to promote the collection. These are not updated often.	Library does not merchandise or promote the collection.	Facebook fan pages Web-based pathfindrs Book Blogs
Provide instruction in basic research skills	YA staff use a wide-variety of print and online tools to teach how to find, evaluate, use and credit information effectively. YA staff teach these skills formally and take every opportunity to teach in one-on-one and group interactions, both face-to-face and virtually, and encourage life-long learning habits.	YA staff take initiative to formally teach how to find, evaluate and use information effectively, using a variety of print and online tools.	When requested, YA staff formally teach how to find, evaluate and use information.	YA staff do not teach research skills and do not model basic research skills.	Screencasts and pathfinders to teach students basic research skills. Virtual tools wherever appropriate to community (e.g., mobile device reference app) Group instruction. Turning every reference interaction into a teaching moment.
Develop and provide access to technology and electronic resources.	YA staff work with others in the Library, the community, and in the profession to build and share new technology and digital resources and tools that ensure young adults' access to knowledge and information. YA staff implement and integrate digital tools in programs and services on a regular basis.	YA staff are aware of new technology and digital resources and adopt them when convenient.	YA staff are aware of new technology and digital resources but are unable to use them in the library.	YA staff are unaware of new technology and digital resources that increase young adults' access to information.	YA staff contribute to online information collections or initiatives.
Maintain awareness of ongoing technological advances	YA staff weekly use a wide-variety of tools, books, magazines, newspapers, blogs & microblogs, and podcasts, to remain aware of advances in technology that can improve access to information for young adults and act as advocates for the adoption of these advances in the library.	YA staff use some tools at least monthly to stay aware of advances in technology that can improve access to information and incorporate them into the library when already approved by library administration.	YA staff are aware of advances in technology when library incorporates these advances into a larger technological upgrade but do not seek information about these topics.	YA staff are unaware of advances in technology that can improve young adults' access to information and do not update technology regularly.	Reading technology related blogs and Twitter feeds. Subscribing to technology related podcasts

Services

Essential Element	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Examples/Resources
Evaluate programs and services	Library programs and services meet the goals of the library's strategic plan while also meeting the developmental needs of young adults. Programs and services always include young adult involvement, through planning and implementation or volunteering, whenever possible.	Library programs and services meet the goals of the library's strategic plan while also meeting the developmental needs of young adults and sometimes include young adult involvement.	Library programs and services meet the goals of the library's strategic plan but do not take into consideration the developmental needs of young adults.	Library programs and services do not have any driving goals connected to strategic plan or the developmental needs of teens.	YALSA Youth Participation Handbook Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets <i>Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action, Chapter 7</i>
Develop and implement services to young adults outside the Library	YA staff initiate and foster partnerships with organizations outside the library to provide services with young adults in non-traditional library settings.	YA staff work with organizations that approach the library to provide services to young adults in non-traditional library settings.	YA staff are aware of community organizations that serve young adults but do not partner with them to offer services	YA staff are unaware of community organizations that serve young adults and methods of offering services in non-traditional library settings.	Outreach opportunities may include: hospitals, home-school settings, alternative education facilities, foster care programs and detention facilities.
Provide services that meet the needs and interests of young adults	Library provides a variety of services, both informational and recreational, that meet the needs and interest of a majority of young adults in the community while still ensuring that these services also meet the goals of the library as a whole.	Library provides services, both recreational and informational, that meet the needs of a majority of young adults in the community.	Library provides services, both recreational and informational, that meet the needs of some young adults.	Library does not provide services that meet the needs and interests of young adults.	Homework help College/Career help Programs that support teen popular culture interests (e.g., gaming, anime, fanfic, etc.) Readers advisory lists and displays
Provide programs and services current with young adult interest and trends	YA staff use a variety of tools, professional journals, magazines, online articles, etc., to remain aware of trends and pop-culture interests of young adults and use this knowledge on an ongoing basis to create new and improve existing library services and the library collection.	YA staff use tools like professional journals and magazines to remain aware of trends and pop-culture interests of young adults and periodically use this knowledge to improve existing library services and the library collection.	YA staff do not seek out information about current trends and pop-culture interest of young adults, but when the knowledge is available, improves library services and collections.	YA staff are not aware of trends and pop-culture interest of young adults.	YA staff are aware that new TV show based on a teen series will be airing soon and so order extra copies of the series to meet the predicted demand.
Accept the changing nature of young adult needs	Library is aware of and is prepared to adapt quickly to the flexible and changing nature of young adults' entertainment, technological and information needs.	Library is aware of the flexible and changing nature of young adults' entertainment, technological and information needs but needs time to act on these changes.	Library is aware of the flexible and changing nature of young adults' entertainment, technological and information needs but does not act on these changes.	Library is unaware of the needs of teens.	School assignments New formats