

Mississauga Library Collection Policy

Approved September 17, 2025
Next Review June 2027

PURPOSE

To provide library customers and staff with a statement of philosophy and the key objectives respecting the selection, de-selection, and access to the collection of the Mississauga Library.

SELECTION GOAL

The Library's goal in the provision of library materials is to maintain a diverse, balanced and responsive collection to serve an informed, connected community where everyone thrives, as defined by the Library's mission, vision and values. The Library collection exists to empower individuals, foster community, inspire lifelong learning and promote a culture of reading.

POLICY OVERVIEW

The Mississauga Library recognizes all significant legislation relating to the Collection Policy including the *Ontario Public Library Act*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and the *Canadian Copyright Act*.

The Mississauga Library endorses the following statements:

- Canadian Federation of Library Associations' *Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom* which states: "All persons in Canada have the fundamental right ... to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the constitution and the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian Society as the foundation for freedom of conscience, thought, belief and informed citizenship." (Appendix 1)
- Ontario Library Association's *Statement of the Intellectual Rights of the Individual*. (Appendix 2)
- Ontario Library Association's *Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library*. (Appendix 3)
- Ontario Library Association's *Position on Teen Rights in the Public Library*. (Appendix 4)

The ultimate responsibility for the Library collection lies with the Director, Library Services, acting in accordance with the general policies established by the Library Board. In practice, this authority is delegated to the Manager, Collections and Materials Handling.

Where appropriate, the Mississauga Library participates in resource sharing initiatives and consortium purchasing to provide the greatest access to library materials.

COLLECTION SCOPE

The Collection Policy applies to all materials in all formats that form part of the Library's collections and are made available to the community. The focus of the collection is on new and recently published works. Emerging formats and technologies may be added and declining ones retired where appropriate and given available resources.

- The Library gives special consideration to materials with Canadian content, that record the Canadian experience or that relate to life in Canada or the lives and works of Canadians. In addition, the collection of Indigenous knowledge and creative materials demonstrates our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.
- The Library recognizes the need to provide information in both of Canada's official languages and will provide informational and recreational materials in the French language. Junior material will be collected to support children in French immersion program.
- The Library provides materials and resources in languages other than English and French for which there is evident demand. The decision to establish or discontinue a language collection is based on census data, available budget, and other supporting statistical evidence.
- The Library has a particular interest in local history and in works by local authors, illustrators and artists, but is not obligated to add everything about the area or produced by local creators to the collection.
- The Library acknowledges the responsibility for the maintenance of a collection of local history material. Rare, out-of-print, and non-print materials, as well as recent publications relating to the development of Mississauga, will be collected.
- Selection is influenced by the existence of other local specialized resources. It is not effective to duplicate specialized material for which there are only occasional demands. The Library's interlibrary loan services may be used to fill these needs.
- Materials whose subject treatment goes beyond the university undergraduate level will, in most cases, not be considered appropriate to the goals of the Library's collection unless they are the only materials available to meet community demand.
- The Library does not attempt to purchase textbooks or other resources used in schools, colleges and universities, except when they provide the best coverage in a subject and are also useful to the general public. While the library supports self-directed learning, it does not collect materials that support solely the specific curriculum needs of formal educational classes.

COLLECTION ACCESS

The Library provides a variety of formats to support equitable access. We are dedicated to removing barriers to access and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the collection.

The Mississauga Library recognizes that the ultimate right and responsibility for the choice and use of materials rests with the individual user.

- Films rated “R” or “18A” and Games rated “M” are limited to customers 18 years of age or older.
- Responsibility for children’s use of materials rest with their parents and legal guardians. No materials are excluded from selection because they may come into the possession of a child.

EVALUATION OF MATERIALS

To build and to maintain the Library’s collection, materials must be measured by objective quality guidelines. All acquisitions are considered in terms of the following standards which include relevance, quality and timeliness. Customers are welcome to [suggest a title](#) and these will be evaluated using the same selection criteria. Not all library suggestions will be added to the collection.

Legal, medical and other professional materials will be acquired only to the extent that they are useful to the average reader.

The Library does not cater to nor discriminate against any religion. Selection is made on the basis of the authoritativeness of the presentation of creed, history or philosophy, and manner in presenting a way of life. It should be understood that there may be limitations to the number of books selected to represent any religion, group or sect.

The Library has a particular interest in local history and in works by local authors, illustrators and artists, but is not under any obligation to add to its collection everything about the area or produced by local authors, illustrators or artists.

The Library occasionally receives requests from authors to add their self-published books. Although this type of publishing is experiencing rapid growth, these books often do not meet the selection requirements for inclusion as outlined in the Collection Policy. Creators are expected to be transparent about the use of generative AI (artificial intelligence) to allow for a proper evaluation of the work.

a. Fictional material will be reviewed on a case by case basis as per the criteria listed in the policy.

b. Staff will exercise their professional judgement when considering non-fiction material. Works that purport to be authoritative (e.g. scientific) in nature must comply with the policy, for example:

- Quality, clarity, comprehensiveness and accuracy of the work
- Reputation, skill, competence and purpose of the originator of the work.

The Mississauga Library appreciates offers to donate materials and encourages donations to be directed to the Friends of the Mississauga Library, which can be dropped off at any location. Donated materials are not added to the Library's collection.

All materials will be evaluated using the same criteria. An item need not meet all the criteria in order to be acceptable. If there is considerable topical interest in the subject and a manifest public desire to read and judge the book first-hand, a title may be included which is not considered accurate, according to expert opinion. No item has universal acceptance and no item is automatically included or excluded from the library collection only because it contains frank or coarse language or deals with controversial topics.

Materials are selected:

- To provide resources that empower individuals of all ages to build knowledge, skills, and confidence throughout their lives
- To support literacy in all its forms with a diversity of formats and encourage lifelong learning
- To expand knowledge by providing a wide range of materials and viewpoints
- To collect and preserve materials which illustrate the growth and development of the City of Mississauga, celebrate its history and heritage or which pertain in whole or in part to activities within the geographic boundaries of the City of Mississauga

A collection of non-traditional library materials, "The Library of Things," will be selected to meet demonstrated demand within the current budget and offered where appropriate facilities exist. Items that directly support Library collections, services and programs will be prioritized over other types of items. Use of these items may be subject to specialized waivers.

Generative AI (artificial intelligence) may be used in the creation of works collected by the Library. The criteria outlined in this policy will be used for the evaluation of all works including those using Generative AI.

The following criteria will be used in the evaluation of these works.

Criteria for selection:

No criteria are absolute and an item need not meet all the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Popular or anticipated demand and current trends
- Represents interests and composition of the community
- Quality, clarity, comprehensiveness and accuracy of the work
- Relation to existing collection and other items on a subject
- Authority, reputation, qualifications or purpose of the author, artist, publisher, or producer
- Attention of critics, reviewers, and the public
- Timeliness or permanence of the work
- Suitability of physical and digital form for library use

- Cost, availability and collection budget
- Accessibility of items in other libraries, for free via the internet, or from other easily and freely accessible resources

RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

The Library upholds the principle of intellectual freedom to ensure individuals have access to information and ideas. Our collection includes diverse viewpoints and we foster a culture of open inquiry and curiosity. The presence of any material in the Library's collection does not indicate an endorsement of its content or viewpoint. The Library does not keep, acquire or purchase material that Canadian courts have found to be obscene, hate propaganda or seditious.

No materials are excluded because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, citizenship, creed, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation.

Selection and maintenance of items cannot be influenced by any anticipated approval or disapproval of its intellectual content by sectors of the community. While people have the right to reject for themselves items of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of others.

If a customer feels that an item in the collection falls outside the criteria outlined in this policy, they are invited to complete a Request for Reconsideration of Materials form. Once a completed form is received, the Manager, Collections and Materials Handling will convene an independent committee of professional employees to assess the item and provide a formal response. Individuals can appeal this decision in writing to the Director, Library Services. Appeals will be reviewed by the Library Leadership Team, with a final decision by the Director.

Some of the Library's digital content is provided using third-party vendors. The Library subscribes to services in which the third-party vendor, and not Library staff, determines the specific titles or materials made available through the service. In these circumstances, the Library is unable to reconsider specific materials that Library users object to, but may inform the third-party vendor of user concerns and/or take these concerns into consideration in determining whether to continue using the vendor.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Selected materials are regularly assessed for their condition, accuracy, currency and usage, within the context of the Library's collection and their relevance to Library customers. The withdrawal of materials from the collection is conducted by knowledgeable staff and according to written guidelines, as a necessary means to maintain the vitality, size and scope of the collection. Material of local historical importance and interest is retained where the content has enduring worth to the community.

APPENDIX 1: Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom

Approval History: ~ CLA: June 27, 1974. Amended November 17, 1983; November 18, 1985; September 27, 2015. CFLA-FCAB: Adopted August 26, 2016; Reviewed April 12, 2019.

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

APPENDIX 2: Ontario Library Association, Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual

Introduction

The Ontario Library Association and its divisions are committed to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Ontario Libraries have the important responsibility to facilitate expressions of knowledge, creativity, ideas, and opinion, even when viewed as unconventional or unpopular.

The Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following principles for libraries:

1. Equitable access to library service to the public is based upon the right of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality.

2. Intellectual freedom requires freedom to critically examine and create other ideas, opinions, views, and philosophy of life, other than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional, uncommon or unpopular.
3. The free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen, view, and create is fundamental to such free traffic.
4. Library governance ensures that the principles of intellectual freedom and expression of thought are upheld.

Library Service, Collections and Resources

5. It is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in the selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings, and other materials including the provision of access to electronic sources of information and access to the internet. Materials are not excluded from library collections based on race, place of birth, origin, ethnic origin, ethnicity, citizenship, age, creed, disability, family structure, sex, and sexual orientation.
6. It is part of the library's service to its public to resist any attempt by any individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate, censor or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view, listen or participate by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.

Library Programming, Events, and Space Bookings

7. It is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and expression by implementing it consistently when hosting programs and events within the public space of the library including rented public space by individuals and community organizations.
8. Libraries create welcoming community spaces where community members are free from discrimination and may engage in peaceful assembly. Libraries may cancel or deny permits to individuals or organizations when speech or displays are used in a way that is unlawful.

Applicable legislation:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Section 2(b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication".

Criminal Code: Section 63 pertains to Unlawful Assemblies and Riots. Section 297 pertains to defamatory libel. Section 318 pertains to hate propaganda.

Ontario Human Rights Code: Sub-section 13 pertains to infringing on freedom from discrimination.

APPENDIX 3: The Ontario Library Association Position on Children's Rights in the Library
Adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting November 1998

Children in public libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom.
2. Equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
3. A full range of materials, services and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their needs.
4. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.
5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.
6. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in children's services.
7. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service from birth through the transition to adult user.
8. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of children's services.
9. Library policies written to include the needs of the child.

Appendix 4: Teen's Rights in the Public Library

Adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting June 2010

Goals for Library Services for Teens:

Young people are valuable members of our library community who deserve the same respect, dignity and human rights as all library members. This document provides a framework for developing library services to teens that meet the educational, informational, and cultural and leisure needs of young people in ways that are developmentally appropriate. Each public library has a different community to serve and therefore different priorities and needs. Although specific services for teens have not been well established in all libraries, these goals are created in the belief that young adulthood is a unique life stage and that young adults are entitled to the same quality of library services offered to other age groups in the population. (Adapted from the IFLA Guidelines for Library Services for Young Adults, 2006 and the YALSA Guidelines for Library Services to Teens, Ages 12-18, 2006.)

The goal of library services for teens is to assist with the transition from children's services to adult services and to provide access to both resources and an environment that meets the needs of young people for intellectual, emotional and social development. Specifically these needs are based on the unique seven developmental needs of adolescents and the five core values of quality service to teens:

7 Developmental Needs of Teens	5 Core Values of Service to Teens
Physical activity Competence and achievement	Respecting and responding to unique YA needs

Self definition Creative expression Positive social Interaction with Peers and Adults Structure and Clear Limits Meaningful Participation	Providing equal access Empowering Youth through participation Engaging Teens in active collaboration Supporting healthy youth development
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Excerpted from: Dorman, G. (1981). The Middle Grades Assessment Program: User's Manual. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.

Core Values excerpted from Jones, P. (2002). New directions for library service to young adults. Chicago: American Library Association.

Teens in Ontario Public Libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom

The library establishes clear policy statements concerning the right to free access by young adults to library resources and information sources; and respect for the rights of young adults to select materials appropriate to their needs without censorship, The library's teen collection, policies and services should be consistent with the concepts of intellectual freedom defined by the CLA, OLA and Ontario Human Rights code.

2. Equal access to the full range of materials, services, and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their unique needs.

The Library integrates library service to teens into the overall plan, budget and service program for the library. Library service to teens is integrated with those offered to other user groups.

3. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.

The Library incorporates funding for materials and services for teens in the library operating budget and ensures there is equitable distribution of resources to support programs and services for young adults.

4. Collections that specifically meet the needs of teens.

The Library provides a wide spectrum of current materials of interest to young adults to encourage lifelong learning, literacy, reading motivation, and reader development. The library endeavors to develop collections that encourage leisure reading, support homework and school success and responds to gender and cultural diversity. The library provides unfettered access to technology including social networking, licensed databases, and other online library resources for teens.

5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.

The Library provides identifiable spaces for teens that are separate from children's spaces where possible, reflects their lifestyle and allows for teens to use this library space for leisure or study, either independently or in groups.

6. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service at every service point.

The Library promotes friendly, positive, non-biased customer interactions with teens, providing staff development and training and ensures that services for teens embrace cultural and gender diversity and economic differences. Library staff will endeavor to respect the teen's need for privacy and nonjudgmental service and assist young adults in acquiring the skills to effectively access all library resources and become information literate.

7. Library Programs and Services appropriate for Teens

The Library fosters youth development by providing programs for teens that contribute to literacy, life-long learning and healthy youth development. The library endeavors to provide volunteer opportunities for helping others through community service hours including participating on Library Advisory Boards, and other projects that help develop a sense of responsibility and community involvement. The library's teen services initiatives are effectively managed according to best practices in the field of Youth Services.

8. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in teen services.

Library staff is knowledgeable about adolescent development and age appropriate resources for young adults inclusive of those with special needs. The library provides services by teen specialists as well as by others who are trained to serve teens.)

9. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of teen services. The Library works in partnership with other community agencies and organizations to support all aspects of healthy, successful youth development.

10. Library policies are written to include the needs of the youth.