

Guidelines for Library Services for Older Pennsylvanians
Office of Commonwealth Libraries
2012

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Corbett, Governor

Department of Education

Ronald J. Tomalis, Secretary

Office of Commonwealth Libraries

M. Clare Zales, Deputy Secretary for Commonwealth Libraries

Bureau of Library Development

Susan Pannebaker, Director

November 2011

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Office of Commonwealth Libraries
Forum Building
607 South Drive
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0600
(717) 787-8007

The Pennsylvania Department of Education does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected category. This policy is in accordance with state law, including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, and with federal law, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

If you have any questions about this publication, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Forum Building, 607 South Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17120-0600.
Telephone: (717) 783-5738 or FAX: (717) 772-0044.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Pennsylvania Department of Education's non-discrimination policies:

For Inquiries Concerning

Non-Discrimination in Employment:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Equal Employment Opportunity Representative
Bureau of Human Resources
333 Market Street, 11th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Voice Telephone: 717-787-4417
Text Telephone TTY: 717-783-8445
Fax: 717-783-9348

For Inquiries Concerning Non-Discrimination in

All Other Pennsylvania Department of Education Programs and Activities:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
School Services Unit Director
333 Market Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Voice Telephone: 717-783-3750
Text Telephone TTY: 717-783-8445
Fax: 717-783-6802

This publication was made possible by the following Older Adults Advisory Committee members:

Susan Purcell
Committee Chair
Senior Services Coordinator
Delaware County Library System

Claudia Koenig
Outreach Advisor
Office of Commonwealth Libraries

Elizabeth Ann Funk
Retired
Office of Commonwealth Libraries

Charity Leonette
Community Partnerships Coordinator/Webmaster
Allegheny County Library Association

Patricia Griffith
Head of Adult Services
Schlow Centre Region Library

Tim Salony
System Administrator
Blair County Library System

Vision

Pennsylvania's older adults will discover or rediscover the joy of learning and pursue leisure and/or recreational activities through quality experiences in libraries throughout the Commonwealth.

Mission

Pennsylvania libraries will provide dynamic and creative approaches to serving all citizens and communities, including older adults, in a welcoming and accepting atmosphere.

This page left blank intentionally.

Table of Contents

Vision and Mission Statements	i
Introduction	1
The Guidelines	3
Management.....	4
Professional Development and Professionalism.....	6
Programming.....	8
Communications, Marketing, and Advocacy.....	10
Facility Development.....	12
Technology Services.....	13
Training.....	14
Appendices	15
Resources for Developing Services for Older Adults.....	15
Library Bill of Rights.....	16
The Freedom to Read.....	16

This page left blank intentionally.

Introduction

The population of older adults encompasses several different cohorts including Baby Boomers, Recently Retired, and Older Seniors. Because of increased life expectancy and rapid societal changes, these three cohorts have different societal experiences and expectations of services. The large cohort of Baby Boomers now entering retirement age are significantly re-defining this period of their lives. The expectations and specific needs of this large group of active “young” older adults will have a great impact on organizations serving them, such as libraries. The information needs and interests of older adults range widely and mirror the adult community as a whole. The first principle of serving an older population is to recognize this great diversity and to be ever conscious of the dangers of stereotyping in planning collections, programs, and services.

With the aging of our society, we can expect that one out of every five Pennsylvanians will be 65 years or older within the next 20-25 years. People in this age category are underrepresented among library users. If this situation continues we can expect a serious impact on our libraries, and how the public views the importance of the library.

To help librarians attract older adults to their libraries and to meet the various needs of this population, the following guidelines were developed to provide a checklist for librarians to use in planning services for older adults. These guidelines provide a structure to evaluate the overall performance of library services to older adults and to assist librarians in advocating for older adult services in their libraries.

This page left blank intentionally.

The Guidelines

Management

Older Adult Services Librarians should be involved in decisions and policies that affect the provision of library service to older adults.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Represents and advocates for older adult services as a part of the management team of the library.				
Understands the mission, role and activities of each part of the library.				
Informs library management of the vital role of and best practices for older adult services.				
Recommends policies for older adult services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation • Registration • Collection development • Electronic use 				
Establishes long- and short-term goals and objectives for older adult services within the framework of the library's strategic plan.				
Analyzes, as a part of the library's planning process, the community, how its needs may have changed and how the library should respond to those needs.				
Develops and implements a collection development policy to meet the needs of the older adults in the community.				
Develops, with the library director, a budget for staffing, collections, programming, and professional development for older adult services. Ensures that services for older adults are an integral and ongoing part of the library's operations and budget.				
Implements and monitors the older adult services budget.				
Identifies outside sources of funding. Writes or assists in writing effective grant applications.				
Evaluates older adult services including maintaining monthly and annual statistics.				
Reviews, regularly, older adult services goals and objectives, considering the needs and interests of all ages.				
Networks with other agencies that serve older adults including Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), volunteer organizations, lifelong learning organizations, senior centers, congregate living facilities, nursing homes, etc.				
Develops programs to meet the needs of all age cohorts of older adults.				
Develops job descriptions and hires, trains, and mentors staff and volunteers who work with older adults.				

Notes:

Professional Development and Professionalism

Professional competencies and current knowledge in the areas of library science, gerontology, and technologies are integral to effective performance as an older adult librarian.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Keeps current with trends, issues, and research in librarianship, gerontology, emerging technologies, education, and allied fields through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading professional journals and books • Visiting other libraries, and attending continuing education opportunities such as system and district meetings, workshops, library conferences, and undergraduate and graduate level courses including online opportunities. 				
Demonstrates understanding and respect for diverse cultural and ethnic values and the aging process.				
Networks with other librarians serving older adults.				
Belongs to and actively participates in professional library and other older adult related organizations.				
Seeks a mentor. When experienced, becomes a mentor.				
Provides in-service training for the library's staff on older adult library service issues.				
Participates in professional development activities throughout one's career.				
Observes programs for older adults in other libraries or other professional settings.				

Notes:

Programming

Library programs provide information, attract new patrons, promote the use of the collection and create awareness in the community about the library.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Designs, promotes, executes, and evaluates library programs for older adult audiences.				
Gives particular attention to underserved and diverse populations. Remains aware of shifting demographics.				
Assesses the library's community for the programming needs of older adults, especially in relation to programs provided elsewhere.				
Presents a variety of programs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book talks • Summer reading program for adults • Book discussions/book clubs • Art and music • Cultural • Pop culture • Subject areas • Programs not traditionally perceived as library programs 				
Provides outreach programs appropriate to community needs and library goals and objectives including both programs in the community and invitations for groups to come to the library.				
Promotes the library's collection in conjunction with programming initiatives. Assembles displays coordinated with programs. Develops learning extension activities to continue the learning experience beyond the library. Creates bibliographies related to programs.				
Develops life-long learning programs to meet the needs of older adults in the community.				
Maintains a how-to collection on older adult programming, including both print and web materials.				
Informs all library staff and board members about programs and services for the community's older adults.				
Maintains directory of community organizations for older adults and other appropriate contacts.				

Notes:

Communications, Marketing, and Advocacy

Develops a branding/marketing campaign to publicize to the community the importance of services to older adults, to inform this targeted population of the services and programs offered at the library and to keep the library staff informed.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Likes working with older adults.				
Speaks effectively to older adults one-on-one and in groups.				
Conducts productive formal and informal reference interviews.				
Communicates respectfully and empathetically with all populations.				
Advocates for older adult patrons with the entire library staff, educating the staff about how the aging process affects older adults.				
Effectively markets the services and programs offered by the library to the older adult community.				
Develops a branding/marketing campaign that effectively communicates impact of older adult services to the community at large, elected officials, and community leaders.				
Elicits opinions about services for older adults from diverse groups.				
Participates in and partners with community organizations, and presents them with information about the library's services for older adults.				
Develops a marketing plan for older adult services in conjunction with the library's plan, including strategies to market library activities to non-users as well as users.				

Notes:

Facility Development

Where possible a specific area should be designated for older adult use. This area should have good lighting, comfortable chairs, large print material, computers, CTV-readers or magnifiers and be accessible to people with disabilities.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Evaluates current space for appropriate use. Advocates for appropriate space for older adults in proportion to the size of the library.				
Advocates for flexible areas for programming and readers for all ages when the library is to be renovated, expanded, or moved to new space. Plans for the older adult area to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.				
Creates and maintains a safe, inviting, and welcoming area.				
Installs bold and appropriate signage that clearly identifies the area and provides navigation aids to resources.				
Includes furniture and shelving appropriate for all ages and disabilities.				

Notes:

Technology Services

The library provides an opportunity for older adults to learn about technology and use it to meet their educational, recreational, and social needs.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Keeps current on the new technologies available.				
Develops or expands the library's website to provide links to other organizations or entities that provides programs for older adults.				
Instructs older adults in the use of the library's electronic resources, including POWER Library.				
Provides Internet safety instruction.				
Searches out and implements new technologies of interest to older adults.				
Includes information/materials about new technologies in the collection.				

Notes:

Training

Trains library staff and volunteers to serve older adults with courtesy and respect.

Older Adult Services Librarian:	Current Yes	Current No	If "No" Planned (mo./yr.)	If "No" Not Planned
Provides training to staff of all levels and all volunteers to make them aware of the difficulties older adults may have in using the library and how to make the library a welcoming and comfortable space for older adults.				
Trains staff and volunteers to recognize and combat ageism and stereotypes about older adults.				
Ensures that all staff and volunteers are aware of any special services the library offers that may be of interest to older adults, such as home delivery services, materials available in non-print formats such as books on CD, downloadable books, and the services provided by the Regional Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.				
Promotes the employment of older adults for professional and support staff positions.				

Notes:

Appendices

Resources for Developing Services for Older Adults

National Resources

American Library Association

Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), *Guidelines for Library and Information Services for Older Adults*.

www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/libraryservices.cfm

Office for Literacy Outreach (OLOS), Services to Older Adults

www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/servicesolder.cfm

Web Junction

www.webjunction.org

Missouri Library Services to Older Adults

www.sos.mo.gov/library/development/services/seniors/manual/guidelines.pdf

Pennsylvania Resources

Web Junction for Pennsylvania

www.pa.webjunction.org – Services for Older Adults

The Office of Commonwealth Libraries Older Adult Advisory Committee;

(This committee has several libraries that offer services to older adults and will extend their advice and help.) Contact Claudia Koenig at ckoenig@pa.gov for more information.

Claudia Koenig

Outreach Advisor

Office of Commonwealth Libraries
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Forum Building Room 307
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0600
717-783-5747
ckoenig@pa.gov

Susan Purcell

Chair, Older Adult Services Advisory Committee
Delaware County Library System
340 N. Middletown Rd., #19
Media, PA 19063
610-891-8622
spurcell@delcolibraries.org

Guidelines for Library and Information Services for Older Pennsylvanians is a publication of the Office of the Commonwealth Libraries Older Adult Services Advisory Committee.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.

Amended February 2, 1961; June 28, 1967, and January 23, 1980,

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,

By the ALA Council.

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgement, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure towards conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights. We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would make the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighting and selecting can the democratic

mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writer to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their*

own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

- 7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by: American Library Association/Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression

The Association of American University Presses, Inc.

The Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

This publication was supported in whole by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries.