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COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY
WILLIAM B. OGDEN FREE LIBRARY



William B. Ogden Free Library
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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I. Overview

A. Goals

In today's world, access to information and the freedom to explore one's interests, whether they are educational or recreational, is essential. The William B. Ogden Free Library (WBOFL) strives to develop a collection that is reflective of the interest and needs of the patrons it serves. WBOFL is committed to purchasing items and resources within its budgetary and space restrictions so as to maintain a balance of recreational, informational, instructional, and reference materials.

B. User Need

WBOFL's collection development will prioritize the needs, interests, and values of our patrons. The collection will maintain a balance of recreational, informational, instructional, and reference materials appropriate to community needs and desires.

The goals of selection will be:

- To support enlightenment and personal development
- To provide recreational materials
- To educate and inform patrons about current issues which are relevant to them and their communities
- To provide a broad cross section of information and research

II. General Collection Guidelines, Priorities, and Limitations

The materials selected for the WBOFL's collection are based on the merits of the work and are selected solely in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of the total community. The primary focus of selection will be on physical materials, as Four County Library System (4CLS) purchases all of the electronic resources (eResources) for the system's consortium. As a member of the 4CLS, the WBOFL benefits from access to the collections and resources of other member libraries.

The collection will consist of fiction, non-fiction, juvenile, young adult, media, such as ~~music~~, movies and audiobooks, periodicals and newspapers, and local history. Any new formats will be added at the discretion of the Director or a staff member designated by the Director. The selection process will prioritize hardcover materials over paperback in order to enhance the longevity of the materials. Audiobooks will also be prioritized over MP3s due to budgetary and technological constraints. Every item will be reviewed for relevance, quality, accuracy, and popularity to determine priorities in purchasing.

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A. Non-Fiction Material Guidelines

Non-fiction materials will be purchased singularly unless there is a known and high demand for the material. Non-fiction materials will also focus on general subjects of interest. Materials which are too limited or specialized in nature may be excluded due to financial or space constraints

B. Fiction Material Guidelines

Fiction items such as best sellers and those materials which are forecasted to be in high demand will be purchased in multiples at the discretion of the selector. Items which are out of print and cannot be easily purchased will not be selected for the collection unless highly relevant to the collection and community.

As a part of the 4CLS, the WBOFL cooperates with other member libraries. Patrons of the WBOFL have access to materials from any library in the 4CLS service area and beyond through a shared catalog and the interlibrary loan distribution process. Additionally, 4CLS provides access to eResources for all WBOFL patrons.

C. Gifts and Donations

The WBOFL accepts donations of new (published within the last 10 years) and gently used materials that are consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the library. Donated items are evaluated under the same criteria as purchased materials. Donations become the sole property of the WBOFL and are unreturnable.

The WBOFL does not evaluate or appraise books for tax purposes. However, at the request of the donor, a [*Materials Donation Receipt*](#) can be provided indicating the number of items donated.

Donated materials may be placed into the collection, the book sale, our “little free libraries,” or disposed of at the discretion of the staff.

Types of materials accepted include:

- Current publications of hardcover novels
- Non-fiction materials containing current information
- Biographies and Autobiographies
- Children’s materials
- Paperbacks

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- Materials of local interest
- Media: books on CD, music CDs, and DVDs

Types of materials not accepted include:

- Materials with outdated information
- Textbooks and Encyclopedias
- Materials that are moldy, mildewed, musty, or discolored
- Materials with torn or missing pages, with writing inside or that are stained or water damaged
- Periodicals
- Media: VHS, pirated movies, or shows recorded from television

III. Details of Subject Areas and Formats

A. General Selection Criteria

The selectors of materials will follow the basic selection guidelines outlined here alongside the collection specific guidelines outlined below. An item need not meet all the criteria in order to be acceptable. Basic guidelines include:

- Relevance to community needs
- Public demand or interest
- Contemporary significance, popular interest, or permanent value
- Attention of critics and reviewers
- Prominence, authority and/or competence of author, creator, or publisher
- Timeliness of material
- Relationship to present collections
- Statement of challenging, original or alternative point of view
- Creative, literary, or technical quality
- Treatment of subject to age of intended audience

Materials are selected on the basis of these criteria and on the whole content of the material. The personal or political history of the author is not taken into consideration. The only information considered is whether the material in question meets the guidelines and criteria stated. Under no circumstances should a book be excluded due to the race or nationality or because of the political or religious views of the writer or publisher. When purchasing controversial materials, the selector will strive to select materials that provide a varied and balanced selection of views when available. See the Controversial Materials Statement for more information on this topic.

Suggestions by patrons or staff are welcome and will be reviewed through the selection criteria. Format selection will be based on expected use, shelf-life, or size.

B. Use of Reviews

In selecting materials for the collection, selectors will use professional publications that provide thoughtful and insightful reviews of materials. These publications included, but aren't limited to: Ingram's iPage, Advance, Publisher's Weekly, School Library Journal, Booklist, Kirkus Reviews, New York Times best sellers list and book review, Library Journal, Voice of Young Advocates (VOYA), Growing Minds, and YALSA (a division of the American Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Association).

C. Adult Collection

Fiction: The adult fiction collection aims to select materials that provide recreational enjoyment for all members of the community. In order to provide the most diverse and popular choices, the collection will be purchased based around one or more of the following criteria with an emphasis on including titles of diversity and wide ranging literary styles and types.

- Suitability of the literature to the intended readers
- Positive contribution to self, community, and social heritage
- Popularity and qualifications of author or subject to the community
- Creative, literary or technical quality
- Inclusion of the title in an existing series as well as the popularity of that series
- Internationally and nationally renowned works
- Realistic presentation of the diversity of cultures and backgrounds

Non-Fiction: The non-fiction collection aims to acquire materials that provide a core knowledge that serves the diverse interests and needs of the entire community. All materials will be purchased in their original format (paperback or hardcover). However, materials which provide a choice will be purchased in hardcover to promote longevity.

The collection range for adult non-fiction will aim to encompass recreational, informational, instructional, and reference materials. The priority will be on materials that address contemporary issues, self-help information, job-related knowledge and skills, continuing education, spiritual growth, and the cultural and recreational interests of the community. The following criteria will be considered when selecting non-fiction materials:

- Relevance of the material to community interest
- Currency of the material to the subject
- Authenticity of factual materials

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- Quality of writing
- Accurate portrayal of issues

D. Juvenile Collection:

The WBOFL will seek to meet the informational and recreational needs of its community through the materials it acquires for the juvenile collection. While building upon the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection, selection of materials for children birth through sixth grade will be based on demand, need, and community interest. This includes picture books, easy readers, board books, graphic novels, juvenile fiction, and juvenile non-fiction. Items purchased for this collection are designated with a “J” label on the spine. The following criteria will be considered when selecting materials:

- Current or anticipated needs of patrons
- Local significance of subject matter or author
- Reputation of the author, illustrator, or publisher
- Evaluations and review in professional journals
- Receipt or nomination for juvenile specific awards

E. Young Adult Collection:

The WBOFL defines young adults as those in grades 7 through 12. The young adult collection is viewed as a bridge between the juvenile and adult collections. The items chosen will reflect current issues and trends and will aim to meet their recreational, informational, and instructional needs. The topics in the collection are varied and reflect the issues that are unique to this age group.

Areas included in the selection process are graphic novels, fiction, and non-fiction. The reading levels vary, as do the maturity levels of the content. Items purchased for this collection are designated with a “Y” label on the spine. The following criteria will be considered when selecting materials

- Suitable for young adult age range/audience
- Public request
- Corresponds to curriculum in school district
- Currency of item
- Popular subject matter
- Award winning
- Credibility or reputation of author/publisher/illustrator
- Opposing viewpoint/alternate point of view
- Supports the existing collection
- Multicultural/diversity

F. Visual and Audio Collections: Audiovisual materials include audiobooks, and DVDs. These materials are purchased using the same selection criteria and guidelines as provided for the WBOFL’s print collections. Audiobooks in all subject areas will be selected as unabridged materials whenever possible.

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G. Circuit: The WBOFL participates in “circuit” collections provided through the 4CLS. This service provides the patrons of WBOFL with access to newer audio, special print, and/or visual materials via a rotation amongst the participating libraries. Each circuit contains approximately 50 items and is hosted for about 6 weeks at a participating library. The selection of these materials is made by the 4CLS in agreement with their collection development policy.

H. Electronic Resources: As a member of the 4CLS, the WBOFL has access to a wide range of digital resources. A link to a number of web-based resources are readily available on our website. In addition, the WBOFL has a subscription to Hoopla that allows patrons to check out five items per month by using their library card.

I. Periodicals and Newspapers

Periodicals: Basic, popular, and general information magazines are selected to supplement the book collection. Newspapers are selected to provide current information.

IV. Collection Development Responsibility

The selection of materials is the responsibility of the Director, operating within the guidelines of the collection development policy as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

Other staff that the Director appoints, participates in the selection of materials, under the guidance of the Director. The Director has the authority to approve or reject selections as it pertains to the Collection Development Policy.

A. Controversial Materials Statement

It is important to the WBOFL that there is a balanced representation of all topics in all sections of the collection. The WBOFL does not exclude titles for reasons other than budgetary constraints or failure to meet the selection criteria. In selecting materials, the staff is upholding the American Library Association’s [*Bill of Rights*](#), [*Freedom to Read Statement*](#), [*Freedom to View Statement*](#), and the [*Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights Statement*](#).

The WBOFL does not judge items in isolation or on a part of the whole item. Patrons who feel an item should be changed or removed from the collection may ask for a [*Reconsideration of Library Materials Form*](#) from a staff member.

B. Statement on Rejection of Material

Non-fiction items may be excluded if the material is

- Deemed propaganda
- Lacking in factual information
- Lacking integrity

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- Intended to incite hatred or intolerance
- Textbooks will not be considered for selection due to the currency of the information and specialization of the subjects.

Fiction items may be excluded from purchase if they are

- Self-published
- Not easily purchased through the library's selected vendors
- Not considered to add value to the existing collection

C. Reconsideration of Library Materials

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for oneself, one should not exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others. The WBOFL recognizes that a diversity of materials may result in some requests for reconsideration. Should a patron decide to request the reconsideration of library material, the subsequent procedures will be followed to ensure that objections or complaints about library materials are handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

- The patron with the request for reconsideration should be referred immediately to the Director or to the person in charge in the absence of the Director.
- The patron will be provided with a copy of the Collection Development Policy.
- If the patron is not satisfied after reading the Collection Development Policy, they may ask for reconsideration in the following manner:
 - The person making the request for reconsideration must complete a [*Reconsideration of Library Materials Form*](#).
 - The request for reevaluation will be referred to a committee consisting of the Library Director, a staff member who has assisted the director in material selection, the board president and one other member of the Board of Trustees.
 - The committee will reconsider the item in question using the Collection Development Policy and reviews from recognized professional sources.
 - The Director will then write to the patron regarding the committee's recommended action. The reviewer's comments will be kept confidential by all concerned. Brief quotes, however, may be used in the Director's letter to the patron.
 - If the patron desires further action, an appeal can be made in writing to the WBOFL Board of Trustees. Their decision is final.

D. Request for Materials

The WBOFL welcomes the input of its patronage in its collection development efforts. Patrons are invited to formally recommend books, periodicals, and audio-visual materials for library purchase by completing the [Materials Request Form](#) that can be obtained from library staff at the circulation desk. While the WBOFL welcomes patron suggestions, purchase decisions are ultimately dependent on the selection criteria outlined in the collection development policy. Although the WBOFL will make efforts to purchase materials requested by the community, it is impossible to purchase all items suggested. Therefore, the WBOFL will rely in part on the 4CLS ILL service and the collections of other consortium libraries or the Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) to fulfill certain material requests.

E. Weeding

The WBOFL regularly reviews its collection to identify materials that are worn, obsolete, unused, or outdated. In addition to consulting [CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries](#) produced by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the WBOFL uses the following criteria for weeding materials:

- Damaged or poor condition
- Broken or worn bindings
- Outdated cover art, especially on juvenile and young adult materials
- Unnecessary duplicate copies
- Demand and frequency of use
- Accuracy of information
- Current relevance to the needs of users
- Local interest
- Last copy
- Consideration of space

Lost, damaged, or destroyed materials will be assessed for the feasibility and cost of repair or replacement. Items are not automatically replaced. The decision to do so is based on need, demand, and budget.

Materials that are withdrawn from the collection will either be donated to the library book sale, shared in our “little free libraries,” or disposed of at the discretion of the staff.

V. Appendices

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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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Freedom to Read Statement

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 judgment, 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 toward 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 an 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

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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 mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing 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 writers 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.*

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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

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

Freedom to View Statement

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, games, software, and other formats.¹ Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.² Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the

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responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.

Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 under previous name "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; and July 1, 2014.