Teen and Young Adult Collection Development

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Abstract

The purpose of this project is to illustrate the process of implementing a new library collection for teens and young adults at Neverland Public Library. This process will explain the actions taken to establish, protect, and promote the new collection for the next upcoming year. As a librarian, it is essential to provide quality services, programming, and materials to individuals of all ages in the community, specifically teens and young adults in this example. In addition to the process of selecting materials for the collection, establishing programming and marketing will play vital roles for the conclusion of this project. Based on the research and data conducted, there will be a thoughtful and considerate plan to both identify the problem and find the ultimate solution for this specific collection.

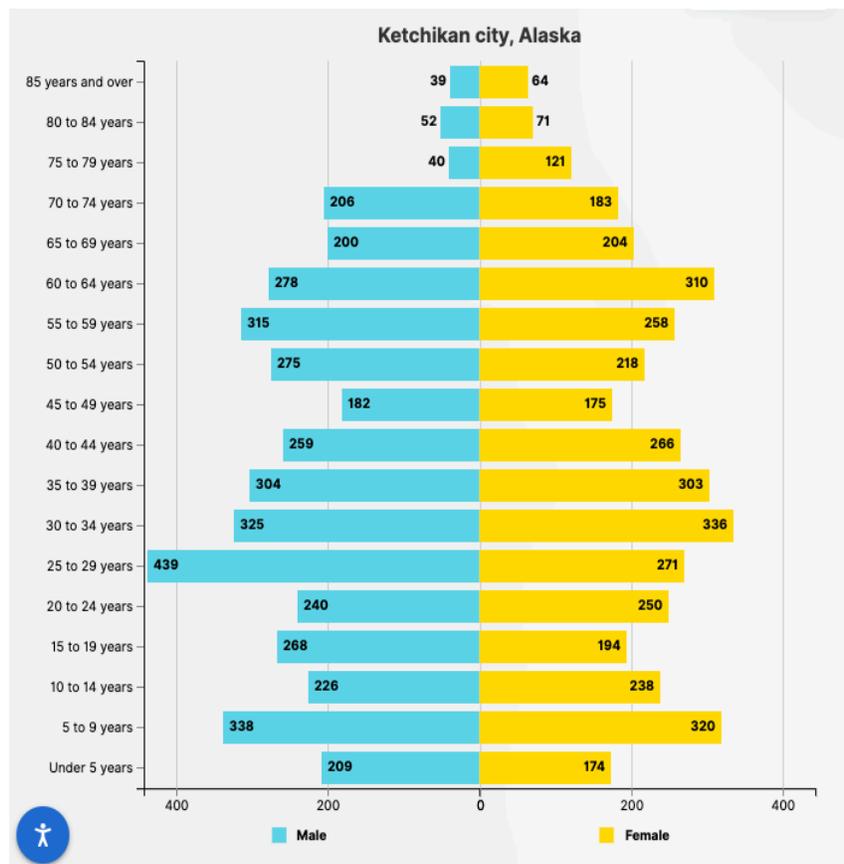**Creating a Library Collection: Programming for Teens and Young Adults**

Introduction

The library is tasked with the implementation of a teen and young adult collection at the Neverland Public Library. This white paper will discuss the "how to" process of creating this collection in addition to maintaining and promoting the collection for the upcoming year. The goal for this next year is to initiate a collection relevant to the demographic and local community within the area, ensure the collection aligns with the current development policy, and establish a definite collection with programming and events for teens and young adults at Neverland Public Library. We will continue to discuss next steps in how to build a library collection, with notable resources, over the course of this white paper.

Demographic Measures and Considerations

Demographics play a major role when selecting materials for a library's collection. Noted in figure to the right, the graph shows an example of the population in both teens and young adults within this community. Using this graph along with the U.S. Census Bureau statistics, the information will be used to determine the initial process in developing the collection. Basic changes in the

Ketchikan city, Alaska

Age	Male	Female
85 years and over	39	64
80 to 84 years	52	71
75 to 79 years	40	121
70 to 74 years	206	183
65 to 69 years	200	204
60 to 64 years	278	310
55 to 59 years	315	258
50 to 54 years	275	218
45 to 49 years	182	175
40 to 44 years	259	266
35 to 39 years	304	303
30 to 34 years	325	336
25 to 29 years	439	271
20 to 24 years	240	250
15 to 19 years	268	194
10 to 14 years	226	238
5 to 9 years	338	320
Under 5 years	209	174

composition in the community are inevitable, however it will still be useful to remain aware of the population in teens and their racial, ethnic, and educational backgrounds (Gregory, 2019). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 84.4% of people are speaking English at home in this area. In addition to this fact, 11.5% of the population are using Asian and Pacific Islander languages in their home. While the data is clear that English is predominantly spoken in this community, it is still important to know there is diversity within this population and this information will need to be taken into consideration when selecting specific materials for the collection.

Needs Assessment

We then ensure the collection materials are relevant to this particular user community by assessing their needs and finding the best collection that is suitable to this population. The first step in gaining insight into the teen community is to build a needs assessment in order to achieve the best results. We'll conduct surveys available through the mail, online, and in-person at Neverland Public Library. Because we are building a collection for teens and young adults, this demographic will be the focus of the surveys. In addition to conducting surveys with teens, we will also reach out to teachers in the area to achieve a better understanding from an educational perspective. Key informants consist of not only teens and young adults, but also English teachers at both the local middle school and high school. It's important to understand the curriculum because most of this demographic is currently in school. The results of both surveys will guide us in the right direction to attain the best collection possible. An example of the surveys conducted are as follows:

Teen and Young Adult Survey

1. What genre of books do you enjoy reading? Please list all that apply.

2. How often do you visit Neverland Public Library?

3. Is there anything you would change about the current Teen/YA collection?

4. What do you typically use the library for?

5. Is there a book, series, or genre of materials you wish were currently at the library?

Local Teacher Survey

1. How often do you visit Neverland Public Library?

2. What grade and subject do you currently teach?

3. Are there any materials that can assist with the current curriculum or can help a specific subject you teach?

4. Are students utilizing physical or digital materials with the current curriculum at your school?

5. Are you interested in doing a collaboration with your local public library in order to achieve more interest in literature for teens?

Collection Development Policy

As we begin the development of the teen collection, ensuring the policy and guidelines are aligned with the intended collection is pertinent. Library administration along with the collection team will be tasked with adding any supplemental "young adult" guidelines to the collection development policy, which will act as a "blueprint for the operations of the library" (Gregory, 2019). Based on the surveys, both popular and curriculum-based materials are needed for the collection at this time. An addendum to the current development policy will include these details in order to be completely transparent with the patrons of Neverland Public Library. The mission statement is as follows:

"The Neverland's Public Library's young adult collection has been created with the popular and curricular reading interest and needs of the town's ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse population of young people between the ages of twelve and eighteen in mind and to that end includes a variety of popular, high interest, and educationally supportive material and media that reflects the interests and needs of this group."

Maintaining a specific policy, which will be available for everyone to read, ensures there is no miscommunication when it comes to the development of the young adult collection. Parents, along with the community, will be notified once the new policy and collection is in place.

Keeping or Weeding Materials

Because there is a current collection to assess, we will analyze the collection to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the present materials. Initially, there are means to keep specific materials based on this criteria:

- Classics and award winners

- Titles currently on YA reading lists

- Materials relevant to local teaching curriculum

- Out-of-print titles that are still useful

Aligning with the collection development policy and the feedback from the surveys, we will choose to keep certain materials with the above criteria and then move into weeding materials. Weeding materials will not only save space and time but the process can stimulate circulation and make room for the desired teen collection (Gregory, 2019). This is to secure the space for new materials in the collection and to ensure materials in the future. Weeding will remain an

ongoing process to keep the teen and young adult collection updated as well as relevant to the ever-evolving teen community.

Proposed Solution and Collection Plan

The goal is to gather materials that are not only popular but to ensure the materials are relevant to the community in need. The surveys note interest in popular fiction, graphic novels, and classic novels relevant to what students are reading in school. Popular fiction choices are chosen based on community needs in addition to utilizing YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) for favored and current teen fiction. Other top resources to consider for collection development are pop culture reference, community, and professional reviews (Fink, 2015). We utilize all of the examples to achieve the ultimate beginning collection. Also, because local teachers also suggest materials needed for their English classes, we will then collaborate with the education department to determine what materials can be supplemental to the current curriculum.

The collection, as it stands, will be made up of popular fiction, graphic novels, classic novels and media. The library will use Ingram Content Group for browsing, curating lists for future use, and purchasing books and audiobooks. This platform contains a multi-format collection, which can be beneficial to the YA collection. Also, based on the analysis of all resources, graphic novels have become a second choice to popular fiction material. According to a recent YALSA article, Creel and Hodge-Wetherbe note, "the popularity of graphic novels with young readers allows for a quick way to engage student readers". The combined educational value and high appeal of graphic novels make them an essential asset to any library collection." This specific genre will appeal to hesitant readers and those who struggle with the traditional way of reading books. Classic novels consist of books that are well-known over a period of time

and in turn, are relevant to the current curriculum in schools. Additional media in the collection will consist of audiobooks, which can assist with struggling readers or teens that use English as a second language. All chosen materials will hit all points to speak for the research taken, in order to propose the solution in creating a young adult collection for Neverland Public Library. Furthermore, we need to implement this new collection by introducing programs to engage teens and young adults in the area.

Programming and Marketing

The final task in completing the collection development is to introduce programming and the marketing of those programs for the upcoming year. Consulting *YALSA's Teen Programming Guidelines*, we will infuse best practices for programming and events for the future. Based on the article, the key is to engage in youth-driven evaluation and measurement. For example, the library will start by involving the exact demographic we're creating the collection for, teens and young adults. A Teen Advisory Group is a great starting point and this can initially form the backbone for teen programming. Teens also have a high rate of volunteerism, which makes them great candidates to step up for the program (Fink, 2015). The purpose of the group is to not only initiate programming, but to engage teens in the mission of the library and to collaborate with their ideas to help shape the overall teen program of the library.

The next step is to implement occurring events for teens in the library. The first plan of action is to host an after school program for teens to have a safe place to study, research for a project, or simply read their favorite fiction. This event is available for teens every afternoon, Monday through Friday, in the "Teen Room" after school. In addition to the reoccurring programs, Neverland will also start a Summer Reading Challenge: Graphic Novel Edition. With graphic novels growing rapidly in popularity, it's important to engage in the genre and take

advantage of the acclaimed books. The library provides a list of graphic novels to read over summer break and the challenge can be convened with a pizza party before school begins again. There will also be a "Create Your Own Comic Bookmark" art project to engage activity during the event as well as discussions over the graphic novels assigned for the summer. Our Teen Advisory Group will continue to spread the word to their friends in addition to posting flyers throughout the library. Social media platforms are crucial to promote events so we'll make posts throughout the school year to get everyone informed and involved. The library will also collaborate with school librarians in order to market current programs in addition to offering our services in return. We'll continue to evaluate these programs over the course of this next year in order to determine if any adjustments need to be made as well as adding in supplemental programs each month. Embracing these beginning steps and fostering a responsive approach to the teen collection development and programming is pertinent in the continuation of a safe environment within the library.

Conclusion

In closing, this white paper has addressed the challenge of creating a public library collection for teens and young adults. By examining teens within the community as well as utilizing alternative resources, this project provides a clear and detailed solution in the collection development process. Key points in implementing a teen collection are researching demographics to determine who the collection is for, assessing needs within the community, evaluating and weeding current materials aligned with the development policy, creating a diverse and conclusive collection, and implementing programs to maintain the engagement with teens. Continuous evaluation and assessment of this plan is necessary to maintain and preserve not only the knowledge, but will ensure the library remains a vital and responsive resource.

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