Massachusetts Library Association Standards for Public Library Service to Children in Massachusetts

Final Revision 2012

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN MASSACHUSETTS

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PREFACE

In 2011, the Youth Services Section (YSS) of the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) formed a subcommittee to review and update the Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts. This committee's charge was as follows:

• Review the existing standards
• Review American Library Association's and other state associations' existing competency statements regarding children's access to and use of information media
• Scan and summarize children's services needs of the Massachusetts Library community
• Decide the extent and content of the revisions
• Prepare draft documents for approval of the MLA YSS Board
• Conduct periods of public comment and/or town meetings on the document
• Suggest implementation strategies to the YSS Board
• Keep the YSS Board up-to-date on the progress of the document

Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts is intended to guide the local library in its ongoing evaluation and development of children's services as a strong unit within its service and planning structure. It is meant to be used in conjunction with other planning documents, including, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) regulations governing public libraries, the plans of service of the Massachusetts Library System, *Children and Libraries: Getting It Right* (2001), *Managing for Results: Effective Resource Allocation for Public Libraries* (2000), *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach* (2001), *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter* (2002), and the *ALSC Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries*, revised edition 2009. Full implementation of these standards requires special planning and cooperation at the local and state level. It is intended that *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts* be reviewed for needed revisions every five years.

The standards formulated here continue to follow the pattern of other library standards of recent years in being qualitative rather than quantitative. They describe the philosophy and principles underlying good library service to children, and define essential characteristics of such service. (For information about past document revisions, please refer to the section entitled "The History of the Children's Standards in Massachusetts".)

While a library director or members of the children's services staff may face obstacles, such as an inadequate building, or budgetary limitations, these are temporary constraints which should not impede the vision, or progress towards achieving and maintaining the level of library service outlined in the standards.

**MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION YOUTH SERVICES SECTION
SUB-COMMITTEE TO UPDATE CHILDREN'S STANDARDS 2011-2012**

Molly M. Collins (Chair)   Burlington Public Library

Beth Kerrigan   Memorial Hall Library, Andover

Steve Fowler   Bellingham Public Library

Meg Malone   Turner Free Library, Randolph

Margaret McGrath   Plymouth Public Library

Ashley Waring   Reading Public Library

Kathy Moran – Wallace   Nevins Memorial Library, Methuen

Noelle Boc   Tewksbury Public Library

Nancy Sheehan   Lucius Beebe Memorial Library, Wakefield

The committee would also like to thank Sarah Sogigian and Susan Babb, youth advisors from the Massachusetts Library System for their assistance with this document.

USE OF THIS DOCUMENT

These standards have been developed for use by:

• youth service librarians
• library staff in all departments
• library directors
• library trustees
• school and town administrators
• youth services consultants
• Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
• Massachusetts Library Association
• faculty of graduate programs in library and information science
• library architects and planners
• members of the community
• Friends of the Library organizations

These standards should be used to:

• Provide a blueprint for optimum library service for children
• Provide a tool to support requests for increased financial resources for children's services
• Develop a long range plan for the children's services department, which includes long and short term goals
• Maintain an ongoing effort directed to library staff and members of the community, which highlights the need for a strong children's services program
• Lobby library planners for children's services space, which prioritizes functionality before form
• Advocate the strengthening of existing children's services and the creation of new services
• Strengthen the professional education of children's service librarians and paralibrarian staff members working in the children's department
• Develop an action plan at the state board level for financially supporting optimum children's services
• Support inclusion of the children's services librarian on any committee or group whose decisions will impact the delivery of services to children
• Maintain an ongoing effort directed to library staff and members of their community, which highlights the importance and need for a strong children's services program

HISTORY OF THE CHILDREN'S STANDARDS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Chronicling the evolution of change within a core document is an important part of an organization's history. We hope this will remind all who use the *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts* that it is a living document.

The *Standards* are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure that the content will always be a powerful tool to advocate for children's library service in our state. In 1985, the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to create a document which would serve as a guide for library service to children in Massachusetts. Committee members decided not to provide "output measures" within the standards document because they felt there was enough information already written on this topic. The committee chose the following definition of standards: "something that is established by authority, custom, or consent as a model or example to be followed." The committee completed its task and the MLA Executive board approved the document in December, 1987. The membership of MLA voted to adopt the *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts* at the May 1988 annual conference. Shortly thereafter, a committee of librarians petitioned the MLA Executive Board to initiate a children's section. The MLA Executive Committee approved this petition and the Children's Issues Section (CIS) was formed. One of the primary functions of CIS was to promote and maintain the standards document. The timeline below, tracks significant events that have taken place since the *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts* was adopted by MLA in 1988.

• In 1989, a survey was conducted amongst librarians to evaluate the effectiveness of the standards document. Librarians reported that they used the children's standards document to establish children's librarian positions in their communities, advocate for children's access to all library materials, services and programs, and to guide their planning and research when improving, renovating, or constructing the children's area in a public library.

• In 1990, MLA/CIS featured an ongoing column called "Standards Scan", in *The Bay State Librarian*, to promote the standards document as the first place to look for ideas on strong children's services for the public library.

• In 1991, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) made public library utilization of *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts* a key criterion to becoming eligible to receive LSCA Title I funding for children's services grant projects.

• During the 1994 calendar year, MLA/CIS formed a subcommittee to officially review and update the *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts*. The revision was completed and adopted by the membership of MLA in 1995. A print copy of the *Standards* was sent by MLA to every public library director in Massachusetts and to local colleges or universities that offer library science programs.

• In 2002, the Youth Services Section of MLA (formerly CIS) formed a subcommittee to review and revise the *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts*.

• In 2011, the Youth Services Section of MLA formed a subcommittee to review and revise the *Standards for Public Library Services to Children in Massachusetts*.

PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICE

In accordance with the principles expressed in the "Library Bill of Rights" and "Free Access to Libraries for Minors" (*Intellectual Freedom Manual*, 8th edition, American Library Association, 2008), every child in Massachusetts is entitled to a free, readily accessible, and specialized program of public library service. The essential goals of public library service to children are to introduce children to the love of reading and literature, and to help them become capable, critical, users of information and technology. Children must have access on an equal basis to all library services and materials provided to adults, including programs, reserves and interlibrary loan, and access to the Internet, online databases, and other developing electronic technologies. To ensure a high quality of service to children, every library director and children's services team must work together to:

• Establish a separate space for children's services
• Employ at least one qualified librarian who is responsible for services to children
• Provide a collection of diverse materials in various formats
• Develop and provide information services for children
• Plan and implement a variety of programs which excite children about literature, information, technology, and promote library use
• Continually publicize the resources and services of the children's department
• Cooperate with other community agencies serving children
• Implement the Massachusetts Library Association Salary Schedule.
• Allocate sufficient funding to accomplish the above goals

SERVICES

By successfully balancing collection development, programming, readers' advisory and outreach, the public library meets the reading and information needs of children and others in its service profile. The Children's Services Department serves children from infancy through age 12, parents and caregivers, adults working with children, and agencies/organizations serving children. Others who may need children's materials include: students of children's literature, writers, artists and craftspeople, adults developing language skills, and adults needing basic subject material.

1.0 **The following PRINCIPLES shall govern the provision of library service to children.**

   1.1 Services to children shall be based on a written policy outlining philosophy, goals, and objectives. This document is reviewed in consultation with the library director on an annual basis to determine its effectiveness in serving the needs and interests of children of all ages, and those who work with children in the community, and to assure consistency with established library goals as stated in the library's long range plan.

   1.2 A full range of materials and services is offered at no charge. Access to materials is not limited because of a child's age, or the type of material.

   1.3 As library users children must be treated courteously and with respect throughout the library, and every effort must be made to answer their requests.

   1.4 The Children's Services Department hours shall be no less than those of the Adult Services Department. The Children's Services Department shall be appropriately staffed to provide the full range of available services to children during all hours the library is open.

   1.5 Continuing efforts shall be made to identify underserved and hard-to-reach populations, and to develop appropriate services in response to their needs. This includes children with special needs, children whose primary language is not English, children at risk, and children in alternative learning and care environments, including home-schooled children. In addition, the library must comply with all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

   1.6 As readers' advisors, children's services staff assist young people in making the transition to young adult or adult materials by introducing them to materials outside the children's area, and by helping them communicate with adult services staff.

   1.7 The child's right to privacy is supported in accordance with the principles in the "Code of Ethics," American Library Association revised on January 22, 2008 and the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78 Section 7 .

2.0 ELEMENTS of basic service provided by the Children's Services Department are:

2.1 An active plan in keeping with the library's mission that promotes the library's goals and objectives.

2.2 A current and user-appropriate collection of children's materials in a broad range of formats for both in library use and circulation. Attention must be paid to the constant evolution of technology. New technologies should be incorporated into children's library services whenever possible.

2.3 Reference and information services that include effective and current service practices, such as training in the use of electronic resources.

2.4 Readers' advisory services that assist children and adults when selecting materials for reading, viewing, and listening.

2.5 A comprehensive programming plan that meets the developmentally appropriate needs of the community's children, and the needs of adults working with children.

2.6 Access to materials and library services for children using methods available to adult library users. This includes requests for materials from all library departments and delivery of material from other libraries.

2.7 Bibliographic access to children's materials through consortia and Massachusetts Virtual Catalog, and/or other types of providers.

2.8 Administrative activities like surveys, statistics and program evaluations, that are regularly used to improve library services.

STAFF

The distinct needs and characteristics of the stages of child development make it essential that every library shall have at least one staff member to provide services to children. Each child in the Commonwealth is also entitled to the expertise of a professional children's librarian. Therefore, the goal of each library director shall be to employ a professional children's librarian, who has earned a master's degree from an ALA accredited program, with course work related to children's materials and service.

1.0 The following PRINCIPLES shall govern the staffing of children's services:

1.1. The children's librarian shall possess the following competencies:
• A broad knowledge of children's physical and intellectual development ,and its implication for library service
• A genuine caring and respect for children
• Knowledge and understanding of the library's mission, goals, and objectives
• Recognition of current issues and legislation affecting children in the community and society
• Ability to work well and communicate constructively with both children and adults
• Ability to plan, manage, and evaluate programs and services, and to assess their effectiveness based on community needs
• A broad knowledge and appreciation of children's literature, periodicals, audiovisual materials, websites and other electronic media, and other materials that constitute a current and relevant children's collection
• Ability to learn and implement skills as new technologies emerge
• Ability to select print and non-print materials, and relate them to the needs of all children
• Ability and desire to assume a leadership role in staff and program development
• Ability and desire to serve as a strong advocate for children within the library and the community
• Ability to plan, develop, initiate, and carry out developmentally appropriate children's programs and services on-site and off-site

1.2 Paralibrarian staff members responsible for implementing children's services shall have some formal library and child-related training, which will be acquired through one or more of the following:
• A four-year college degree
• Successful completion of college level course work with emphasis on child development and children's literature
• Specialized training through continuing education, such as regional workshops, association meetings, programs, and seminars
• In addition, paralibrarian personnel shall be encouraged by the library administration and trustees to pursue a master's degree from an ALA accredited program.

1.3 The salary of the children's librarian must be commensurate with the formal qualifications mandated by the library, and on par with other staff who have similar levels of responsibility within the library. Appropriate time and recompense shall be provided for job related professional activities.

1.4 Staff support (professional, paralibrarian, clerical, page) is essential for attaining a high level of service, and for achieving the following core responsibilities:
• Support may be shared with other departments, but should be available to the children's department, when programs are in progress, and at other times that are mutually agreed upon by the children's librarian and the library director.
• Library administration and trustees shall encourage staff to take part in specialized training through continuing education, such as regional workshops, professional association meetings, programs and seminars.

1.5 Factors to be considered in staff allocation shall include:
• the percentage of the total population who are children
• the percentage of total circulation consisting of children's materials
• the need to expand children's services
• the volume and diversity of programming
• the size and complexity of the collection
• the need to provide staff coverage during all hours of operation

1.6 There shall be position descriptions for all staff with responsibility for children's services, and it is desirable that each staff member develop an annual set of goals and objectives in consultation with her/his supervisor.

1.7 Regular performance evaluation of children's services staff shall be conducted and shall be based on position descriptions, and on goals and objectives.

1.8 Any volunteers serving in the children's area shall be supervised by the children's librarian. Volunteers should not replace, but act as a complement to regular staff. The use of volunteers in the children's department shall follow the guidelines determined by the library administration.

1.9 The Massachusetts Library System (MLS) shall provide at least one full time advisor. This advisor shall provide advisory services to staff in local public libraries, and provide continuing education programs. Every effort shall be made to support opportunities for regular meetings between local youth service staff and state advisors.

2.0 The RESPONSIBILITIES of the professional children's librarian are to:

2.1 Serve as part of the library's management team to assure communication, coordination, and planning with library administration and other library staff.

2.2 Manage the operation of the children's area, including:
• Analyzing the costs of library services to children in order to assess the budgetary needs of the children's department.
• Working with other library personnel to plan and implement the budget.
• Writing job descriptions, interviewing, and selecting staff in cooperation with the library administration.
• Training, supervising, and developing staff through mentoring, coaching, and constructive evaluation.
• Gathering and analyzing statistics to inform and promote the development of library

services.
• Assisting the library administration in the development of policies affecting children's services.

2.3 Develop short and long term goals and objectives for children's services as part of the overall library planning process. Plan and implement activities to achieve these goals and objectives.

2.4 Take the initiative, working with library administration, to seek supplementary funding, to enhance library services. Sources may include:
• Grants from federal, state or local governments or private foundations.
• Contributions from Friends of the Library, community organizations, or local businesses.

2.5 Implement the library collection development policy in matters of selecting, evaluating, maintaining, and weeding children's materials.

2.6 Provide reference, reader's advisory, and library orientation/instruction services.

2.7 Plan, implement, manage, and evaluate programs for children of all ages, parents, teachers, and caregivers.

2.8 Work with other library departments to promote, publicize, and represent children's services and the library, in the schools and with local community agencies.

2.9 Develop cooperative programs, services, and initiatives between the public library, schools, and other community agencies.

2.10 Advocate for children's services to governmental, educational, and community boards.

2.11 Pursue professional development through active participation in professional associations, attending continuing education, reading professional literature, and keeping abreast of trends relating to children's needs and interests. This information will also be shared with the library administration to keep them informed of the latest developments.

2.12 In the absence of a professional children's librarian, these responsibilities shall be shared between the designated children's paralibrarian and the library director. They will seek additional expertise from the Massachusetts Library System youth advisor as needed.

COLLECTIONS

The purpose of the children's collection is to provide diverse, current and relevant materials that meet the informational, recreational, cultural and developmental needs of all children in the community. Inherent in this purpose, is the desire to encourage lifelong learning, foster an appreciation of literature and the love of reading, and provide a source of accurate and up-to-date information.

1.0 The following PRINCIPLES shall govern the development of collections to serve children:

1.1 A written collection development policy specific to children's materials must be in place and endorsed by the library's governing board. This policy should be consistent with the mission and policies of the library, and the *ALA Library Bill of Rights*. This policy shall include:
• a statement of purpose
• criteria for selection, evaluation and weeding
• the *Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read* and *Freedom to View* (all policies of the American Library Association)
• a statement governing donated materials
• guidelines for handling requests for reconsideration of library materials

1.2 Collection development of children's materials shall be under the direction of the person responsible for children's services.

1.3 Selection of materials shall be based on:
• Consulting a wide variety of reviewing sources, and includes material from large publishers and small presses.
• Considering popular appeal as well as requests from children and adults who work with children.
• Accommodating the diversity of patrons by providing a collection that is balanced in subject matter and in points of view.

1.4 A continuous materials evaluation program for discarding and replacing materials that are worn, out of date, or no longer appealing to users must be in place. These materials must be discarded from the collection and/or evaluated for replacement. The children's librarian must be aware of the changing nature of each subject area.

1.5 An annual budget must be designated for materials and maintenance of the children's collection. A portion of the budget shall be allocated for replacement and duplicate copies. Factors to be considered in budget allocation shall include:
• the percentage of the total population who are children
• the percentage of the total circulation consisting of children's materials
• the need to expand children's services
• the comparative cost of children's materials and adult materials
• the necessity of replacing children's materials more frequently
• the need to include new formats and technologies

1.6 The public library collection for children shall complement, but not take the place of the school library in the community (See *The MLA and MSLA Joint Statement on Collection Development*). In cases where the public library also serves as a school library, arrangements must be made for reimbursement from the community budget.

1.7 To facilitate the use of the children's collection there must be:
• Full cataloguing and prompt processing of all print and non-print materials
• Logical organization of materials according to accepted library standards
• Display of materials in a way as to invite use by children and adults,
• Directional signs and appropriate shelving,
• Promotion of materials through a variety of methods such as, online promotion, social networking sites, booklists, book talks, library exhibits, and programs.

1.8 Use of professional collections provided by the Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

2.0 CHARACTERISTICS of Children's Department collection:

2.1 The children's department collection shall include a wide range of materials (print, audiovisual, and electronic) which will take into consideration the developmental stages of children, and the needs of adults who work with and care for children.

2.2 The collection must include a selection of current reference materials (available in print and electronic database formats).

2.3 Each library collection should:
• Include materials which represent the cultural and social diversity of a changing society, and reflect the experience of contemporary children.
• Provide access to materials in languages appropriate to meet the reading needs of all children in the community.
• Provide materials in English about the culture of prominent ethnic groups in the community.
• Provide a parenting collection which aids and supports parents/caregivers in better understanding the developmental needs of children.

2.4 Library programs shall serve special needs children, providing access to materials and equipment such as books in Braille, talking books, audiobooks, large print, telecommunication devices for the deaf (TTY), and low vision aids.

2.5 As new formats and technologies are developed, they should be considered for inclusion in the collection. Appropriate equipment for using audiovisual materials and electronic formats should be readily available and accessible to children throughout the library.

2.6 The children's librarian will select and evaluate electronic resources on an ongoing basis, using the guidelines in the library's collection development policy.
• A portion of the collection's budget should support electronic acquisitions. Additionally, the library's technology plan should also address the need to purchase and maintain the equipment. This includes the software and infrastructure needed to support these items.

• Each children's department should have its own dedicated web page as part of the library's website. Information that might be included on the website to enhance and extend the programs and services for children are:
• Department contact information
• Programs and services
• Links to electronic resources provided by the library, consortia or state agency
• Listing of online resources
• Homework Page
• Collection Promotion-booklists etc.
• Interactive formats
• Information on searching the Internet safely

2.7 Children's librarians should work with library administration in reviewing their Internet policy. Components of the policy should include:
• Acceptable uses of the Internet in the library,
• Children's access to technology
• Selection criteria for inclusion of links on the library web page
• Programs to help children and parents safely navigate and evaluate information found online
• Programs to help children and parents understand digital portfolios, and how to be a responsible digital citizen
• Information for parents on protecting children's privacy
• Consequences of violating the policy

PROGRAMS

Programming for children and those who work with children is an essential service that responds to the cultural, educational, recreational and informational needs of the community. As program administrators, youth services librarians develop comprehensive program plans to meet the developmentally appropriate needs of the community's youth.

These programs serve as a catalyst to stimulate a child's investment in lifelong learning by promoting literature, literacy, information, encouraging library use, and highlighting the library as a vital community resource

Free-of-charge programs shall be considered a basic part of library service to youth regardless of library size. Types of programming may be varied and may include: storytimes for various ages; craft programs; programs for parents and other adults; films; special performances in puppetry, theatre, magic, music, dance, and storytelling; summer reading programs; book discussion groups; library orientation and tours; programs related to library skills; visits to schools; outreach programs; lectures; technology-based programs; and demonstrations.

1.0 The following PRINCIPLES shall govern the development of programs for children:

1.1. Programs shall be planned on a regular basis for children of all ages and abilities, including those with special needs. Programs for caregivers such as parents, childcare providers, teachers, and/or community workers who are involved with youth, as well as programs for adults and children together, may also be provided.

1.2 The children's librarian will create a policy that outlines the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the library's children's programs. It will be reviewed on an annual basis and revised as necessary.

1.3 The librarian shall consider community needs, literacy benchmarks, and opinions and requests of children and caregivers, when planning programs.

1.4 The librarian shall consider schedules, and resources, as well as physical accessibility, when planning the location, quantity, time, and variety of programs.

1.5 Programs shall include activities both within and outside the library, and should include activities co-sponsored with other community groups. Important ongoing activities are:
• Communication between the public library and schools, preschools, daycare centers, family daycare providers, and homeschoolers, to ensure all children experience the benefits of public library services.
• Communication, cooperation, and interaction with a variety of community agencies, to help provide for the education, enrichment, and well-being of the children in the community.

1.6 Publicity must be integrated into a well-planned marketing approach to ensure program success.

1.7 Programs shall be evaluated to identify areas of success and the need for

improvement, and to gain support for future programming. Program evaluation methods may include statistics, surveys, benchmarks, focus groups, written anecdotes, and asset-based outcomes.

2.0 ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAMS:

2.1 Organization and management of programs shall be under the direct supervision of the children's librarian. It is essential that paid library time be scheduled for the preparation, publicity, execution, and evaluation of programs. Volunteers with special skills may assist with programming. The librarian shall see that volunteers are adequately trained, prepared, and supervised.

2.2 A specific budget should be allocated for children's programming which reflects community needs. The budget should be sufficient to plan, present, and publicize programs throughout the community.

2.3 Facilities shall be designed to accommodate the presentation of programs as well as the safety and special needs of participants. Programs must be located with consideration for the convenience of other library users. At times as a result of collaboration, programs may take place virtually and off-site.

2.4 Program marketing shall include promotional tools, both within and outside the library. These tools may include, but are not limited to, site visits, displays, press releases, contests, radio, television, library websites, social media, newsletters, listservs, and e-mail distribution.

2.5 All programs should be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Program evaluation assists the librarian in determining success in:
• Meeting the library's program goals
• Advocating for sufficient staff and funds
• Reaching the target audience and meeting community needs
• Relating current programming to future planning and budget preparations

2.6 The Massachusetts Library System shall regularly provide to local libraries continuing education programs, program idea packages, publicity materials, and individual consultation regarding the principles and characteristics of programs.

2.7 Compilation and evaluation of statistics and feedback provide justification for program support, such as staffing, scheduling and budget requirements, to library and community administrators, library trustees, and the public. Feedback can be obtained by conducting surveys, evaluations and patron commentary.
Statistics should be kept regarding:
• number of programs
• types of programs
• program attendance
• preparation time per program
• cost
• staff required

- actual program time
- target audience and actual audience.

FACILITIES

Each Massachusetts public library will have a specific area which is equipped to provide developmentally appropriate children's services. This area is open the same hours as the rest of the library and is accessible to appropriate program space. All areas of the library are designed to ensure children's ease of access and use. A well planned and maintained children's area, which is suitably staffed, underscores the benefits of the children's library experience. Attending to the spatial needs of the children's department supports the librarian's goals to deliver a full and evolving complement of children's services.

1.0 **The following PRINCIPLES shall govern the provision of facilities to serve children:**

1.1 The appearance of the children's area shall be inviting, and stimulate the use of a variety of resources.

1.2 The children's area shall be an integral part of the whole library; located in such a way that children have easy access to other library services, and in compliance with guidelines set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

1.3 The librarian regularly evaluates the effectiveness of existing space and makes recommendations regarding layout and furnishings. When designing space, the guiding principle should always be form follows function. As activities, technologies, and children's needs change, the area shall be adapted accordingly.

1.4 Visibility, ease of supervision and safety factors are prime considerations in designing the area. These guidelines shall be the minimum followed:
• All electrical outlets shall be child proofed
• Sturdy shelving and storage units shall be designed and placed to avoid accidents
• Well-maintained, safe entrances and exits must be provided
• Stairways, balconies or railings shall be designed or modified to ensure safety
• An unobstructed line of sight (in relation to the children's information desk) should be a goal throughout the facility.

2.0 CHARACTERISTICS of facilities serving children:

2.1 The children's area shall be designed for ease of use by children of all ages.

2.2 The children's area must be accessible to all users, including those with special needs.
Level floors without steps are desirable for ease of access, safety, and flexibility.

2.3 The physical layout of the area should be safe, flexible and conducive to a variety of users' activities:
• Browsing
• Reading
• Quiet study
• Group study
• Individual or group instruction

• Participating in programs
• Convening meetings
• Using audiovisual and electronic technologies
• Using toys, games and realia

2.4 Shelving shall be designed:
• To fit the size and dimension of a variety of materials
• To be used easily by children
• To be adjustable and moveable
• To include racks, bins, and other storage equipment

2.5 Furnishings shall accommodate use by children of various sizes and needs, and adult-and-child pairs.

2.6 Designated space for strollers and coats is desirable in the children's area.

2.7 Other essential elements in the children's area include:
• carpeting
• good acoustics
• glare-free and shadow-free lighting
• sufficient electrical power sources
• sound proofing
• temperature controls
• clocks in public and staff areas
• staff telephone
• staff safety mechanism (i.e. panic button) to alert public safety officials

2.8 The circulation desk, whether located in the children's area, or shared with adult services, shall be accommodating for children.

2.9 All program areas shall be:
• Generously supplied with outlets, light controls, flexible seating, telecommunication and audio-visual capabilities
• Provided with good ventilation
• Accessible to a sink
• Accessible to a restroom

2.10 Restrooms shall be located for easy supervision. An ADA compliant restroom designed for children shall be provided. Restrooms should also provide room for an accompanying adult and a diaper changing area.

2.11 The children's area will have a strategically located, non-public, staff work and material storage area.

2.12 Bulletin boards, exhibit space, and display accessories should be:
• Easily maintained
• Dispersed throughout the area
• Multi-purpose in nature
• Arranged with maximum visibility to children

2.13 Signage shall be consistent with the library's overall signage plan:
• Signs shall be simple, concise, highly visible, current, easily maintained and professional in appearance.
• Signs shall be consistent in color, letter style and tone, easily comprehended by children, and ADA compliant.
• Symbols and languages, in addition to English, may be appropriate.
• Signs shall indicate service areas, parts of the collection, and library and safety regulations.

CORE DOCUMENTS

- [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Free Access to Libraries for Minors](#)
- [The Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- [Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials](#)
- [Banned and Challenged Materials](#)
- [Minors and Internet Interactivity: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks](#)
- [Copyright Issues for Youth Services Librarians](#)
- [Kids! Know Your Rights](#)
- [Statement of Commitment to Excellence in Library Service to Children in a Technological Age](#)
- [Labels and Rating Systems](#)
- [Confidentiality Law Chapter 78, Section 7 of the Massachusetts General Laws](#)

MSLA and YSS/MLA Joint Statements:
- [Statement on School/Public Library Collaboration](#)
- [Schools/Public Library Services to Children: A Common Purpose with Similarities and Differences](#)
- [Joint Statement on Collection Development in Schools and Public Libraries](#)

Additional documents:
- [YSS Bylaws – updated March 2012](#)

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

State Agencies

Massachusetts Library System
The Massachusetts Library System (MLS) provides services to more than 1,700 Massachusetts libraries of all types and sizes throughout the Commonwealth. MLS was established in July 2010 with the following mission:

The Massachusetts Library System, a state-supported collaborative, fosters cooperation, communication, innovation, and sharing among member libraries of all types. The MLS promotes equitable access to excellent library services and resources for all who live, work, or study in Massachusetts.

MLS has two offices:
Headquarters
225 Cedar Hill Street, Suite 229
Marlborough, MA 01752
Voice: 508-357-2121
Toll Free: 866-627-7228

Western Massachusetts Office
4 Sandy Lane
Whately, MA 01093
Voice: (413) 665-9898 / 800-282-7755
Fax: (413) 665-8877
Mailing address: PO Box 609
South Deerfield, MA 01373-0609
http://www.masslibsystem.org/

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
98 North Washington Street, Suite 401
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617-725-1860, 800-952-7403
Fax: 617-725-0140
http://mblc.state.ma.us

National and State Library Associations

Massachusetts Library Association
Elizabeth Hacala, Executive Director
PO Box 535
Bedford, MA 01730
phone: 781-275-7729
fax: 781-998-0393
mlaoffice@masslib.org

Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA)
Kathy Lowe, Executive Director
Massachusetts School Library Association
PO Box 658
Lunenburg, MA 01462
klowe@maschoolibraries.org
Phone/fax: 978-582-6967
http://maschoolibraries.org/

New England Library Association (NELA) and New England Roundtable of Teen and Children's Librarians Section (NERTCL)
55 North Main Street, Unit 49
Belchertown, MA 01007
413-813-5254
rscheier@gmail.com
http://nelib.org/
E mail: office@nelib.org

American Library Association (ALA)
50 E. Huron St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611
http://www.ala.org

Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC)
50 E. Huron St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611
1-800-545-2433, ext. 2163
E mail: alsc@ala.org
http://www.ala.org/alsc

American Association of School Librarians (AASL)
50 E. Huron St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611
1-800-545-2433 ext. 4382
E-mail: aasl@ala.org

Email Lists

Click HERE for Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Email Distribution Lists
This includes subscription information for the Massachusetts Youth and Children Discussion List (**MASSYAC**).

Bibliography of Professional Resources

Some of these resources are available as an online document.
Simply click on the link that you would like to access.

Accessibility

ALA: Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies. *Library Accessibility: What you need to know.* 15 online tipsheets, 2010.
http://www.ala.org/ascla/asclaprotools/accessibilitytipsheets

Advocacy

Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) Issues and Advocacy
http://www.ala.org/alsc/issueadv

Public Library Association (PLA)
http://www.ala.org/pla/advocacy

ALA (ALA) Advocacy and Legislation
http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg

ALA: Add it up: libraries make the difference in youth development and education
http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/additup

Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) Advocacy
http://www.masslib.org/advocacy

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Periodicals for Collection Development:

Booklist
P.O. Box 607
Mt. Morris, IL 61054-7564.
Tel: 888-350-0949
http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/booklist.htm
ISSN: 1055-4742

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501 E. Daniel St. MC-493
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Intellectual Freedom

ALA/OIF. Office of Intellectual Freedom**.**
http://www.ala.org/offices/oif

ALA/OIF. Intellectual Freedom Manual
http://www.ifmanual.org/

ALA/OIF. Libraries and the Internet Toolkit:
http://www.ifmanual.org/litoolkit

ALA/OIF. Privacy Tool Kit.
http://www.ala.org/offices/oif/iftoolkits/toolkitsprivacy/privacy

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<u>Technology and Internet</u>

ALA Online Resources for Internet Safety and Use

Internet Tool Kit: http://www.ala.org/offices/oif/iftoolkits/litoolkit/default

Navigating the net with kids
http://www.ala.org/alsc/sites/ala.org.alsc/files/content/issuesadv/internettech/NavNetBrochure.pdf

ALA Privacy Resources for Children and Families:
http://www.ala.org/offices/oif/ifissues/issuesrelatedlinks/privacyresources

ALA Great Websites for Kids:
http://gws.ala.org/

Child Safety on the Information Highway:
http://www.safekids.com/child-safety-on-the-information-highway/

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The committee would also like to thank Susan Nichols and Elaine Loehman from the Douglas School System Libraries and Doreen Metcalfe formerly of the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (2001-2002) for their assistance in the initial stages of the document.

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