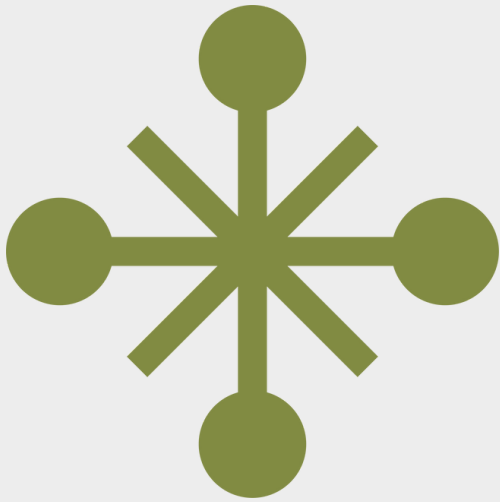


July, 2023



Teen Diversity Audit

Final Results

Arranged by

Christina Kelley, Dakota Hall, Tyler
Munn, Rachel Akemon, & Decker
Cavosie

Prepared for

Bartholomew County Public Library
Board of Trustees

Phase 1: Benchmarking

During Phase 1, our subcommittee spoke with 30 public libraries across the country to consult peers and experts on the future of Teen collections. Our team asked each library the same set of questions regarding collection development, curation and display to identify commonalities and industry standards.

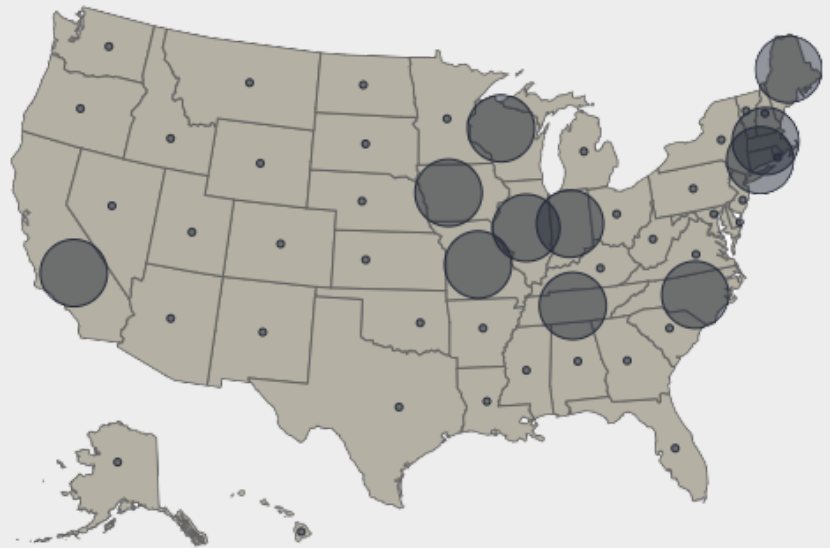




All Libraries Surveyed

Greenwood Public Library
Jennings County Public Library
Floyd County Public Library
Indy Public Library
Jackson County Public Library
Portland Public Library
Monroe County Public Library
Los Angeles Public Library
Benicia Public Library
Bettendorf Public Library
Nashville Public Library
Shawano County Library
Morrison-Reeves Library
Walpole Public Library
Muncie Public Library
Brown County Public Library
Forest Park Public Library
Chicago Public Library
Tippecanoe Co Public Library
West Lafayette Public Library
Aurora Public Library District
Kokomo-Howard Public Library
Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library
Jeffersonville Township Public Library
Jefferson County Public Library (Madison)
Wake County Public Library
West Millbrook Magnet Middle School
Danville Public Library
Kirkwood Public Library
Stratford Library Association

Locations Across the Country



Populations ranging from 14K to 1.1M





Libraries Covered in Synthesis



Bartholomew County Public Library

Columbus, IN

Population: 85K

Indianapolis Public Library

Indianapolis, IN

Population: 970K

Floyd County Public Library

New Albany, IN

Population: 77K

Jackson County Public Library

Seymour, IN

Population: 47K

Monroe County Public Library

Bloomington, IN

Population: 130K

Portland Public Library

Portland, ME

Population: 68K



Phase 1: Benchmarking

Conclusion

All thirty interviewed libraries feature a physical shelving collection dedicated to teen books. Some call it Young Adult, YA, or Teen.

Typically, the target audience for this section is 6th or 7th through 12th grade. This is true for the five spotlighted libraries. While some do, most of the libraries interviewed do not further split their collections into a “younger teen” and “older teen” section, “middle school” and “high school,” etc, following publishing guidelines and target audiences.

Some libraries just feature a standalone teen fiction and teen graphics collection, while “interfiling” teen nonfiction with adult nonfiction. Typically, this is due to space issues or size of their collections. However, at least one such librarian commented that they didn’t like this system because it “buries” the teen titles within the larger adult nonfiction collection, and teens just don’t venture into that collection as much. At least one other library is currently in the process of creating a teen graphic nonfiction section.

By and large, teen materials are selected by a dedicated Teen Librarian for 6/7th-12th grade, or in some cases, a Youth Services Librarian (birth-18). These librarians are trained and have MLS degrees.

The data collected across the state and country show that the Bartholomew County Public Library’s Teen Area is very typical in its intended audience (grades 7-12), its collections, and that the Teen Services Manager selects all materials.



Phase 2: Large-Scale Community Survey

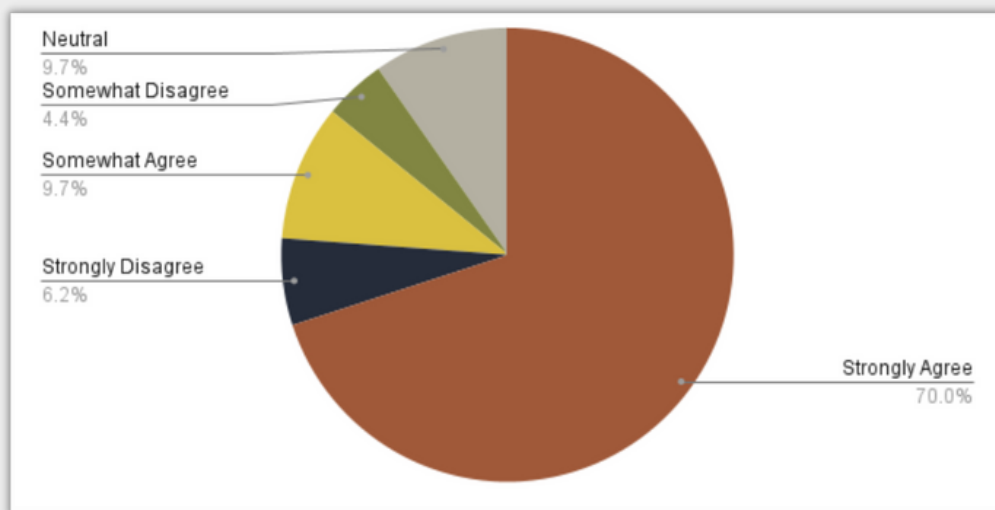
While benchmarking data against neighboring libraries and the industry overall, understanding our community was also essential to Phase 1 of this diversity audit.

Our team developed and conducted a three question survey open to all community members. The survey was specific to the Teen department and it allowed for community members to provide in-depth comments regarding the teen collections and space.

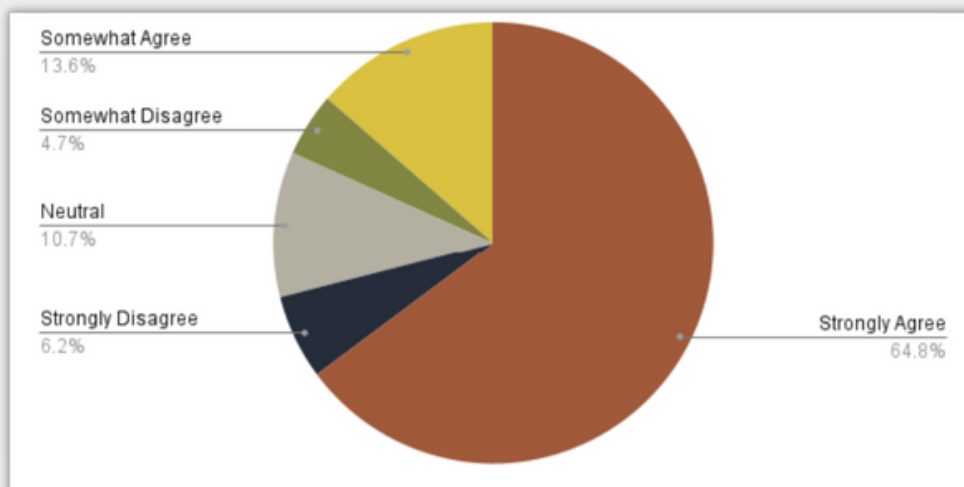


Phase 1: Large-Scale Community Survey

Question 1: The teen area is a safe, welcoming space for all that meets the library's mission to serve as the community crossroads- connecting people, ideas, information, and experiences to empower everyone on their journey of lifelong learning.



Question 2: The teen collection provides relevant materials that meet our diverse community's needs.



Phase 1: Community Survey Conclusion

The survey ran for three weeks and gathered over 800 responses overall, 151 specifically from teens. The data collected showcased outstanding support for our Teen Services and highlighted opportunities for the department moving forward.

After each question, respondents were offered the ability to add their thoughts to elaborate on their choice. Our team was able to connect common threads in this qualitative data to provide a better idea on the specific comments and concerns that arose from the survey:

Question 1 Positive Responses featuring:

- Atmosphere/Staff: 116
- Collection: 57
- Personal Belief/Expression: 33

Question 1 Negative Responses featuring:

- Atmosphere/Staff: 13
- Collection: 44
- Personal Beliefs/Expression: 29

Question 2 Positive Responses featuring:

- DEI: 87
- General: 76
- Specific Collections: 19

Question 2 Negative Responses featuring:

- DEI: 42
- General: 9
- Specific Collections: 25

The 'Additional Thoughts' from our community members showed that most teens and community members feel safe and welcome in the Teen space. Opportunities for the atmosphere/space included upgrades in furniture, a more private area, and more variety in teen-designed art. The 'Additional Thoughts' comments also showed that our community trusts the current collection development strategies, but there could be room for expansion in certain genres.



Phase 2: Teen Collection Diversity Audit

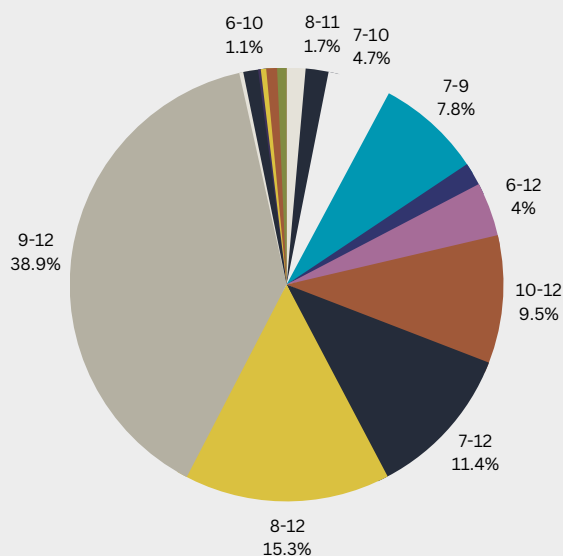
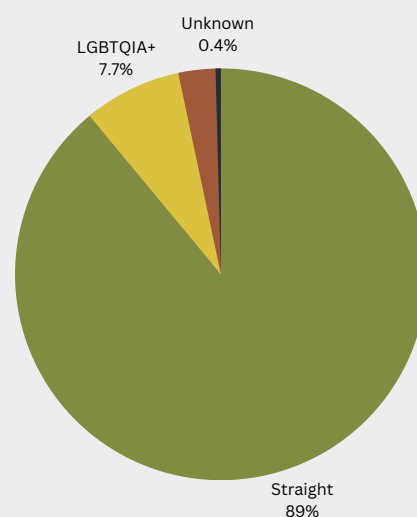
In Phase 2, our team conducted an in-depth collection diversity audit. This audit looked at collection attributes of the authors, protagonists, and voice of the materials. Attributes examined included gender, sexual orientation, religion, race/ethnicity, and disabilities. Additionally, suggested grade range of each collection item was examined.

Data collected for this audit came from Novelist Plus. Novelist Plus is the premiere database for readers' advisory used by librarians worldwide.



Phase 2: Teen Collection Diversity Audit

A common topic brought up at past board meetings centered around the perception that our Teen romance collection featured predominately LGBTQIA+ characters. The data collected during this audit shows that roughly 7.7% of the Teen romance collection features an LGBTQIA+ character, while 89% of the Teen romance collection features a straight main character(s). Furthermore, only 12% of the teen collection as a whole features LGBTQIA+ characters, which is well below the national and state population among teens, which both sit around 20% of the population.



The grade ranges for our collection items varied the most out of all data sets examined. The information gathered highlighted the inconsistency in the world of publishing for suggested age ranges and reading level suggestions for materials.

During Phase 2, our subcommittee found that the collection has room for improvement. Our team found much of the data supports the traditional, dominant culture viewpoint. Overall, the Diversity Audit has shown that the Bartholomew County Public Library Teen collection needs to be further diversified to better meet the needs of the teens we serve and to align with library industry standards.



Phase 3: Recommendations

Phase 1 of the Teen Diversity Audit by speaking with 30 public libraries across the country to consult peers and experts on the future of Teen collections. The data collected from this inquiry provided an initial outline for the rest of the Teen Diversity Audit and future of teen spaces in general. Phase 2 encompassed a large-scale community survey and an internal collection audit. The community survey revealed that a vast majority of our local teens feel that we offer a safe and welcoming space with diverse, relevant collection materials.

The internal audit showed that our collection needs to be further diversified to better meet the needs of the teens we serve and to align with library industry standards. Phase 3 expresses the data collected from both previous phases in actionable next steps for the Teen Department.



Phase 3:

Recommendations

Collection Goals for 2023 and Beyond:

As our survey and diversity audit show, our Teen collection is not as diverse as it should be. Going forward, we are committed to making the diversification of our Teen collection a high priority and being intentional with our sourcing of materials. We will accomplish this by regularly looking at specialized publishing companies whose focus is also on various diverse subject matters as well as ALA's annual Youth Media Awards which includes many diverse awards. We will strive to add more books by authors with disabilities, BIPOC authors, authors from a wide variety of religious backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ authors, and more Spanish language titles, especially those originally published in Spanish.

1. Specific awards that can help meet collection diversity goals

- a. Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature
- b. Lambda Literary Awards (LGBTQ)
- c. Coretta Scott King Book Awards (Black)
- d. Pura Belpré Award (Latinx)
- e. Stonewall Book Awards (LGBTQ)
- f. American Indian Youth Literature Award
- g. The Arab American Book Award
- h. Schneider Family Book Award (Disability)
- i. Christy Award (Christianity)

2. Specific publishers that can help meet collection diversity goals

- a. Religious books
 - i. Zondervan (Christian)
 - ii. Thomas Nelson (Christian)
 - iii. Spirit (from Baker & Taylor) (various)
 - iv. Salaam Reads (Muslim)
 - v. Judaica Press (Jewish)
 - vi. Jewish Lights Publishing (Jewish)



Phase 3:

Recommendations

2. Specific publishers that can help meet collection diversity goals

b. BIPOC authors

- i. Diversity & Inclusion (from Baker & Taylor)
- ii. Lee & Low Books/ Tu Books imprint (BIPOC)
- iii. Great Oak Press (Indigenous)
- iv. Salina Bookshelf (Indigenous/Navajo)
- v. Theytus Books (Indigenous/Aboriginal)
- vi. Tuttle Publishing (Asian)
- vii. Denene Millner Books - S&S Imprint (Black)
- viii. Levine Querido - (BIPOC and Queer)
- ix. Arte Público Press - (Latin American)

c. Spanish titles

- i. La Vida Espanol (from Baker & Taylor)

d. Queer publishing

- i. Sapphire Books (Lesbian)
- ii. Interlude Press - Duet imprint (LGBTQ)
- iii. Harmony Ink/ Dream Spinner Press (LGBTQ)
- iv. Ylva Publishing
- v. Abrams Books - especially Surely and Megascoppe imprints
- vi. Chicago Review Press
- vii. Sourcebooks
- viii. Page Street Publishing Co.

e. Ability Diverse authors

- i. Disabledwriters.com



Phase 3:

Recommendations

Policy for Book Displays

The Bartholomew County Public Library highlights materials from our collection in order to enable our patrons to find the materials they need, promote programs happening within the library, and to encourage the discovery of something new. This is done through activities such as monthly displays, pop-up displays, small groupings of materials, and reading lists. These activities are planned, curated, and implemented by library staff. Topics chosen are done so with intentionality.

Displays and reading lists often coincide with national celebrations and observances, but are also informed by community relevance and hot topics. All groupings of highlighted materials are created to promote and highlight diversity and inclusion within the community, and thus seek to exhibit the diversity of the library's collection by displaying a wide array of backgrounds and viewpoints in characters, authors, genres, formats, and ideas.

Teen Space Changes

In order to make it clearer that one has entered the area in which Teen materials are held, we will use shelving configurations and styles that differ from the other collections. This will showcase it as a unique space. We will be experimenting with the best ways to present and group different materials. Special care will be taken to be thoughtful about the proximity of the various teen subcollections and other collections.

The Teen area will be moving to the opposite side of the Adult nonfiction collection and moving the Teen programming area into what used to be the Indiana Room. This room will be staffed by our teen librarians and create a safe space for the teens to congregate and engage in programming. All teen materials will be housed outside of this room along with some seating for quiet reading.

