

Making Space for Young Adults in Public Libraries
[name removed] Public Library

Staff Video

I'm entering Young Adult Services. This department was founded in 1952, so it's 60 years old. The first thing we see is the teen art wall. It usually features manga or sometimes teen photography, since we have a big anime drawing contest and teen photography contests every year as well as an anime club, but right now it's featuring an exhibit from the Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The next feature is the display case for posters and flyers about upcoming events, and then there's a new book rack. We can see the length of the department in this shot, and then here are the series spinner racks. These have not only series books, but also some of the books for high-low... they're sort of high-low books for reluctant or struggling readers, so this collection is pulled out to give people who are struggling readers a little bit of a more browsable fiction collection to look at.

Down this way we have the digital media lab on the left. This is not open yet. We'll be putting some equipment in there soon, and it will open in June. That's going to be a space where teens can use iMovie or Garage Band or learn new software programs. Next door is the young adult workroom, which is neat because we have our own refrigerator in there as well as workspaces for staff. We do a lot of programming in the department, so it's been saving a lot of time to have a refrigerator closer. It used to be the nearest one was about a block away.

Down this aisle we also have some educational DVD's and audio books, but the bulk of the collection is next door in Art, Music and Media when it comes to feature films, video games and music CD's.

This is more of the collection. We have fiction, high-interest nonfiction, curriculum-support nonfiction, about 30K [thirty thousand] volumes, so it's a fairly good-sized young adult materials collection, and we also have about 20K [twenty thousand] items in the basement storage that people can still access. These are genre displays, and then we have, down on the right, some magazines, and then a booth seating area and a big table area, and the area with all the big reader tables. We have such a big reader table area because we often have school groups come in to do research, so we can accommodate a school group of about 80 students plus teachers with all these chairs and tables, and the tables are powered, so people can plug in their laptops, and we have very comfortable ergonomic chairs that many people like. The booth chairs are neat because they can be reconfigured into a little square or a circle or a little amphitheater so people can see stuff that's happening on the screen. This projector and screen is used mostly to show the library catalogue and databases, but we also have sometimes had the anime club show anime music videos on this or project each other's deviant, you know, art accounts, and talk about what they're doing. The cardboard cutouts are around because we're not allowed to hang posters on the walls, so we have to have freestanding posters.

This is the reference collection past these circulating kits, much smaller than it used to be. The reference desk seats two librarians. We have two librarians work on Wednesday and Thursday evenings as well as Saturdays and Sundays during the times that we're open on Sundays during the school year, and computers, we have 16 of them with Microsoft Office and Internet. You can see the teen living room in the background. Here's one of the study rooms, and there's another one behind it. These are used by tutors and students as well as students working on group projects and students just having fun and playing role-playing games or whatnot. There's a phone teens can use to call for rides, a little chair behind the desk where people like to sit and talk to us and say 'hi.'

Here we can see the living room. You'll notice the ceiling does... the living room wall doesn't go up to the ceiling. The west wall is really neat. It's all windows all the way down, so we have these great views of downtown, lots of natural light, and teens can look out the window and see if their ride has arrived and there's a city bus stop right out there and some school bus parking for when school groups come. That was well thought out. The computer area and this living room are both teen-only, so just people in grades 6 through 12. There's sounds, listening stations in the ceiling, comfortable furniture. You can see the TV, and there's an X-Box Kinect there and we also have a Wii and some other video gaming systems. These white lights in the ceiling can be turned off and we have a colorful LED lighting system installed that's really neat in the evenings when the white lights are turned down. It gives it a disco effect back here. But right now they're broken, and we're trying to figure out if they can be replaced at all since the system is five years old and definitely out of date. The one drawback back here, like I said, is the wall doesn't go up to the ceiling and there's no door, so we're limited with how loud programs can be back here and not disturb the people who are on the computers, because we have learned that teens don't necessarily want other teens' activities to be loud when they're on the computer and vice versa, so it really depends on what people are doing, but it can't be as loud. It's not just a question of adults not liking loudness. It's a question of sometimes teens not liking too much loudness as well, so we try not to over-generalize and say all teens like a loud space, when really, that's not true.

This is the comic book collection for super heroes and independents, and this is the manga collection. Now we're sort of getting back to reference and the reference desk and the booth seating area. Overall, I would say that the strength of the department is that it's very big. It's about 10K [ten thousand] square feet, and we can do a lot in here. We can have a program going on at the big tables, a program going on in the booths, a program going on in the living room, so you know, people still asking reference questions, and there's a lot that can be happening at one time and that's terrific. The drawback of it is that it's very open, and a lot of teens prefer, you know, cozy little nooks, so it's six of one, half a dozen of another. One thing we would love to have had different was more sound-proofing of the spaces so that the multi-purpose use would be a little easier, and we also wish we could have more color, so that might be something we can get in the future.

[End of Staff Video]

Youth Video One

I'm entering the Young Adults department, where we have plenty of books over here on my left, and on my right as we pass some more books over here. And then over here we have some magazines. And as we're passing the references desk where the librarians work a lot, all the time, over here are more books. And here's anime. A lot of people like to read anime. Here is the study room where you can study or get on your laptop. Here is another study room where you can study or get on your laptop. And here's the lounge, where we usually have our game nights. I also met author Mike Mullin, who wrote *Ashfall*. I met him here.

This is the computer area, where I get on the computer and I get on Facebook. And this is where people can go to get on the computers or do their homework or just spend time with friends, or eat, and that's about it.

[End Youth Video One]

Youth Video Two

Hey, you guys, so I guess I was supposed to make a video about touring the Young Adults Department right there, and like show you around and describe some stuff that I like about it. So the young adults is about like 16, 17 years old. It's kind of old. These are some of the... actually, I don't know what this is. Oh, it's about the Holocaust. Sometimes there will be like some drawings for anime that are put up here from the manga club, which is like on the last Wednesday or Thursday of each month. I don't know if they still do it, though. Yeah. So there are like many books here, kind of some popular, some not popular. Back here we have even more books that has so many topics, like if you want to study for your SAT's or GED's, they're right here. There are some drawing instructing books somewhere around here. Oh, we also have history, so if you guys are into any history or anything, you can find that here in Young Adults. I'm sorry; it's been kind of a while since I've been back here.

Oh, here we are, good. So there are some drawing books here, kind of like this one. I like to go back here and grab some of these books, kind of help me to learn how to draw. It's... yeah, it helps me out a lot. And over at these seats here, it's... that's where they... well, they have chess club here on like Saturdays. A lot of people come here to play chess. And at these desks over here, there are homework helps on... like every day, I think? I came here a lot, and I've seen them here pretty often. I'll be over here like sometimes, but I'm mostly like on the computers doing the normal thing people do when they're on the computer, Facebook. And also, I like to be in these study rooms and just hang out and talk to my friends.

Also, let me show you another part of the library – the Young Adults – that I like: *so much Manga*. Like, there's just a lot. There are also some very, very good superhero books like the X-Men. There's G.I. Joe and just pretty much a lot of stuff, really.

And let me show you another portion of the library that I like to go to. This room back here, this has to be one of my favorite parts of the Young Adults because in there is a flat screen T.V. that we use every Wednesday... well, except for the last Wednesday of the month, that we just like to just play video games, stuff like that. We used to use it for like a taco anon. [sp?], which is like watching an anime, but we haven't really been doing that often. I don't really know why. But on Wednesdays we have a game night where we can play the Kinect; we have sports, stuff like that, and then we play a little bit of Call of Duty. We used to play Halo 3 but we kind of stopped playing that. And people can just come here and relax.

Well, I hope you enjoyed my video. Have a nice day!

[End of Youth Video Two]