

LIBRARY SPACE DESIGN

CHILDREN'S AND TEEN AREAS

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CHILDREN'S LIBRARY SPACES

- Reflect mission of the library
- Designed with child development in mind

Library Mission and Goals

- Library serves as a community center.
- Library supports learning from birth through adult.



Child Development

- Children learn by being active and interactive.
- Early literacy skills develop in real life settings through positive interactions with literacy materials and other people.



Early Literacy/Learning

- **Early learning environments:**
 - Cozy spaces
 - Activity carpets
 - Places to crawl and explore
 - Simple toys to stimulate imagination
 - Room for strollers, etc.

Early Literacy Space



Early Literacy Depot at the Harris County Public Library, Texas
<http://www.hcpl.net/content/new-early-literacy-depot-your-library>

Child Development

- **Ways to make a library space child-friendly for all ages of children:**
 - Create zones for quiet and noisy activities.
 - Offer age appropriate furnishings and décor.
 - Make the collection accessible to different ages of children and organize it the way your community uses it.

Hall Memorial Library—Children's Nook



Elkins Public Library Tree and Bear



Elkins Public Library Picture Book Collection



Where to start?

- **WEED!**
 - Higher usage
 - More space for displays
 - Face-out collections



Books are "shelved" on benches and window sills.

Elkins Public Library Collection



Where to start?

- Locate activity areas so they are visible from the entrance.
- Be creative about finding space.
- Create comfortable seating for both children and caregivers.

Rain gutter bookshelves--



Barbara Bush Elementary School from The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease at <http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/rah-ch7-pg3.html>

Where to start

- Move parenting collection to the children's area.
- De-clutter and create space for movement and play.
- Visit other libraries, children's museums, and early childhood centers.
- No matter how attractive a space looks, if it doesn't work for the people who use it, it's not good design.

YALSA's National Teen Space Guidelines

- Solicit teen feedback and input in the design and creation of the teen space.
- Provide a library environment that encourages emotional, social and intellectual development of teens.
- Provide a library space for teens that reflects the community in which they live.

"Quotes and Notes" at Derry Public Library



YALSA Teen Space Guidelines

- Provide and promote materials that support the educational and leisure needs of teens.
- Ensure the teen space has appropriate acceptable use and age policies to make teens feel welcome and safe.
- Provide furniture and technology that is practical yet adaptive.

Teen Spaces—Manchester Public Library



Teen Spaces—Other Considerations

- Location of teen space in the library
- Use of library lingo like YA
- Virtual space important

Wilton Public & Gregg Free Library



Teen Spaces –Wiggin Memorial Library



Final Thoughts

- Great children's and teen areas are wonderful assets, but they are not as important as having staff members who understand and enjoy children and teens and who make them feel respected and welcome.
- Questions?
