Team | Teen Interest Group
---|---
Date | April 12, 2022
Facilitators | Jake Ciarapica & Kevin Jayce, Co-Chairs
Recorder | Kevin

**Introductions**
- *Shogun* book
- *I Think Our Son is Gay* manga
- Housewives of Orange County / Salt Lake City TV shows
- *Locke and Key* graphic novel
- *The Housewives: The Real Story Behind the Housewives* book
- *The Me You Love in the Dark* book
- Making our own earrings
- The Ultimatum TV shows
- *Dungeons and Daddies* podcast

**MLA Sharing**
- Instagram Content with Readers’ Advisory Group is going well!
- Recommendations for TIG Site - we are trying video game and manga reviews.
- Kids are Customers with Children’s Services Division - dates have changed.
- Conference, May 4-6
  - Session Topics: Anime, Booktok, Discord and Comic Cons
  - Silent Basket Audition: Otaku-themed
  - TIG Meetup: Thursday, May 5th (3pm-4pm) - potentially exchange buttons!

**Other Updates**
- Teen Connect, April 28th
  - Registration closes April 21st
  - Register here: [https://sites.google.com/view/teenconnectformdlibraries/home](https://sites.google.com/view/teenconnectformdlibraries/home)
- Calvert County just started a TikTok! Follow @calvertlibrary

**Discussion**

*Suggested Resources: YALSA Advocacy*

*How do we advocate for teens…*
- *with management?*
  - When management is supportive, it is easier.
  - Teens get tacked on as the extra group - it’s important to make sure we’re purposeful with creating things that target the group.
  - Soliciting feedback forms from teens helps highlight the importance of the programs for teens which might be different than just relying on programming numbers.*
○ The balance between programming for all ages versus specialization is important because it often feels harder to make sure there are quality programs targeting teens if we also are working on story times, etc.

○ Teen Spaces might not be designated only as teens - it’s hard to make sure that the things we designate for teens are used only by teens.

○ We need to make sure we enforce policies that encourage teen spaces the same way we designate adult spaces.

○ Having former teen-services-orientated staff moving into management and supervision helps maintain advocacy.

○ Keep talking about your programs: Be positive and make sure you have the feedback for it so that others will see the benefits of a program, even if it’s just one person.

○ Collect photos and document stories for staff to see.

• … with co-workers?
  ○ Trying to balance “everyone is welcome” with “teen only” - some teens don’t want to come in if there are other ages in the room. We need to make sure staff feel comfortable with this designation.
  ○ When programming, making sure there are firm age-lines for the program which relate to actual elements of the program. I.e. An escape room for teens would not be suitable for younger kids that might run around.
  ○ We want teens to be excited to hang out together and use library resources.

• … with the community?
  ○ We want to make sure customers know the benefit of having teens in the library.
  ○ Appeal to nostalgia to customers: remind them of what the teens get from having things in the library.
  ○ Harness empathy - at least they’re hanging out here other than elsewhere; they’ve been in school all day.
  ○ Remind customers that teens are just as much customers as they are.
  ○ Sometimes community members need to recognize that other customers exist and are allowed to be in the space - and that some customers are afforded other space options which teens are not.
  ○ The library is not a quiet place anymore - quiet libraries only cater to a specific population.
  ○ Creating relationships with teens can help them understand that you are willing to be on their side and advocate for them. Make sure you follow through on their requests.

• … with administration?
  ○ Teen services has been a recent addition to some systems - but this also means the conversation feels like a recent issue.
  ○ Teen voices / customer feedback can be more valuable than staff voices sometimes.
  ○ Some started a teen board with a teen representative that speaks at board meetings.
○ It’s important to create lifelong retention: if we lose elementary kids and want them to come back as adults, we are just hoping they come back when they have kids.
○ Teens grow up to be the adults that vote for funding and policies for libraries.
○ Libraries need to be designed with spaces in mind because teen spaces next to quiet spaces or next to children’s spaces create larger challenges.
○ When branches are being remodeled, it would be beneficial if teen specialists would be consulted to get a better sense of what things could be.
○ Aesthetic over use or function is not helpful - we want to encourage teens to own the space which cannot happen if it has to rely on the brand.
○ Having to fit the brand aesthetic can be a hindrance for moving forward.
○ It’s helpful to create good relationships with marketing departments and collection development departments.

● Teens advocating for themselves:
  ○ Teens Advisory Council of Students - creating ideas for teens to get service learning hours (Calvert)
  ○ Teen Advisory Board - teen sits on adult board and gives feedback (Cecil) & (Harford)

● One tip you’d give to a new teen librarian:
  ○ Do not take it personally if no one shows up to your program
  ○ Food is your ally - bribe people to come
  ○ Form a series of tight relationships with new teens at the beginning of the school year so they can explain to the others - they'll advocate for you & your stuff
  ○ Wear cool buttons on your lanyard because you’ll be related
  ○ Be present with teens - be in the space so they know who you are
  ○ Take pictures of everything
  ○ Play dumb - let them teach you things
  ○ Acknowledge teens - just speaking to them
  ○ Speak to the teen, even if the adult is asking the questions.
  ○ Be who you are - share your interests because you can connect with teens

Agenda Building
● Next Meeting: TIGTalk in June 14th (on Discord)

Action Items

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