



## Teen Services Today: A Practical Guide for Librarians (Practical Guides for Librarians)

By Sara K. Joiner, Geri Swanzy



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Two authors with more than 20 years of combined experience share their practical experience serving teens in public libraries. *Teen Services Today* highlights best practices, including resources and references, to quickly implement programs and services to young adults.

Although teen services covers ages 12 to 18, a world of developmental changes and interest levels exist within those six short years. Teens offer a range of opportunities for public libraries, not simply as patrons, but also as advocates and volunteers.

Special features of the book include:

- Basic information on the fundamental services and programs for teens
- Reasons for providing services to teens
- Examples of successful teen programs, complete with lists of needed supplies and potential costs, that can generally be performed by one or two staff members
- Checklists and forms

*Teen Services Today: A Practical Guide for Librarians* gives all library staff the tools they need to work with teens. Whether you are the teen librarian, the clerk who's been assigned to 'do something' about teens or the branch manager who sees an underserved population, this book will provide you with the building blocks to create successful relationships with the teens who use your library.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

This text covers most of what a new librarian needs to know about working with a teen population. Through carefully noted references and additional bibliographies, much additional information could be easily found in the noted resources. Beginning with a brief history of YA services in libraries, the book also covers developmental characteristics and their effects on issues like body image and mental health and friendships and relationships. Services to members of special populations are noted, with brief descriptions of the special needs of urban libraries, rural ones, young people who identify as LGBTQ, and individuals with disabilities. Also mentioned is marketing-industry research highlighting factors like family togetherness, music, and coolness as attractors of teens. Programming suggestions are numerous and split into two types: for younger teens and older teens. For the younger (middle-school age), the usual fare—such as gaming and book groups—are recommended, along with lock-ins, tech events, and food-related experiences. For older teens (high-school age), the emphasis is on practical items, like test preparation, dressing for interviews, and personal-finance workshops. Additionally, helpful collection and reconsideration policy samples accompany the chapter on managing teen services. This basic text is best for those with little to no experience in libraries, and would be suitable for library-school students. (*Booklist*)

Complete and thorough, this guide touches on almost every aspect of teen services. The authors consider their patrons, briefly discussing teen populations (those in urban and rural areas, minority groups, those with special needs, and homeless teens) and the developmental needs of adolescents. The section 'Teen Collection' features a quick description of genres and formats, contains advice on how to use picture books with young adults, and emphasizes the need for diversity in the collection. A variety of program ideas are presented, from book groups and writing workshops to maker spaces and comic cons, as well as school-related tie-ins (prom dress exchanges and SAT preparations), ideas for older teens (teaching financial aid information, going over job interview tips), and more unique programs, such as skills training in car maintenance and housework. Suggestions for marketing involve using social media in addition to more traditional print options. Young adults are also seen as a potential volunteer resource. Every chapter concludes with additional reading and a helpful resource list. Grants and crowd-funding are also tackled, and a sample donation letter is included. Examples of a materials selection policy and a request for reconsideration will be valuable. Much of this content is covered elsewhere, but it is useful to have so many up-to-date aspects of the topic in one handy volume. Verdict: An important tool for librarians and paraprofessionals new to teen services. (*School Library Journal*)

This twenty-seventh volume in the *Practical Guide for Librarians* series acknowledges both the potential exhilaration and the challenges of working with teens. . . . The book opens with a quick history of teen library services, moving to chapters on teen development and issues in selecting and arranging books for teens, always advising awareness of any specific community's standards. Separate chapters present programs for younger and older teens, with an impressive array of creative examples from libraries across the country. The final chapter includes useful advice on developing policies, training staff, marketing, and funding. . . . VOYA readers have already sampled the innovative spirit of many teen librarians; this book catalogs that movement and locates it in the context of effective library policies, as Generation Z discovers the relevance of libraries to their lives. (*VOYA*)

Librarians entering the world of teen services will find a handy guide in *Teen Services Today: A Practical Guide for Librarians* by Sara K. Joiner and Geri Swanzy. Beginning with a history of teen services, the guide

includes a survey of teen development and teen collections and an explanation of services that includes many programs. This guide will lead your way to creating a library that welcomes teens. The final chapter will get everyone at the library on board with necessary policies and staff training. (RoseMary Honnold, Editor-In-Chief, VOYA Magazine)

This new book by two renowned young adult librarians offers a concise but exhaustive look at serving teens in libraries. From understanding the teen brain and their developmental changes, and how those factors affect library services for them, to specific services that meet teen needs and attract teens to the library, Joiner and Swanzy cover it all. Their thorough coverage of teen literature is especially valuable and includes discussion of diversity and controversy. Separate chapters explore programs for younger and older teens, offering a variety of replicable ideas. The information is provided in an informal and chatty style, making it easy to absorb all their practical advice and tips whether you are a novice just entering teen services or an experienced librarian refreshing your skills. (Jeanette Larson, Adjunct Faculty, Texas Woman's University)

#### About the Author

Sara K Joiner is the youth collection development coordinator for the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She is responsible for ordering books and e-books for children and teens from birth to age 18. She has also worked at the Brazoria County Library System where she oversaw the children's and teen programs in the system. In addition to programming and selection, she has also worked on marketing committees and library policy committees. She has written an article for Texas Library Journal about hosting a writing workshop for teens as well as *After the Ashes*, a middle grade novel published by Holiday House Books for Young Readers. She earned her MLIS from the University of Texas at Austin.

Geri Swanzy is the children's librarian at the Manvel Branch of the Brazoria County Library System in Texas. She has worked for ten years in youth services in public libraries. She has planned and implemented a variety of programs for teens of all ages including book clubs, crafts, and games, as well as larger events, such as after-hours lock-ins. She saw the need for more teen-centric activities in Brazoria County and proposed and helped organize their first official teen summer reading club. She earned her MLIS from the University of North Texas.

When not working, Geri spends her time with her two pups, Maddie and Penny. She also enjoys volunteering for various organizations, playing the clarinet in a community band, and seeing what kind of new craft project she can concoct. And, of course, she loves to read.

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