

Collection Development Policy

The Westport Library is a non-sectarian public library whose aim is to provide a collection of materials representing different points of view for the education, information and enjoyment of its users.

It is the primary objective of the Westport Library to provide carefully selected, quality materials for members of our community from infancy through maturity, that meets their diverse needs and interests and broad range of viewpoints.

Purpose

The Westport Library provides unrestricted access to materials, information, programs, and other resources to satisfy our community's intellectual needs and to support lifelong learning. The purpose of this document is to establish the policies by which the Library develops and maintains its collections.

Objectives

- To provide resources and materials, both in digital and physical form which informs, educates, entertains, and enriches our community
- To include works of enduring value as well as materials of current interest
- To supplement our collection through Interlibrary Loans
- To help people learn new skills, and improve literacy
- To increase social awareness and community involvement
- To preserve and encourage the free expression of ideas essential to an informed citizenry

Scope of the Collection

The Library provides materials, services and a collection that reflect the diverse educational, informational, and recreational needs of its users. The Library recognizes that library patrons have different learning

styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, the Westport Library provides materials

in a variety of formats, including, when appropriate:

- Print – such as hardcovers, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers
- Digital resources – such as online databases, digital books, digital video, digital audio, images, and digital archives
- Library of Things – A unique collection of unconventional objects to support learning. Items range from the practical to the fun, including board games, microscopes, and a metal detector.

Selection Guidelines

Factors considered in the selection of materials (which include print books, digital content and other items) are:

- Authority
- Literary merit, artistic quality, originality, and creativity
- Accuracy, objectivity, clarity, logic, and effectiveness of material
- Relevance to the current and future needs of the community
- Local interest in subject or author
- Cultural significance and critical acclaim
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- The extent to which the topic is already represented in our collection
- Limits of space and funds
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Professional and special materials, such as legal, medical, and religious works, are purchased if they are of general interest
- All works by an individual author may not be considered for purchase

Youth Collections (which includes both Children's and Teens Collection)

The Youth Department offers developmentally appropriate materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of children ages birth through eighteen. In addition, the Youth Department selects materials on child-rearing and other relevant topics for parents and caregivers.

The Youth Department maintains a collection that is balanced, relevant, and of appropriate size, quality, and diversity to suit the needs of our users. To ensure that all parts of the collection are appropriate and well-chosen, the Youth Department librarians consult professional review sources before purchase.

The Library does not generally purchase textbooks to support educational curriculums. Textbooks may be added to the collection if they provide the best or only source of information on a subject, or to complement an existing area with another perspective.

Children's Collection

Some materials in the Children's Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. While some books are too mature for one child, other children may be ready for them. Only each child and their parent or caregiver can decide what material is suitable for that child to read.

Teen Collection

Some materials in the Teen Services Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for

all teenagers. While some books are too mature for one teen, other teens may be ready for them. Only each teen and their parent can decide what material is suitable for that teen to read. Ultimate responsibility for the selection of materials rests with parents or caregivers.

Collection Maintenance

To provide the best service to our community and to ensure that the collection is fresh and relevant Library staff evaluate the collection regularly.

The following criteria are considered when determining whether items should be withdrawn from the collection:

- Items are worn, stained, or damaged beyond reasonable repair
- Items are out of date, contain inaccurate data, or are not historically significant
- New, more current, or more comprehensive resources are available
- A more desirable format of the content is available
- Duplication
- Low circulation

Items withdrawn by reason of condition, loss, or damage will be considered for replacement if deemed suitable and current.

Items removed from the collection are to be either given to the Book Sale ventures for resale or are donated to other non-profits or are recycled.

Patron Requests

Requests for materials are welcome and the Library will consider all requests from Westport residents using the same selection criteria that we use for the collection.

The Library will make every effort to obtain items requested by members of our community, that are not represented in our collection and do not meet our selection criteria, via Interlibrary Loan.

Controversial Materials and Intellectual Freedom

The Westport Library does not promote beliefs or opinions. The Library provides materials for various opinions, which can apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox viewpoints. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material whose value is to be judged in its entirety.

The selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain, view, or otherwise be exposed to materials their parents or guardians consider inappropriate. The ultimate responsibility for children's reading and viewing choices rests with their parents and legal guardians.

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to have access to materials, the Library supports the following documents:

- First Amendment of the Constitution
- Library Bill of Rights Adopted June 18, 1948, amended February 2, 1967, and June 23, 1980,

inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council

- The Freedom to Read Statement – Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee

Gifts

Gifts and donations are important supplements to the collection. The Library will evaluate all materials offered as gifts against the collection development criteria.

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Executive Director. The Manager of Collection Development oversees the Adult selection process, and the Director of the Youth Department oversees the Children’s and Teen’s collection. Designated selectors within both departments work as a team supporting the collection development process.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

If a patron objects to the presence of any material in the Library’s collection material, the patron has a right to submit a complaint which will be given due consideration. If a patron elects to register a formal complaint about an item in the Library, the patron may request a copy of “Westport Library Request for Reconsideration Procedure.”

The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend this Collection Development Policy at any time.

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on February 24th, 2021