

Cleveland Bradley County Public Library Teen Zone Policy

Approved and Adopted by Library Board 7.22.2025

Policy Statement 1

The Cleveland Bradley County Public Library is committed to providing an inviting and safe space for teenage patrons to engage in individual and group activities. The social nature and unique characteristics of this age group require a separate space designed for their needs.

Regulations

1.1 The Teen Zone at the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library is for patrons ages 13 to 17. Participation in Teen Zone activities is reserved for patrons ages 13 to 17, this includes patrons enrolled in homeschool programs.

1.2 While patrons of all ages are welcome to browse and check out materials from this Young Adult Collection, the use of computers, television, other electronic equipment, and seating areas within the Teen Zone are exclusively for the use of patrons ages 13 to 17.

1.3 Parents or caregivers may be in the Teen Zone with their child, if the child is ages 13 to 17.

1.4 No other exceptions will be made for library patrons whose age falls outside this age range.

1.5 Teens will officially age out upon their 18th birthday.

1.6 The Library reserves the right to utilize the Teen Zone for scheduled teen programs, events and gaming activities.

1.7 Teens are expected to stay at the program they are participating in for the duration of the event. If teens leave a program and/or the library, the parent or legal guardian is then responsible for their whereabouts and behavior.

1.8 If a situation arises off library property, the library is not responsible for the behavior of those involved. Parents and teens are encouraged to contact the proper authorities. However, if library staff are made aware of the situation, proper authorities will be contacted.

Policy Statement 2

Teens are expected to respect the overall Library environment, and may not engage in activities or communications that disrupt other Library users or staff. All other Library policies apply to the Teen Zone. The Library reserves the right to limit the use of the library for teens who violate the policy.

Regulations

2.1 Teens shall respect each other, library staff and other patrons in word and action.

2.2 The Teen Area should be used only for its intended purposes, therefore, no rough housing, no running, no spitting, no throwing, no public displays of affection, and no swearing or abusive language will be permitted. The Cleveland Bradley County Public Library policy prohibits excessive or inappropriate displays of affection (PDA) to maintain a welcoming and respectful environment for all patrons. While light physical contact like hand-holding or a brief hug may be acceptable, behaviors like prolonged kissing, intimate touching, or any actions that could be considered lewd or offensive are prohibited. This list is not exhaustive of prohibited behavior and is subject to the judgement of the librarian on duty.

2.3 Verbal or physical abuse of staff or patrons such as cursing, rude or demeaning comments, hitting, biting, kicking, punching, or teasing other patrons in a deliberately cruel manner is not permitted. This list is not exhaustive of prohibited behavior and is subject to the judgement of the librarian on duty. Any behavior that endangers the safety of the individual or others is prohibited.

2.4 Any behavior considered aggressive by the staff may result in the proper authorities being notified and further actions will be taken.

- 2.5 Vandalism, theft or damage of library property or to library grounds is a legal matter.
- 2.6 Covered beverages and tidy snacks are allowed in the Teen Zone. Other food and beverages may be provided during Teen Zone activities with the understanding that the teens are expected to clean up after themselves before they leave.

Policy Statement 3

The Library recognizes the importance of supporting the educational and recreational needs of teens by providing access to computer equipment. The Library has designated the computers located within the Teen Zone as Teen Only computers.

Regulations

- 3.1 The use of the teen computers is restricted to patrons ages 13 to 17.
- 3.2 Computer usage is subject to the Library's Computer Usage Policy.
- 3.3 Food and drinks are prohibited near computer equipment.

Policy Statement 4

The Library will occasionally host Teen After Hours Events or Library sponsored field trips. Permission slips for Teen After Hours events will be required to be filled out by the parent or guardian of teen participants once every six (6) months. Library sponsored field trips will have separate permission slips. There are always at least 2 staff members or background-checked volunteers present as chaperones for these events.

Regulations

- 4.1 Teens participating in After Hour events and Library sponsored field trips are expected to behave according to the Public Policies and Procedures and Teen Zone Policy.
- 4.2 Teens that present unacceptable behavior will have their parent or guardian contacted and asked to come and pick them up.
- 4.3 Permission slips for After Hours events will need to be signed by the parent or guardian once every six (6) months. This will act as a behavioral and informational check-in between Library staff and parents.

Policy Statement 5

The Library acknowledges that to effectively connect with teens, it must be present in online spaces where teens frequently interact. The Library has a moderated Discord server specifically for teens ages 13 to 17. Access to this server is a privilege.

Regulations

- 5.1 The Teen Zone Discord server only sends out invites to teen patrons who have verified their age with the Teen Services Librarian.
- 5.2 The rules of the Discord server mirror the Teen Zone Policy and the Public Policies and Procedures.
- 5.3 Any violations of rules will result in the removal from the server.
- 5.4 Excessive misuse of the server will result in the server being shut down.

Enforcement

Teens in violation of the Teen Zone Policy or the Library Public Policies and Procedures will be given a warning. If a second offense occurs, Library staff will contact the parent or legal guardian. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, proper authorities will be contacted. Library staff reserves the right to immediately ask teens in question to leave in cases of extreme behavior or repeated violations of the same policy. Teens in violation of policy in an instance that requires police intervention will be required to be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian when on library property and may lose library privileges.