

Program Policy

Approved May 2006

Revised July 2008, July 2009, Sept. 2012, Sept. 2013, Sept. 2014, Sept. 2016

The Groton Public Library offers programs in keeping with the library's mission: To provide free access to collections, services, and programs that enrich the lives of all and to do this in a professional, friendly, and confidential environment that also promotes the joy and benefits of reading and learning.

Library programs focus on making connections with the collections and services of the library and are designed to meet the current and emerging interests of library users while offering a balance of topics.

Programs are typically divided into four groups by age and interest levels: children, young adults/teens, adults, and families. When programs are planned and publicized, the age level of interest is determined and indicated.

Many programs are designed for specific age groups to ensure enjoyment by all attending. GPL defers to the program presenters and/or the staff person planning the program to determine the age limits for these programs and supports and adheres to these age-appropriate guidelines for the convenience of all.

Children's Program Policy:

For those programs where space is limited, preference is given to Groton residents. Non-residents are welcome if space allows.

When attending children's programs at the library:

- A child five (5) years old or younger must be accompanied at all times by the parent/caregiver with the exception of the story times specifically presented for three to five year-old children.
- Children who are six (6) through eight (8) years old may attend an age appropriate program unaccompanied by the parent/caregiver, but the caregiver must stay in the library during the program and pick up the child promptly at the conclusion of the program.
- Some children's programs are designed for specific age groups to ensure the quality of the program and the enjoyment by all attending. GPL defers to the program presenters to determine the age limits for these programs and supports these age-appropriate guidelines for the convenience of all.
- All program registrations for children between the ages of 9-11 must include contact information for a parent or caregiver when a child is unaccompanied at the program.

Library staff is not responsible for the safety of unattended children.

Program Policy (continued)

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Young Adult Programs Policy

(Approved by GPL Trustees 10/27/09)

The Groton Public Library assumes no responsibility for children of any age while at the library. Young Adults need to abide by their parents or guardians' rules pertaining to leaving library programs or the library.

In order to provide enjoyable programs for everyone, we expect young adult participants to:

1. Show respect for library staff and listen to and follow the person in charge.
2. Treat all people and property with courtesy and respect.
3. Stay and participate in the program that they are attending.
4. Be able to reach a parent/caregiver immediately by phone or in person.
5. Understand that one (1) warning will be given for unacceptable behavior and if the misbehavior continues the participant's parents may be called, the participant may be asked to leave the program and may also be asked to leave the library.

Program Policy Background Notes

O. Shuman, May 2006

The Library Trustees approved a brief program policy while thinking about age restrictions, suggestions and programs primarily for teenagers. The staff was planning movies for teens and wanted to show movies that are connected to books, have subject matter for thoughtful discussion, and may have R ratings. The Motion Picture Association of America's ratings are suggestions and are not law. We currently have movies that can be checked out to anyone regardless of age. That led the Library Trustee's Policy, Personnel, and Planning (PPP) committee to ask, "Why not show them at the library?" The schools have a permission form when showing R-rated movies.

The discussion revolved around the difference in borrowing a movie and watching it at home vs. showing it in the library, especially when it is a young adult program and aimed at teens. We also felt that any movie that was controversial should be followed by a discussion.

The PPP committee (and Library Trustees at their meeting) agreed that, like the Materials Selection Policy, the Program Policy should state that the library does not act "in loco parentis" (in the place of a parent) and it is the parent and only the parent that controls the viewing choices of their children and only their children. To that end, all selection of movies, performers, etc. will be planned and targeted by ages.

Should we show an R-rated movie, there would be a reason, and the choice would be carefully made and extensively advertised.