



TOWN OF ACTON LIBRARIES

TEEN FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY REPORT 2024

JANUARY 31, 2024 — 3:00-4:30 PM

TEEN FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS = 10

1. WHAT ARE THE VERY FIRST TWO WORDS YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE LIBRARY'S TEEN SPACE?



- Collaboration
- Communication (3)
- Community (2)
- Welcoming
- Calm
- Open
- Focused
- Social (2)
- Working together
- Openness

2. WHAT COULD WE DO TO MAKE THE TEEN SPACE MORE WELCOMING?

- **Improve Furniture and Fixtures (2):** Add bean bag chairs and shorter tables. Create a “cozy corner.” || Fix the chargers and lamps. They either don't work or aren't accessible.
- **Enhance Configuration (2):** Create a more communal area (e.g., a circle). || Quiet study area and an area to work with friends.
- **Misc. (2):** Add more supplies (pens, pencils, paper, etc.). || Brighten up the space. Use better colors.

3. WHAT TYPES OF RESOURCES SHOULD WE OFFER IN THE TEEN SPACE?

- Provide book lists and recommended reading resources. (9)
- Increase the collection of test preparation materials. Move test prep information into the Teen Space (2)
- **Misc. (2):** Offer current events information. || Knowing how to handle things – Financial literacy resources and other issues for adulting.

4. TELL US HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE LIBRARY'S PROGRAMS.

- **Increase Promotion of Teen Programs (5):** Not enough marketing (3) || Include events in the school's morning email. || More publicity and marketing. Post program information on Instagram
- **Unaware of Teen Programs (3):** Didn't know about the programs (2) || Hasn't heard about the programs.

- One participant attended a program. She volunteered for the Holi event (“loved it”).

PROGRAM IDEAS (15):

- **College Prep (3):** Acton-Boxborough Regional High School alums (or others) who recently applied to college to review the college application process. (2) || Current college students or recent alums discuss their college experiences (what to expect, tips, etc.)
- **Career Forum (3):** People come in and speak about what they want to do. The school already has career speakers who discuss their jobs, fields, and careers (how they got there). It would be great to have some of that at the library, too. (3)
- **Financial Literacy (3)**
- **Misc. (6):** Arts and crafts. Great for de-stressing. || Collage Poetry || Guest authors for teen books and guest speakers. || Hobbies || Record speakers’ presentations and make the recordings available for on-demand viewing. || Presentations and interactive discussions of relevant current issues.

5. HOW DO YOU PREFER TO ATTEND LIBRARY PROGRAMS?

- In-Person (10)
- Hybrid (in-person and virtual) (10)
- Virtual with Take-It/Make-It kits (2)
- Virtual (0)

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (2):

- For offsite programs, make sure the activity is local.
- Virtual programs are easy, but in-person programs are much more engaging. Not interested in virtual-only programs.

6. WHAT TWO WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE LIBRARIANS WHO ASSIST YOU?



- Caring
- Considerate (4)
- Fun
- Hardworking
- Helpful (3)
- Kind
- Outgoing
- Patient (3)
- Positive
- Resourceful
- Welcoming (3)

7. WHAT TECHNOLOGY DO YOU THINK THE LIBRARY SHOULD FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

- **Increase Access to Printers (10):** Provide access to a printer. (9) || Make the 3D printer more publicly accessible.

- **Misc. (4):** Offer digitized Acton-Boxborough Regional High School textbooks (2) || Expand technology resources that help with studying (study tools). || Interested in a makerspace. Cambridge Public Library has a really nice makerspace with laser wood printers, virtual reality tools, and more.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (2): We don't need audio services or the orange easy readers. (2)

8. WHAT TYPES OF LIBRARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES MIGHT INTEREST YOU?

- **Help Develop and Conduct Programs (10):** Help run or lead programs. (8) || Engage with younger kids. Help plan or guide kid programs. || Serve as tutors or mentors.
- **Support Marketing Activities (7):** Create social media content (6) || Help promote library programs. For example, assist with the development of marketing materials.
- **Misc. (3):** Write and record (audio or video) book reviews (2) || Have members of school clubs visit the library to provide information about their focus and activities.

9. TELL US HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT SERVING ON THE TEEN ADVISORY BOARD (TAB).

- **Values the Safe, Comfortable, and Dedicated Group (5):** A comfortable environment. Everyone's voices are heard. || It's a safe space to share one's opinion. || It is a laid-back environment, but TAB members take their roles seriously. || It's a laid-back and flexible forum. It enables the group to be creative. || We talk a lot and are comfortable with each other.
- **Enjoys Contributing to the Library's Success (3):** Having a say in what happens in the library is nice. || The participant likes being able to help and have an impact on someplace where she spends a lot of time. || Having a say in improving the library. "It's cool that our opinions are valued."
- **Appreciates the Welcoming, Positive, Engaged TAB Members (3):** Everyone is friendly and participates. || Everyone is welcoming. Everyone wants to work together to help improve the library. || It's an open forum in which everyone participates.

IDEA (10): Improve the meeting schedule by starting TAB meetings later. It's difficult to get to meetings directly after school. A 3:10-3:20 start time might be better. (10)

10. WHAT CURRENT ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- **Fake News and Misinformation (5):** It's hard to know what news is valid. We want to be able to identify misinformation/fake information (5).
- **Gaza and Israel Conflict (3):** There's a lot of disinformation. Offer more resources and fact-based information. (2) || Share information regarding charities and fundraising for Gaza, including details about which charities are real and trustworthy.
- **Misc. Other Issues/Interests (4):** Books and current news about queer rights. || Wants to learn how to assess charities. || Information and resources about general current events. || Local food insecurity is an issue. Hold fundraisers and food drives for local charities.

11. WHAT COULD THE TOWN OF ACTON'S LIBRARIES DO TO BETTER SERVE LOCAL TEENS? WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR US?

FACILITY IDEAS (5)

- **Improve Accessibility (3):** Add more signage to help teens find what they're interested in. || Increase accessibility. Make it easier to find and access what you want. || Reduce the number of misplaced books (e.g., misplaced paperback and young adult books). Some volunteers misshelve, and patrons may, too. Improve the signage to direct people to where books belong.
- **Misc. (2):** Create and use outdoor space. || Offer fidget toys for both kids and teens (Rubik's cubes, stress toys, etc.). Have a box of fidget toys in the teen space.

MARKETING IDEAS (5)

- **Increase Awareness of Library Offerings (2):** Improve and increase marketing. || Increase awareness of library offerings.
- **Promotions with and at School (3):** Add library news to the Acton-Boxborough High School's Morning Blast. Get events on the morning newsletter's Google Doc. || Hang posters at the school. || Promote activities in the Acton-Boxborough High School's morning announcements.
- **Program Idea (1):** Financial literacy programs and resources.

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (1): Librarians are helpful.