

Serving ‘Tweens and Teens

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This grant gives public libraries the ability to develop innovative programs and strategies to reach out to the teens and tweens in their communities. It is appropriate both for libraries looking to start serving this audience as well as those who want to revamp or reenergize their current services.

A key component of this grant is collaborating with teens and tweens throughout the project and beyond. Libraries should start or work with their TAB (Teen Advisory Board) and/ or TWIG (Tween Interest Group). However, collaboration should not be limited solely to formally organized groups. Teen and tween involvement needs to be included throughout the teen services program and should empower teens and tweens to give both informal and structured feedback to the library. Libraries should pay particular attention to ensure that they are serving all the teens in the community, not just regular library users.

The collections and programs developed should reflect the unique needs and interests of teens and tweens in that community. Libraries should be flexible, creative, and open-minded throughout the project in order to best serve their audience.

A portion of the funds may be used for limited redesign of the library’s teen space.

Libraries should partner with relevant organizations, such as local schools, youth organizations, and community centers.

ELIGIBILITY

Public libraries that meet standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant programs may apply. This is a two year grant with a maximum of \$15,000 available over that time period.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent form with the “Serving ‘Tweens and Teens” option checked off. If you need more information about this program, please call Lyndsay Forbes at

the MBLC at 1-800-952-7403 ext. 252 or email lyndsay.forbes@state.ma.us.

BACKGROUND

Teens need a welcoming place to explore their interests, and socialize with friends. This need is especially pronounced during non-school hours and is particularly important for vulnerable and underserved youth. Oftentimes, the public library is the only free, safe space that can provide this outlet for teens and tweens in their community. Creating a vibrant and inclusive teen services program provides a vital resource for teens and tweens, a place where they can connect, create, and discover who they are in a supportive and encouraging environment.