

## Reaching Out to Teens

Recently we posed the question to our teen patrons, “How can we make the library relevant to you?” We covered the table top in the Teen Area with paper and provided coloured pens. The feedback we received was both surprising and informative.

The most frequent suggestion, not surprisingly, was the request for more computers and computer time. Currently we have five, one-hour computers, four “express” stations and two Word-processing stations available to the public free of charge. Demand for these computers is at an all-time high. In March alone the computers were used 3447 times! While we would love to be able to accommodate this request, we have to ensure equal access to all our patrons. We are always looking for ways to take advantage of grant money and hope to expand our computer access in the future. As a reminder, we also offer free wireless Internet during regular library hours.

We had many teens asking for more graphic novels and anime films. In the last couple of years we have allocated funds to purchase graphic novels and this has proved a wise investment. Currently we have over 150 titles in our Young Adult collection alone and usage of these materials is up almost 200% from two years ago. We are also very excited to announce that we have started developing an anime DVD collection. Both of these collections have been developed with the invaluable suggestions from our teen patrons.

Late last year we started an anime club. Teens meet monthly to watch the latest anime films. These films are free of charge and we sell pizza, drinks, and Pocky (a Japanese snack food) during the film. All proceeds from these sales are re-directed back to the Young Adults to further improve collections and services.

Several teens also made general comments about wanting “better books” and “more books” while many made specific title requests. To help get more regular feedback, we are in the process of creating a “Request to purchase” form that will be available in the teen area.

One of the most informative discoveries of this endeavor was the fact that the teens made many suggestions for materials and services that we already offer. It is rewarding, on one hand, to know we are on the right track in providing service relevant to teens today, but distressing that these services are not widely known within this group.

To address this issue, we are going to include a section in our new Teen Newsletter that will specifically speak to these requests. The newsletter, which is due to be released shortly, will also highlight new titles, programs being offered to teens, homework tips as well as showcasing poetry, art, short stories created by Brockville teens.

There were also several requests for more teen programming. We are very excited to announce that we are working towards a Teen Drop-In Program which will run weekly on Thursdays between 2:30 pm and 5:30 pm. Please watch our website for details as we roll out this exciting project. As mentioned above, we have already begun the Anime Club and starting in April we will be adding FLICKit: teen movies @ your library™ which will show non-anime films. In May we will add “Game on!: gaming @ your library™” which will include Wii tournaments as well as various board and card games. Finally we will be adding “Let it Out: open mic @ your library™” which will give teens the opportunity to share their poetry, music, art, and short stories to an audience of their peers.

Teen Drop-In Dates for April:

*Anime Club*

Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup> ~ 2:30 to 5:30

**Jyu-Oh-Sei \*\*PART 2\*\***

(movie starts at 3:30 pm)

*FLICKit!*

Thursday April 30 ~ 2:30 to 5:30

**Movie: Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist**

(movie starts at 3:00 pm)

We encourage teens to visit us in person or online at [www.brockvillelibrary.ca](http://www.brockvillelibrary.ca). If you are unsure of our collections or services, please feel free to ask us about them. We are available to take your suggestions at any time by emailing [lisa@brockvillelibrary.ca](mailto:lisa@brockvillelibrary.ca) or [amanda@brockvillelibrary.ca](mailto:amanda@brockvillelibrary.ca). You can also visit us on Thursdays at our Drop-In programs.

We would like to thank all the teens who took the time to share their ideas with us. We appreciate the feedback and look forward to working with you to make the library more relevant to you.

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