

Teen Policy Purpose

Cass District Library (CDL) teen spaces are designed to provide a safe, welcoming, and developmentally appropriate space for teens in grades 6–12, and/or ages 12 to 17. Teen spaces support reading, studying, creativity, social connection, and positive use of library resources. Teen spaces are governed by this policy and the CDL *Patron Behavior Policy*. All expectations, rules, and disciplinary procedures outlined in the Patron Behavior Policy apply fully within the Teen spaces.

Teen Spaces Visitors

- Teen spaces are intended for students in grades 6–12, and/or ages 12 to 17.
- Adults or younger children not accompanied by a teen may be asked to relocate to other areas of the library.
- Staff may further restrict access to teen spaces at any time to maintain safety, capacity limits, or appropriate use.
- The above aligns with *Patron Behavior Policy* Section III.D which states:
 - *Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building or on Library property. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, or using Library materials shall be required to leave the building and shall not remain on Library property.*

Teen Space Usage

Acceptable usage and activities in teen spaces include:

- Reading, studying, homework, and school projects are examples of appropriate work.
- Using computers in accordance with the *Computer and Internet Use Policy*.
- Socializing quietly and paying attention to others using the branch.
- Teens must stay seated on the furniture and not the floor. This helps keep aisles clear.
- Participating in library programs and appropriate recreation (games, crafts, conversation).
- Food is not allowed in teen spaces at any time. Teens who bring in food or uncovered drinks will be instructed to remove or discard them immediately.
- Failure to follow this directive will result in the teen being asked to leave teen spaces, for the remainder of the day, or longer depending on the infraction.
- All expectations in the *Patron Behavior Policy* apply, including rules regarding noise, respectful conduct, and the proper use of CDL property.

Teen Behavior Expectations

Teen behavior expectations remain consistent with the *Patron Behavior Policy*.

- Respect staff, other patrons, and each other.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.
- Follow staff instructions promptly.
- Maintain a noise level appropriate for a shared public space.
- Use furniture, equipment, and materials safely and appropriately.
- Place all backpacks and books under the table or chair when seated.
- Keep all backpacks with you at all times when moving through the branch and outside.
- Running, roughhousing, pushing, shoving, or unsafe physical behavior is prohibited.
- Harassment, threats, or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Hateful or discriminatory speech will result in the teen being immediately asked to leave.
- Vandalism or misuse of library property will result in immediate suspension.
- Blocking aisles, entrances, or access to materials is a safety and security issue and will not be tolerated.
- Repeatedly entering and exiting the building in a disruptive manner is unacceptable.

Safety and Supervision

- Teens 12 and older may use CDL locations independently.
- Parents and caregivers remain responsible for their child's behavior even when not present (Patron Behavior Policy III.C).
- Staff may contact a caregiver if behavior becomes unsafe or repeatedly disruptive.
- Progressive discipline and behavioral consequences include the following steps:
 - One Verbal Warning: A reminder of expectations and an opportunity to correct behavior.
 - Removal for the Day: Teen/s may be asked to leave the Branch for the remainder of the day.
 - Suspension of Library Privileges: Short term suspension (up to three weeks) for repeated violations.
 - Chronic or Severe Behavior will result in a meeting with the teen, caregiver, Branch Manager and/or Library Director.. Consequences may include:
 - Longer suspension from the Branch and/or suspension from all CDL locations.
 - Police involvement for illegal, threatening, or dangerous behavior.
 - Staff may immediately remove a teen for extreme behavior.

Staff Authority

Library staff have the full authority to act on the following:

- Enforce this policy and the Patron Behavior Policy.
- Determine whether behavior is acceptable.
- Ask patrons to leave teen spaces or the branch.
- Contact parents, caregivers, or law enforcement when necessary.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by library administration and the Library Board to ensure it continues to support a safe, welcoming, and equitable environment for teens and all patrons.