Collection Development Policy

Darien Library is a free, non-sectarian public library whose aim is to provide a currently useful collection of materials representing different points of view for the educational, informational and recreational opportunities of its users and to give guidance in its use.

It is the primary objective of the Library to provide and organize materials for people from infancy through maturity, making available carefully selected materials of purpose and quality that will meet the needs and interests of the users of the Darien community. Sensitivity to all interests, early recognition of needs before they are clearly expressed, and range of viewpoint mark the outstanding collection.

Purpose

Darien Library provides unrestricted access to information and its programs and resources to satisfy our community’s intellectual needs and lifelong learning. This in turn will enrich our community’s quality of life and enjoyment.

The purpose of this document is to establish the rules by which the Library develops its collections.

Objectives

- To provide resources and materials which inform, educate, entertain and enrich our community
- To include works of enduring value as well as those timely materials on current issues
- To select materials based on community needs and interests
- To supplement resources through the use of electronic access and interlibrary loan
- To help people learn new skills, and improve literacy
- To increase social awareness and community involvement
- To preserve and encourage the free expression of ideas essential to an informed citizenry

Scope of the Collection

The Library provides materials and services that reflect the diverse educational, information, and recreational needs of its users. In so doing, the Library provides access to content through print, multimedia, and technology. The Library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that library patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, Darien Library provides materials in a variety of formats, including, when appropriate:

- Print – such as hardcovers, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers
- Non-print – such as audio and visual formats
- Digital resources – such as online databases, digital books, recordings, images, and digital historical archives
- Equipment – such as new technology and specialized hardware
Youth Collections

The Children’s Library offers developmentally appropriate materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of children ages birth through twelve. In addition, the Children’s Library collects materials on child-rearing for parents and caregivers.

The Children’s Library maintains a collection that is balanced, relevant, and of appropriate size, quality, and diversity to suit the needs of our users. To ensure that all parts of the collection are appropriate and well-chosen, the children’s librarians consult professional review sources before purchase. The children’s librarians also rely on the recommendations of library users.

Major factors that influence the selection of children’s materials (which include print book, eBooks, audio books, DVDs, and computer software) are:

- Content
- Authority
- Literacy merit, artistic quality, originality, and creativity
- Accuracy, objectivity, clarity, logic, and effectiveness of material
- Relevance to the needs of the community
- Current interest in subject matter
- Local interest in subject or author
- Popular demand
- Limits of space and funds

Some materials in the Children’s Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. While some books are too mature for one child, other children may be ready for them. Only each child and their parent or caregiver can decide what material is suitable for that child to read.

The Teen Services Collection offers developmentally appropriate materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of preteens and teenagers ages twelve to eighteen. Teen Services maintains a collection that is balanced, relevant, and of appropriate size, quality, and diversity to suit the needs of our users. To ensure that all parts of the collection are appropriate and well-chosen, the teen librarian consults professional review sources before purchase, but also relies on the recommendations of library users. Some materials in the Teen Services Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all teenagers. While some books are too mature for one teen, other teens may be ready for them. Only each teen and their parent can decide what material is suitable for that teen to read.

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for materials chosen and resource access rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of this policy. The Collection Development Coordinator oversees the Adult selection process, makes available critical reviews and other appropriate selection tools and tracks budget by selector and selection criteria to ensure the flow of new materials throughout the year. All staff members are encouraged to participate in the selection of Library resources. Designated selectors work as a team representing all aspects of the collection.
Selection Guidelines

All or some of the following criteria may be considered when adding new items to the collection:

- Accuracy, timeliness, format durability, and ease of use
- Cultural significance and critical acclaim
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Literary merit will be considered
- Price and availability
- Public appeal or local interest
- Relevance to the present and potential needs to the community
- Professional and special materials, such as legal, medical, and religious works, are purchased if they are of general interest.
- The Library does not purchase textbooks to support educational curriculums. Textbooks may be added to the collection if they provide the best or only source of information on a subject, or to complement an existing area with another perspective.
- Periodicals are added to the collection on the basis of relevance and community interest.
- Technology is selected upon usefulness, interest, and the broadness of its implications and importance.
- Audiovisual material is added to the Library’s collection with consideration to patron demand and budget constraints. The Library acquires this material primarily in the most popular format.
- All works by an individual author may not be considered for purchase.
- All criteria need not be met for purchase consideration.

Collection Maintenance

In order to provide the best service to our community the collection is regularly evaluated. To keep the collection fresh and relevant the Library maintains a schedule of evaluation.

The following is the criteria for withdrawal from the collection:

- Items are worn, stained, or damaged beyond repair
- Items are out of date, contain inaccurate data, or are not historically significant
- New, more current, or more comprehensive resources are available
- A more desirable format of the content is available
- Duplication
- Low circulation

Items removed from the collection are to be either sold with proceeds to benefit the Library, or disposed of properly.

Currently useful items withdrawn by reason of condition, loss, or damage will be considered for replacement.

Patron Suggestions

Suggestions are welcome and we will consider all requests from Darien residents using the same selection criteria that we use for the collection.

If an item is unavailable for purchase we will attempt to obtain the item via Interlibrary Loan for Darien
Controversial Materials and Intellectual Freedom:
Darien Library does not promote particular beliefs or views. The Library provides materials for various opinions, which can apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox viewpoints. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material whose value is to be judged in its entirety.

The Library recognizes parents and legal guardians as the parties responsible for the reading and viewing habits of their children. The selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents or guardians consider inappropriate.

Concerns about materials in the Library’s collections may be directed to any staff member.

In the interest of protecting the individual’s right to have access to materials, the Library supports the following documents:
- First Amendment of the Constitution

Appendix A
The Local History and Genealogy collection of the Darien Library provides a wealth of historical and genealogical resources that focus on Darien, Fairfield County, and Connecticut. In addition, the collection offers genealogy research guides and reference works. The Library is committed to its important role in preserving the history of the town of Darien and making those materials accessible to patrons from many backgrounds, as well as to providing high-quality materials to genealogical researchers. The majority of this collection does not circulate, and its primary purpose is to inform and educate, making it quite different from the rest of the Library’s collection. Accordingly, the policy governing its growth and maintenance is different as well.

Selection Guidelines:
The following criteria are considered when adding materials to the collection:
- Geographic relevance
- Families of local interest
- Accuracy and ease of use
- Price, availability, and condition
- Digital access
Gifts:
Gifts and donations are important supplements to the collection. The Library will accept gifts of local (Darien) family histories, local histories for all towns in Connecticut, and material otherwise related to Darien. The Library will not accept family bibles, personal papers, artifacts, or items in poor condition.

Collection Maintenance:
Historical and genealogical resources are rarely removed. Research guides and reference works are updated as new materials become available. Because of the unique nature of the materials, the collection is predominantly non-circulating.

Adopted by the Darien Library Board of Trustees on January 14, 2013.