

# Looking for the right book for your child?

There are many resources available to help you select appropriate material for your family. Here is a list of tools parents can use when reviewing reading choices with their children:

- One of your best resources is your own local librarian! Your library staff have the skills and tools necessary to help you find a good-fit book for your family.
- Novelist is a resource free to Michiganders. It's a great tool for identifying new reads based on other books you've enjoyed.
- Your library card catalog will often have a short book description, and these can help you in looking for subjects and topics you like.
- If your child enjoyed a certain author or series, try searching online for that author's name and "Readalikes" to review a similar list of authors/series.



Scan to launch  
Novelist!

Sometimes, as a parent, we come across books we don't like for our children. There are plenty of other books in the library you may love. Your library may also have access to MeLCat interlibrary loan, which provides further reading choices for your family through a state-wide lending program.

When you come across books you don't think are suitable for your child to read, your library can help you find a better option for your family among our diverse collections. At the library, we recognize that everyone has the freedom to read, even if another person might find that material objectionable. Sometimes, books you don't like can spark valuable life discussions between you and your child. Other times, you might determine that a book is not the right fit for your family. That's up to you, and libraries recognize and respect the power of the parent to choose.

Libraries encourage parents to have fun exploring the library with their family, guiding their children and teens in reading choices, and enjoying using our spaces at every age and stage. We encourage parents to discuss with their children what material they can check out.



TRAVERSE AREA  
DISTRICT  
LIBRARY

# Public libraries believe in the power of the parent

to navigate library  
collections.



## Public libraries provide something for everyone.

Not everything on library shelves is suitable for every family. Libraries believe in the power of the parent to guide their children in navigating library spaces and collections.

Libraries recognize every parent's strong desire to keep their children safe, and want to aid parents in navigating collections by giving them the power to choose.

Public libraries are spaces for everyone, where people from all walks of life can come and gain access to resources and materials on a wide variety of topics. Beyond your library building, there are many resources for reading available to you, including hundreds of titles in our digital collections.

## Public libraries operate differently than schools.

One interesting difference is that libraries do not act "in loco parentis." This is a legal term that means "in the place of a parent", and it refers to the legal responsibility of a person or organization to take on some of the functions and responsibilities of a parent. The library is a public space, much like the grocery store, rather than a school (where the teacher is tasked with watching out for a child's safety in place of the parent). As a public space for all, libraries have put in place unattended children policies and other rules that task the parent with monitoring a child's use of the library and collections.

Public libraries operate under the assumption that as children navigate our spaces, their parents will be there to guide them or have discussions with them about what materials they should or should not read. It is not the library staff's duty, nor do they have the legal right, to restrict what your child can read. You have the same right as all parents to choose what's best for your family.

## We recognize a parent's right to decide what their children read.

Libraries recognize the vital role parents play in making decisions about what their children read. No governmental body - like a library board - should decide what books are the right fit for your family. Libraries protect all ideas and thoughts and will guard your ideas and beliefs as well, even if others may be offended by the content. Likewise, other community members may want to access materials you find offensive. And your library will be here to protect the books you hold near and dear to your heart.

**For more help, just ask your library staff!**

**Email: [kids@tadl.org](mailto:kids@tadl.org)**

