



CREATING THE BEST LIBRARY EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR FAMILY

A Guide for Parents and Caregivers

Welcome to the Meridian Library District! We appreciate that you are a parent or caregiver who is invested in your child's learning. We can see that you care about your child because you are taking a step to understand how to navigate the library's collection to find content that fits with your family's interests and values.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- As a parent or caregiver, you are your child's first and best teacher. You should feel empowered to set parameters that are right for your family. It is your role to discuss with your child what is and is not appropriate for them to read, view, and listen to.
- As a public library, it is our responsibility to include materials in our collection that meet the needs of all of the different people in our community. We strive to have something for everyone! With that in mind, every family is different. What is just right for some community members and some families may not be appropriate for others.
- This is why we empower you to set those boundaries for your family! There are a number of ways we can help you do that, and they are outlined in this guide.

PERSONALIZED RECOMMENDATIONS

Our trained and experienced library staff are here to help you navigate the library's collection so that you may find something that is just right for your child or teen. Our staff can work with you through the process of a reference interview. We can talk with you about your family's reading, viewing, and listening values. This is also an opportunity for you to tell us about any subject matter you would like to avoid. This will help us identify items in the collection that specifically meet your family's needs, interests, and standards.

There are a few ways to do this:

- You can visit a library location to speak with a staff person one on one.
- You can fill out our reading recommendation form at www.mld.org/reading-recommendations-form to indicate your reading preferences.
- You can contact us by phone (208-888-4451), email (help@mld.org), or the live chat on our website (www.mld.org).

BROWSING & NAVIGATING THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Our collection is organized by **age group** to give our patrons an idea of where they can browse for materials that would be appropriate for them. In general:

- The **children's department** contains juvenile materials for children between the ages of **birth through 12**.
- The **teen space** contains young adult materials for middle school and high school age youth between the ages of **13 to 18**.
- The **main library** area has materials for **adults**.

The difference between books for older kids and teens:

- Although material in the teen space is considered by librarians and the publishing industry as generally appropriate for teens between the ages of 13 and 18, this does not necessarily mean that the **reading level** is higher or more advanced than juvenile books in the children's department. In fact, it is possible that the reading level could be higher for some books in the juvenile fiction collection than those in the young adult collection in the teen space.
- What is a guarantee however, is that the **content** of young adult books in the teen space, for ages 13 to 18, is **more mature** than what you'd find for 11 and 12 year olds in the juvenile fiction collection in the children's department.
- Additionally, books for older teens (15 to 18 years old) may contain content of a sexual nature. You would be less likely to find explicit language and definitely less likely to find sexual content in the juvenile fiction collection.
- There are some wonderful, gentle, teen reads with protagonists aged 14 to 18 years old that can be found in the teen space. Library staff aim to make these gentle teen reads accessible by curating book lists and occasionally putting up displays of teen books that avoid mature content like explicit language and sexual content.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Stop by a Meridian Library District location to talk with our staff! Or reach out at 208-888-4451 or help@mld.org.



MANAGING YOUR CHILD'S LIBRARY ACCOUNT

Every member of your family is welcome to have a library card of their own! As a parent/guardian, you can select how you want to set up and monitor your child's account:

- You can **log in to your child's account** at www.mld.org using their library card number and the pin you set up when you opened the account. This will let you see everything that is checked out on the account.
- You can **add your email address to your child's account**. You will receive notifications when items on the account have been placed on hold or renewed. You will also receive notifications when items are overdue or deemed lost.
- You can **link your child's account to your own library card account**. This allows you to pick up items on hold under your child's account. However, you will still need to log into your child's account separately to see items they have checked out.
- You can **choose not to monitor your child's library account**. However, a parent or guardian will still need to be listed on the account. That person is financially responsible if there are charges for lost items.