



TIPs (Teen Involvement Pointers) Great Ideas to Get Teens Involved!

The acronym **T.I.P.** (Teen Involvement Pointer) got started in my book *Teen Spaces: The Step-by-Step Library Makeover*. The TIPs presented here are meant to inspire you to **get teens involved** in young adult services, space planning and design, collection development, programming, marketing, and more.

1. Create a **Teen Advisory Board** (TAB) or a **Junior Friends of the Library**.
2. Ask member(s) of your TAB or other teen representative(s) to serve as **liaison(s)** to the **Library Board, School Board, Friends of the Library**, etc..
3. Include **teen representatives** (whether teen staff and/or patrons) on library committees (building and planning, policy and procedure, etc.)
4. Have teens make a **suggestion box** for teen area and help gather and compile suggestions
5. Give teens a blue print of the library/teen space and have them **design their teen space** on paper or make a model.
6. Have a **contest** – students come up with the name and or theme of the Teen Area. How about a “Teen Space of Your Dreams” contest? Have students work in teams to design space using a computer program or create a presentation board using magazines cutouts, drawings, etc (see *Teen Spaces*).
7. Hold a **silent auction** (local businesses donate prizes). Proceeds go to the TAB.
8. Create a teen **web page** designed and maintained by teens or with the assistance of teens.
9. Have teens vote (preferably online) on favorite books, videos, music, etc. and create a “**Teen Picks**” section on library’s teen web page.
10. Ask teens to **review** materials (books, movies, music, etc.). Display reviews, materials, and/or photographs of teens in library, on web, etc.
11. **Talk to teens!** Get to know them. Don’t be afraid to ask for their help.
12. Sponsor a “**Meet and Greet**” – get to know your “regulars” and entice non-library users.
13. Go on a shopping or **buying trip** (this works for teen space design & collection development...). Garage and yard sale trips are also great fun and a good way to economize!
14. Include posters and **artwork** in your teen area that have been selected (and hung) by teens.
15. Decorate the teen area with local middle or high school students’ paintings, photographs, etc. This could even be on a rotating basis. How about holding a **teen art show**?

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16. Have teens create **collages** of their “favorite” book, movie, etc. to hang in the teen area (possible art project if you coordinate with local art teacher).
17. Host a “team” **sidewalk chalk drawing** contest, photograph the winning picture, enlarge and display in teen area.
18. Incorporate **plants** in teen area and have teens take care of them and/or bring their own in. Local horticulture group or club?
19. Offer teen **community service** hours for helping at library events.
20. Start a teen / **peer-to-peer tutoring** program available after school in the Teen Area.
21. Hold a “**Trading Spaces**” **contest** with another area library (*I am currently working on this ☺).
22. Have teens **bring “stuff” from home** to display in teen area – accessories!
23. Start a **Technology Club** for those interested in web page design, video games, etc.
24. Instead of or in addition to a teen book discussion group, try an **AV Discussion Group**.
25. Ask teens to assist in ordering materials for **collection development** (music, videos/DVDs, magazines, etc.).
26. Have **teens help seniors** learn **computer** skills, Internet, etc.
27. Teens help run **summer reading program** for children and/or for teens.
28. Teen-sponsored **fundraiser** to raise money for remodeling teen area, buying materials, etc
29. To promote “teen happenings” at the library, ask teens to **write articles** for the local paper.
30. Using public access channels, have teens assist with the development of “**commercials**” showing what’s happening and what’s new at the library. They can also be your actors!
31. Appoint a **teen liaison in each grade** at your local schools.
32. Display **poetry** written by teens (coordinate with school) in the teen area and/or on library’s web site.
33. Once your teen area is finished, have teens plan a **Grand Opening** (food, festivities, etc.)
34. **Tell-a-Friend** program – give away prizes, rewards, etc. to teens for bringing in new teen library users.
35. Train teens to give **library tours** to other teens, community groups, etc.
36. Create a Library **Zine** with teen writing (poetry, cartoons, prose, etc.).
37. **Teens as programmers** for children’s or teen programs. Ideas include skateboarding, gaming days, radio control cars, car customizing, and cosmetology. How about a teen magician for a children’s program?
38. Teens **read books or short stories on tape** for disabled or blind. Great for school credit or volunteer hours.

39. Post a “Teens Welcome Here!” banner on the front of the library or in the lobby – created and hung by teens, of course!
40. Distribute teen-created flyers on **candy/gum wrap-arounds**. Include a brief message about upcoming event, etc.
41. Have teens **create signage** for the teen area (or any area of the library, for that matter).
42. Ask industrial arts students to **make shelves, furniture**, etc. for teen area and/or Home Economics class to help design space.
43. Hire teenaged **library workers** (pages, shelvers, etc.).
44. Invite teens to **weed the teen collection**. Make sure you have guidelines (i.e., give them written criteria, you (the librarian) has final say, and let them help purchase new materials).
45. Organize **student volunteers** to help with the children’s summer reading program, the library book sale, etc.