

THE TEEN SPACE

A Safe Haven and Launch Pad Designed and Directed by Teens

Supporting Inclusion and Exploration for Unadulterated Minds

The Concord Free Public Library Corporation acquired the adjacent house and property at 151 Main Street and is in the quiet phase of a campaign to fund a substantial addition that will connect the Library House to the Main Library. The project will allow us to meet growing demand by creating a new and expanded Children's Center, Teen Zone, Program and Meeting space as well as enhancing our Special Collections and creating the Workshop: flexible DIY space where people can create, invent, learn, and collaborate. Among many potential uses, the Workshop could prepare students and adults to compete in the fast-changing world of business.

The Teen Space will be a nurturing environment for study, collaboration and discovery

Taking the Middle School bus to the Main Library on Tuesday afternoons is a rite of passage for many 'tweens and teens in Concord. Forty students and 40 backpacks, loaded with laptops, bag lunches and other middle school accessories, enter the Sudbury Street doors every week. The students come to get a head start on homework, collaborate on group projects, meet up with friends and visit Concord Center.

This formative group makes frequent visits to the library evenings and weekends, as well as Tuesday afternoons. These young people are navigating their way toward independence. Some students are self-starters, eagerly embracing new freedoms. Others are slowly and perhaps reluctantly, trying to find their footing, socially, intellectually and emotionally. The Teen Space will be both launch pad and safe haven.

The Teen Space will nurture independence and inspire exploration

With an irreverent nod to the real and imagined tension between adults and teens, The Teen Space will offer young people their own room, their own materials and their own digital tools, to help them discover and define their place in the world. They can explore what it means to grow up in Concord, in a relatively protected environment, steeped in political and literary history. They can begin to map out how they want to navigate their individual life journeys. And then they can walk to Sally Ann's for a snack. Or, begin work on a group Social Studies project. Inspired by the *New York Times Kids'* section, which prohibits adults from reading its contents, this space is for 'tweens and teens and 'tweens and teens only. We are working with students from the Concord Middle School and the high school to make sure this space feels like their own and to find a name that represents their sensibilities.

- *Self-directed Study.* Traditional and 21st Century media and materials will support homework assignments and encourage new fields of interest.



- *Gateway to Local Exploration.* The Teen Space will be a comfortable home base from which to explore downtown Concord, grab a snack, make a drink run or simply get some fresh air with friends.
- *High School Resident Advisors.* Offering collegial confabs and hands on help, these older teen volunteers will be a reassuring, unobtrusive presence. Available as needed, the RAs will help students access library resources and provide peer mentoring. This program is another opportunity to cultivate a long-term connection to the library. The RAs will have special access to library programming and adult mentorship.

We invite you to help make The Teen Space a reality

Transitioning from childhood to adulthood is an extraordinary time with boundless opportunities to open the mind to new ways of thinking and being. It is also fraught with questions of identity, purpose and belonging. We envision The Teen Space will offer refuge but also inspire confidence.

Creating an inclusive environment to foster a lifetime love of learning and exploration will be a gift to generations of Concord families. Our young adults are facing a complex and fragile world. Efforts we undertake now to instill confidence, stretch imaginations and inspire creative purpose will redound to the benefit of Concord and beyond. Our hope is that a few leaders will step forward and embrace this opportunity.

In appreciation of your time and treasure, we will include a tasteful, permanent recognition in the form of a plaque. A leadership contribution to funding the Teen Space is a wonderful opportunity for a Concord family to give a gift that will benefit thousands of Concord's young people and their families in perpetuity.

Help make the Library the place where Concord connects, learns, and innovates

For more information about CFPL's Connecting Our Community Campaign, contact Marcy Bouley Eckel at MEckel@CFPLCorp.org.

