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I have been visiting our Juvenile Court Detention Center once a week since October 2009. Librarians in our Mobile Services Division visited before I took the reins. I maintain the collection and circulate books among the 50-60 residents there. It certainly has its challenges, but ultimately is a rewarding partnership between the public library, the public school system and the Juvenile Court.

The room is not just a library, but also used for teacher materials storage, computer usage, and lesson planning. The library utilizes about half of the room. I have about ten six-shelf units and eight four-shelf units for the library collection. The collection, until last school year, was comprised entirely of donations. Most of the donations are discarded titles from the Akron-Summit County Public Library collection, but donations are received from other libraries, local charitable organizations, religious institutions, and individuals. The Juvenile Court has a library card, but I have stopped taking circulating library books to the students because of the low return rate. I still provide books from ASCPL's collection to staff members for curriculum support.

When I took over the collection, one of the first tasks was to get the library in some sort of order and weed heavily. Among the books I weeded were a 1976 Bicentennial World Book Encyclopedia set and 20 large print copies of Jan Karon's *Shepherds Abiding*, in like-new condition. While all donations are gratefully accepted, not all are useful to add to the collection!

The librarians before me used a card system to keep track of the books. I have been using a simple Excel spreadsheet on my work laptop, but plan to create an Access database to catalog and maintain the collection.

I will also be able to police the collection better, as currently my biggest challenge is getting the residents to return their books to the library when they are done. If they like a book, I am much less likely to get it back, as they will read and reread, and pass it among the units (there are five units for the boys, with as many as 15 in each, and one unit for girls) to their friends. The books are not treated with gentle loving care, to put it nicely; once the books are ripped up, the guards often throw them out without my knowledge. There are books in each of the units as well, and the students and guards don't always know which should be returned to me. I tell them to bring all the books to me to sort out, but this hasn't worked as well as I'd like!

Last year, the new Detention Supervisor allocated \$3000 to the library to buy new books. This money was Title 1 money through Akron Public Schools. I was able to buy many current, popular books, especially urban fiction titles, which were incredibly popular with the students.

I have also received donations from the State Library of Ohio, Rosen Publishing, and galley copies from Baker & Taylor and Scholastic. These books are new or pre-publish copies, and have helped me in updating the non-fiction sections and in filling out series.

Urban fiction is by far my most popular collection, followed closely by James Patterson's "Alex Cross" series and R.L. Stine. Non-fiction is also popular, and I make sure to keep pregnancy/parenthood, careers and college, gang life and violence (prevention), sports, drawing and poetry sections stocked with new and different titles. Half of my office at the Main Library is filled with a reserve collection of titles – these

include replacement copies of popular books as well as different titles. I try to take different books out each week.

I am only able to give about three hours of my work week to the Juvenile Court Library, and as you might imagine, that is barely adequate, given the fact that I see about 50 residents (age 9-18) during that time! I have started building my collection database, but have not been able to complete it. I also need to weed again. Another goal of mine for the upcoming school year is to have a collection development plan in place so that the books I select will have support.

I send statistics to my library director and the Juvenile Court supervisor once a month. A typical month will see 350 circs over 4 visits. Each resident is allowed to check out three books per visit.

The residents in the Juvenile Court Detention Center are largely voracious readers, and the reading levels range from second grade to collegiate. I have had the same patron ask for books on Greek art and *The Boxcar Children* in the same visit. Each visit is different, and each patron is different, with different needs, just like at the public library. I have seen several of the residents after their release; some have visited the Teen Department at the Main Library, and they are always happy to talk to me about the books they've read since they've been "on the outs."

I have many plans for my future service at the center, including a book club and an author visit, but I need to find more hours available in my schedule to spend at the Juvenile Court.

Juvenile Court contact information is easy to find online, and if your county has such a facility it is definitely worth a call to the Detention Supervisor to learn what library services are available to the students, and how you can help.