



*a division of the Oregon Library Association*

The mission of OYAN is to support people who provide library services to teens in the state of Oregon. As people who work with teens, we are aware that adolescents are in a critical time of development. These are the years that youth explore identity and self expression that will follow them into adulthood. Teens are straddling childhood and adulthood and face unique challenges. More than any age group, teens are sensitive to how others view and interact with them. Many adults view teens as problems simply for exhibiting age appropriate behavior. This unfair prejudice is compounded by the racist oppression and violence BIPOC youth experience in both society and institutions. It is critical that we work to dismantle white supremacy in Teen Services so that all youth can flourish.

Violence against BIPOC people has received greater attention in the past year and has caused many organizations to look inward to examine both institutional racism and personal bias. This examination is long overdue and should not have required such widespread outcry to take place.

The term Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion has become jargon and is often misunderstood. OYAN holds to the definition as laid out in the [statement](#) by the OLA EDI Anti-Racism Special committee.

A commitment to EDI requires a commitment to Anti-Racism. EDI is passive whereas Anti-Racism is active. EDI acknowledges that racial oppression exists whereas Anti-Racism is a dedication to fighting against racism. Furthermore, any EDI statement must be a process and not an end. Dismantling racism within oneself is a life-long process. Dismantling racism in a country that is situated on stolen lands and was built by stolen people will last generations.

Libraries have historically reinforced white supremacy in many ways. The most celebrated classics tend to be written by white men to the exclusion of more diverse points of view. Historically, libraries have promoted use of the library in a way that supports dominant culture through their policies and procedures. Even the commitment to intellectual freedom and freedom of expression serves to oppress underrepresented people if it is not approached with an equity lens.

OYAN stands with youth who have experienced marginalization or violence due to their heritage. OYAN supports Oregon libraries in their efforts to decolonize and dismantle institutional racism in their libraries and collections. We reaffirm our dedication to elevate the voices of BIPOC authors in our book lists and other resources. We will focus our educational opportunities, both workshops and our scholarship fund, on dismantling white supremacy.

Anti-racist work is a process not an end product. As such, this is intended to be a living document which will change and evolve as we do the necessary work moving forward.

*Last edited April 20, 2021*