



May 3, 2023

JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF DURHAM REGION

Every June, for the past five years, all public libraries in Durham Region have partnered with the Durham Children's Aid Society and Youth Pride Durham to host a family-friendly community event called Drag Queen Storytime. Drag Queen Storytime is a storytime program attended by children with their parents and features stories and songs that celebrates diversity and teaches love, inclusion, and acceptance in a safe space. Every library supports the program by providing space and marketing the events to our respective communities.

We recognize that Durham Region is home to a variety of individuals and families, each with unique perspectives, experiences, and values. We deliver a range of programs and services that reflect and celebrate all members of our communities while acknowledging that not every book on our shelf or program we offer will be a good fit for each resident. These programs are selected based on our knowledge of our community and residents decide whether a program is a good fit for them and their family.

A large number of families in our community feel that Drag Queen Storytime speaks to their values. They express this through their continued attendance at the program every year and in their messages to us afterward. We hear often that the program offers a meaningful experience and a safe space for children and parents to talk about inclusion.

Public libraries have always championed the values underpinning a democratic society including free, open, and equitable access to a diversity of information and ideas, civic engagement, intellectual freedom, and freedom of speech. The public library remains an institution that helps build understanding for one another by being a welcoming and inclusive public space for all.

Sandy Taylor
Sandy Taylor
Board Chair
Ajax Public Library

Karen Enss
Karen Enss
Board Chair
Brock Libraries

St Cooke
Steven Cooke
Board Chair
Clarington Public Library,
Museums, & Archives

E Guernsey
Eric Guernsey
Board Chair
Oshawa Public Libraries

Sarah Jeffrey
Sarah Jeffrey Sheehy
Board Chair
Pickering Public Library

Sarah Parry
Sarah Parry
Board Chair
Scugog Public Library

David Phillips
David Phillips
Board Chair
Uxbridge Public Library

Geoff Anderson
Geoff Anderson
Board Chair
Whitby Public Library

Sarah Vaisler
Sarah Vaisler
Chief Librarian and Executive
Officer
Ajax Public Library

Katie-Scarlett MacGillivray
Katie-Scarlett MacGillivray
CEO
Brock Libraries

Monika Machacek
Monika Machacek
Chief Executive Officer
Clarington Public Library,
Museums, & Archives

Frances Newman
Frances Newman
CEO
Oshawa Public Libraries

Jackie Flowers
Jackie Flowers
CEO/Director of Public Libraries
Pickering Public Library

Amy Caughlin
Amy Caughlin
Chief Executive Officer
Scugog Public Library

Corrinne Morrison
Corrinne Morrison
Library Manager
Uxbridge Public Library

Rhonda Jessup
Rhonda Jessup
CEO
Whitby Public Library