

Challenged Materials in Colorado Public Library 2021

Every year, Library Research Service surveys Colorado public libraries about challenges to their materials or services. The libraries that report receiving one or more challenges are then asked to provide additional information.

A challenge is an attempt to remove or restrict materials, based on the objections of a person or group (www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport). There were 20 challenges in 2021. This represents a 100% increase in the number of challenges from 2020 to 2021.

The number of challenges for different formats for the past 4 years are as follows (note that the format called other includes programs and displays):

- In 2018, 22 challenged items were books, 16 were videos, 3 were computer, and 2 were other
- In 2019, 10 challenged items were books, 5 were video, 2 were computer, and 4 were other
- In 2020, 6 challenged items were books, 1 was video, 1 was computer, and 2 were other
- In 2021, 18 challenged items were books, 2 were other. There were not any video or computer challenges.

The percentages of intended audience for challenged items were: 57% children, 17% adults, and 26% YA (young adult.) Note that items could be classified in more than one category.

Following are the number of challenged items by item topic. Nine items were LGBTQ, 3 were race/racism, 2 were fantasy, 1 was politics and 5 were other. Other includes items that are not explicitly about a single topic. Note that items could be challenged for reasons other than the topic of the item.

The results of the challenges were 2 items were dropped, 3 items were moved, 13 had no change, and 2 were other. Explanations of other included event cancellation and incomplete reporting.

The author of this report is Amy Bahlenhorst, research analyst at Library Research Service. Questions can be sent to lrs@lrs.org. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The document ID is ED3/110.10/No. 262.