

# Why does Intellectual Freedom matter?

Whether you're reading a book, magazine or newspaper, listening to your favourite song, watching a new movie or playing the latest video game, Intellectual Freedom impacts your daily life in a free and democratic society. Intellectual Freedom protects your right to read, listen, write and speak your beliefs and opinions – and everyone has the right to have an opinion or hear an opinion on any topic.

Under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the fundamental freedoms of thought, belief and expression allows every Canadian to explore different ideas, hear all sides of an issue and gather information to make well-educated and informed decisions.

## Intellectual Freedom matters!

*"Intellectual Freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive, and disseminate ideas."*

American Library Association

## Online Intellectual Freedom resources.

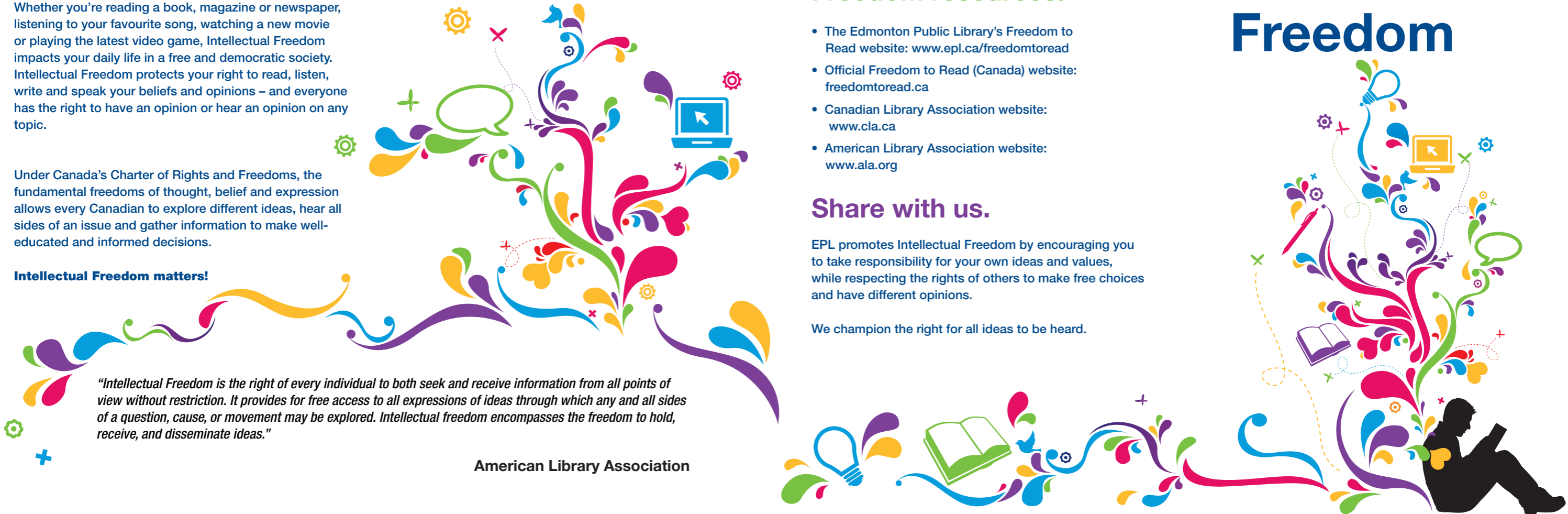
- The Edmonton Public Library's Freedom to Read website: [www.epl.ca/freedomtoread](http://www.epl.ca/freedomtoread)
- Official Freedom to Read (Canada) website: [freedomtoread.ca](http://freedomtoread.ca)
- Canadian Library Association website: [www.cla.ca](http://www.cla.ca)
- American Library Association website: [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)

## Share with us.

EPL promotes Intellectual Freedom by encouraging you to take responsibility for your own ideas and values, while respecting the rights of others to make free choices and have different opinions.

We champion the right for all ideas to be heard.

# Intellectual Freedom



## What does EPL do about Intellectual Freedom?

Each year tens of millions of items are borrowed from the Edmonton Public Library – books, magazines, music, movies, video games and more. As “Ideas Champions,” EPL plays an important role in protecting your Intellectual Freedom, ensuring everyone has uncensored access to materials of varying topics, beliefs and opinions. We’re excited by ideals, ideas and conversations!

## We’re a marketplace of ideas.

With more than 3 million materials in our collection, there’s guaranteed to be something that might be offensive to some. But, you’ll never find any materials marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents – that’s your decision. As a marketplace of ideas, EPL provides a wide range of materials and we want you to use them freely and develop your own informed thoughts and opinions.

## Something for everyone.

The materials in your library are selected to offer a diverse, balanced and high-quality collection representing all viewpoints. EPL’s selection criteria include:

- Relevance to community needs
- Importance as a historical document or as a current event
- Relation to the existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Popularity and local demand
- Comprehensive treatment of a subject and clarity

## I don’t like this book!

There may be a book, a CD or a DVD in our collection you don’t like. Tell us about it. Share your concerns with a staff member and complete the form available at every branch – all issues will be explored and responded to. If you think there are better materials available expressing certain viewpoints, let us know that too by going to the “Suggest New Items” section on the EPL website.

## What are my kids looking at?

You’re the best judge of what your kids should and should not do. We encourage you to have discussions with your children about what is appropriate for them to read, listen, view and play. Children under the age of 18 must have permission from their parents or guardians to get a library card and you can conveniently review your children’s borrowing activity online.

## ...and the Internet?

EPL provides unfiltered Internet access in support of Intellectual Freedom, but users must comply with EPL’s Public Internet Access Policy.

*“It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials...Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.”*

Canadian Library Association