

BRANCH PROFILE
MERCED BRANCH

Merced Branch opened in 1958. It has a one-floor area of 5,375 square feet, 3,861 of which comprise public service area. There is no public meeting room.

Merced Branch is open Monday through Friday, 34 hours weekly. It is staffed by a full-time 3632 adult librarian/branch head, a 37-hour full-time reduced 3630 children's librarian, a full-time 3616 library technician, and three part-time pages working a total of 42 hours per week.

In fiscal year 1992-1993, total circulation was 105,306. Circulation per capita was 6.97. Collection turnover rate was 3.00. Juvenile circulation accounted for 32% of the total. Patron usage was 86,223. Average patron use per open hour was 51.63.

Children's services provides weekly and seasonal programming year round. During 1992-1993, a total of 5,753 patrons attended children's programs at the Branch, including the Summer Reading Program and weekly Lapsit, Preschool Story Hour and Elementary School programs. Weekly programming is particularly well attended, accounting for 41% of total program attendance during the year. A total of 66 classes from nearby schools visited the branch, and the children's librarian visited an additional 36 classes during that period.

A survey conducted during fiscal year 1992-1993 indicates that 53,575 items were used in the library. 86,223 patron visits to the library occurred. 24,174 reference questions were asked, as well as 35,158 other questions, for a total of 59,332.

Total items in the library numbered 35,101. Books which account for the largest circulation are McNaughtons, uncatalogued

paperbacks and juvenile picture stories. A small collection of uncatalogued Chinese paperbacks circulates actively. In the children's collection, the most often requested nonfiction books are in the areas of science, geography, history, and biography. Juvenile fiction is extremely popular, especially in paperback format. Juvenile reference tools used frequently include encyclopedias and almanacs.

Highest ethnic populations served are white (63%) and Asian (23%.) The branch is used by elementary, middle, high school and college students, as well as by a large senior population. Mercy and Lowell High Schools, San Francisco State University, the Recreational Center for the Handicapped, Stonestown Shopping Center, and Stonestown and Park Merced Apartments are located nearby.

Strong areas of the adult collection include health, home improvement, history and travel. Subject areas which need improvement are business, pure sciences, cookery, computer science, art, general fiction and young adult.

The juvenile collection is strong in folklore, the arts and fiction. The j500s, particularly basic sciences, technology, history, and the jPS collection need weeding and updating. Picture stories in particular need to be expanded, given the high number of young children and parents served by the branch. A small foreign language collection of picture stories and other juvenile literature is becoming increasingly popular, with the highest demand for books in Chinese and Japanese.

A great limitation in the children's room is lack of space. A limited amount of space will be generated from aggressive weeding, but many of those titles will need to be replaced and new ones added, in order for the collection to meet juvenile user demand.