



May 6, 2025

Dear

This letter is in response to the completed Request for Reconsideration form for “Being You: A First Conversation About Gender” by Megan Madison in the Cromaine District Library (CDL) collection. I understand that a group of individuals helped you fill out these forms. We discussed at our second meeting that while each person filling out the forms selected that they represent themselves as an “individual” rather than “organization” because you are not a formal group, but a group of like-minded friends with similar concerns. You indicated that you may speak for the group and that I may communicate directly with you.

The concern about this title noted on the form was “sexualization/exploitation of children.”

When we met you explained to me that your main goal is to protect children from the subject matter of these particular books, which you broadly defined as containing viewpoints that, in your opinion, “will lead children to confusion about gender.” I explained to you that per library policy, only a parent may restrict what their own children read, and that public bodies may not restrict access to books based on the book’s viewpoint. You indicated that your personal views about gender confusion should take precedence over the rights of other parents in the community with whom you disagree.

After completing a staff review, I have concluded that this title was acquired in accordance with the library’s Materials Selection Policy #3010, which was provided when we discussed your concern in March 2025. This title was first available to community members in February 2022 and has circulated 11 times. It is published by Rise X Penguin Workshop. It is a board book written for children ages 2-5 that is shelved in the Parenting Collection.

Kirkus Reviews ([kirkusreviews.com](http://kirkusreviews.com)), a professional review source used by librarians when selecting titles, reviewed the title in October of 2021:

*This primer on gender lays the groundwork for affirming conversations and creates opportunities for self-identification. In straightforward, encouraging prose, Madison and Ralli guide readers through a gentle and interactive introduction to gender, sex, self-expression, and feminism. Beginning with a concrete foundation of commonality (everyone has a body), the lesson continues naturally into specific body parts (elbows, noses, vaginas, penises—the latter two not depicted), all the while normalizing that “every person’s body parts look different.” With that understanding, the narrator transitions into the way grown-ups describe babies as boys or girls when they are born, based on genitalia; here there’s a refreshing (but brief) acknowledgement that sometimes grown-ups aren’t sure but make a guess anyway. Emphasizing joy, wonder, the fluidity of identity, and self-expertise, the text carefully distinguishes gender from expression, which leads seamlessly into a developmentally conscious explanation of harmful stereotypes, unfair rules that give boys unearned power, and ultimately a call to action. Prompting questions invite the audience to deepen the facilitated conversation through moments of self-love, reflection, and sharing personal truths. Accompanying illustrations feature a racially diverse cohort of children learning about themselves, playing with one another, and engaging with their community, which includes recurring representations of disabled people as active participants. The final pages, targeted at caregivers, provide additional means of engaging with the conversation and pointedly challenge adults not to underestimate young people. An invaluable resource that supports ease and confidence. (resources) (Board book. 2-5)*

CDL's Policy #3010, Section V part B. notes that *"Responsibility for the reading material of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The Library respects each individual parent's right to supervise his/her children's choice of reading materials. However, the Library does not have the right to act in loco parentis (in place of the parent). Therefore, a parent who chooses to restrict the materials his/her children select must accompany those children when they use the collection to impose those restrictions. Juvenile material may be labeled with non-prejudicial, viewpoint-neutral labels.*

Review has deemed that this title would best fit our collection within the Big Concerns for Little People section of the Parenting collection, and labeled with a colored sticker to help parents find books about LGBTQ+ topics to share with their children.

Policy #3010 provides a protocol to appeal of this decision in Section IX Part F: written appeal of the Library Director's decision may be made by the Requester to the Chair of the Library Board within ten (10) business days after the written decision is made by the Library Director. The appeal must include the specific Library Material being appealed and the reason that the Requester would like the decision reversed. Please direct an appeal to:

William Bolin  
President, Cromaïne District Library Board of Trustees  
PO Box 308  
3688 N. Hartland Rd.  
Hartland, MI 48353

The Library Board will review any documentation it deems necessary to decide within sixty (60) days of receipt of the appeal. The Library Board may issue an additional extension if necessary in order to fully evaluate the material.

CDL's Board of Trustees delegates collection development responsibilities to the library director. A staff of librarians with advanced degrees and professional credentials make collection development decisions for CDL. Ultimately, however, the responsibility of what a child reads rests with parents and guardians. Public libraries cannot be expected to interfere with parental obligations and responsibilities when it comes to deciding what a minor may read, listen to, or view. It is the right of parent/guardian to determine what materials are available for their children to read.

The Cromaïne District Library serves 30,000 people in Hartland Township and portions of Brighton, Deerfield, Genoa, Oceola and Tyrone Townships. Library patrons come from a wide variety of religious, political, ethnic, and social backgrounds. Members of our community are well educated and possess a broad range of interests. Not every item the library offers will be enjoyed by every reader, listener, or viewer, but there is something for everyone at the public library. I respect your personal taste in materials and encourage you to ask CDL librarians to recommend titles that more closely match your interests.

Best,

Sarah Neidert  
Director, Cromaïne District Library