

Policy Title: Supervision of Children

Intent

The Georgina Public Library welcomes children of all ages, and encourages and promotes children's use of the library. However, parents and guardians should be aware that the library is a public place that is open to all members of the community. Furthermore, as in all public facilities, emergencies can occur. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to monitor the whereabouts and behavior of their children. Library staff, though concerned about the safety and well-being of children, cannot be responsible for their safety or supervision. Child protection in Ontario is legislated under the Ontario Child and Family Services Act, under the responsibility of local children's aid societies.

Regulations

1. In accordance with the Ontario Child and Family Services Act, children under the age of 10 must be accompanied, and adequately supervised by a parent or responsible caregiver of at least 13 years of age.
2. A child under 10 who is attending a library program need not be accompanied into the program by a parent or caregiver unless otherwise indicated. However, the parent or caregiver must remain in the building during the program.
3. Parents are responsible for supervising their child's access to all library resources, including the Internet (see the Public Access to Computers and Internet Services Policy).
4. As a public place, the library does not monitor the activities of its users unless there is a problem with conduct or a child is left unattended. Truancy is a school and parent issue, not a library one. The library cannot act in the role of either parent or police. If a parent, guardian, or school representative telephones to enquire if a child is in the library, staff will attempt to locate and bring the child to the phone to speak with them.
5. If staff suspect child abuse, they are required by law to contact the police or Children's Aid Society
6. Procedures for dealing with unattended children will be implemented in the following or similar situations: an unattended child is under the age of 10, is alone and frightened, is doing something dangerous, seems to be in danger from another person, is not following the library rules after reasonable warnings, or is alone in the library at closing time.
7. Under no circumstances will library staff provide transportation for unattended children or take them away from the library.
8. Two staff members must be present with an unattended child at all times.

Staff Procedures for Dealing with Unattended Children in the library:

9. Attempt to comfort an unattended or lost child and help to locate the parent or caregiver within the public areas of the building

10. If it is closing time, ascertain if transportation arrangements have been made
11. Identity of the parent/caregiver will be verified with the child
12. If the caregiver cannot be located within the building, attempt to contact by phone. If the library is closing, inform parent of this fact and that they must pick up their child within 15 minutes.
13. Remain with the child until the caregiver arrives
14. Inform the caregiver of the Supervision of Children Policy
15. If all reasonable attempts to locate the caregiver fail, or if no one arrives within 15 minutes of closing, call York Region Police Services.
16. Complete an Incident Report documenting attempts to contact caregiver, parent or guardian and steps taken.

Phone numbers:

Children's Aid Society York Region: 905 895-2318
 York Regional Police: 905 895-1221

Attachments: For safety sake posting

POLICY HISTORY:	
Initial Draft	November 22, 2006
Draft Presentation Review	June 28, 2007
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