



Otonabee- South Monaghan Public Library

Policy Type: **Programming**

Policy Title: **Children in the Library**

Policy Number: **PG-02**

Date of review/revision: **October, 2024**

Date of original motion: **April 1, 2015**

Year of Next Review: 2027

Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Otonabee - South Monaghan Public Library recognizes that children of all ages have a right to a welcoming, respectful, supportive, and safe environment when they visit the Library. As a public facility, the Library does not monitor the activities of its patrons unless there is a problem with conduct as outlined in OP-14 *Code of Conduct*, or a child is left unattended.

1. Responsibilities of the Parent or Caregiver

- a) Responsibility for the welfare and the behaviour of children using the Library ultimately rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver.
- b) The Library is guided by the terms in the Ontario *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)* with regards to unattended children.
 - i. Section 136 (3) **“Leaving child unattended (3) No person having charge of a child younger than 16 shall leave the child without making provision for the child’s supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances.”**
- c) To this end, the Library expects parents, caregivers and teachers to:
 - i. not leave children under 16, requiring supervision, to be unattended in or about Library premises unless they are taking part in programs like camps or workshops that do not require the help or supervision of parents.
 - ii. monitor the use of services by children under their care.
 - iii. be responsible for the appropriate behaviour of children under their care.
- d) In the library:
 - i. Children ages twelve and over are welcome to use the Library independently on a regular basis, but parents or caregivers are still responsible for the behaviour of any children to 16 while they are in the Library.
 - ii. Children younger than 12 should be accompanied by an adult while in the Library.

2: Responsibility of Staff

- a) Library staff will be guided by this policy in situations where:
 - i. an unattended child is found frightened or crying in the Library.
 - ii. an unattended child is perceived to be endangering themselves or others.

- iii. another person in the Library poses a perceived threat to an unattended child.
- iv. an unattended child exhibits specific inappropriate behaviour.
- v. an unattended child in not met by a responsible caregiver at closing time.
- vi. a child is consistently left on their own in the Library for long periods of time.

3: Duty to Report

- a) The *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (Section 125) recognizes that each of us has a responsibility for the welfare of children. It clearly states that members of the public, including professionals who work with children, have a **legislated** obligation to report promptly to the Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they suspect that a child or youth under the age of 16 is, or may be, in need of protection. The CYFSA defines the phrase "child in need of protection" as including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, and risk of harm.

Related Documents

Ontario's *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. S.O. 2017, CHAPTER C.14, sections 74, 84 (1), 125, 136 (3).
OSMPL **OP – 14 Code of Conduct Policy**
OSMPL **OP – 07 Internet Services Policy**
OSMPL **OP - 04 Collection Development Policy**
OSMPL **OP- 12 Circulation Policy**
OSMPL **PG - 02 Young Adult Services**