

Madawaska Valley Public Library Policy Manual

Policy Type: Operational

Policy Number: OP-13

Policy Title: Unattended Children

Initial Approval Date: 25 September 2013

Last Review/Revision Date: 2017

Review Date: 2021

Objective

To establish the conditions needed to maintain the well-being of children and the responsibilities of their parents / guardians / caregivers.

Scope

The Madawaska Valley Public Library (the Library) recognizes that children of all ages have a right to a welcoming, respectful, supportive and safe environment when they visit the library.

Section 1: Responsibilities of the Parent / Guardian / Caregiver

1. Responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children using the library ultimately rests with the parent / guardian / caregiver.
2. The Library is governed by the terms in the Ontario *Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA) with regards to supervision of children.

Specifically:

Section 79(3): “No person having charge of a child less than 16 years of age shall leave the child without making provision for his or her supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances.”

Section 79(4): “Where a person charged with contravening Subsection (3) and the child is less than 10 years of age, the onus of establishing that the person made provision for the child’s supervision and care that was reasonable in the circumstances rests with the person.”

3. The Library expects parents / guardians /caregivers and teachers to:
 - a) Not leave children requiring supervision unattended in or about library premises
 - b) Monitor the use of services and collections by children under their care
 - c) Be responsible for borrowed materials and fines incurred by children under their care
 - d) Be responsible for the appropriate behavior of children under their care.
4. Children nine (9) years old and younger must be accompanied by an adult while in the library.
5. While children under the age of five (5) attending programmes, may be supervised by Library staff / volunteers only during the schedule time of the

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programme, their parents / guardians/ caregivers must always remain in the library building.

Section 2: Responsibility of Staff / Volunteers

1. The Library staff / volunteers will be guided by this policy in situations where:
 - a) An unattended child is found frightened or crying in the library
 - b) An unattended child is perceived to be endangering him/herself
 - c) Another person in the library poses a perceived threat to the unattended child
 - d) An unattended child exhibits specific inappropriate behavior
 - e) An unattended child is not met by a responsible parent / guardian / caregiver at closing time
 - f) A child is consistently left on his or her own in the library for long periods of time.
2. Where a responsible adult cannot be contacted, library staff will:
 - a) Not leave a child unattended at closing time
 - b) Not give the child a ride home
 - c) Contact local police first, and then the Children's Aid Society (CAS) if so directed by the police and/or the Chief Executive Officer (the CEO) or designate
 - d) Remain with the child until the parent / guardian / caregiver or proper authorities can take the child home, or into their protection.

Section 3: Duty to Report

1. The CFSA 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 an obligation to report promptly to CAS if they suspect that a child or youth under the age of 16 is or may be in need of protection.
2. The duty to report applies to any child who is, or appears to be, under the age of 16 years. It also applies to children subject to a child protection order who are 16 and 17 years old.
3. When staff members have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, they will advise the CEO, or the Chairman of the Township of Madawaska Valley Public Library Board (the Board) if the CEO is not available, and together they will promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which is based to the local CAS as stated in the CFSA s. 72.(1).

Related Documents:

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Ontario *Child and Family Services Act* R.S.O. 1990. Chapter C.11, s. 72(1)

Policy Number **OP-14**

Circulation Policy

Policy Number **OP-09**

Use of Internet and Electronic Media Policy

Policy Number **OP-12**

Children's and Teens' Services Policy