



Safety of Children in the Library Policy

Purpose and Scope

Library policies and services are designed to provide a safe and welcoming environment for customers of all ages. Burlington Public Library welcomes and encourages children of all ages to visit the library as a safe space to enjoy our collections, programs and services. Library staff assist children in the library, but cannot assume responsibility for the safety, well-being, and supervision of children left unattended in the building.

Policy Statement

Parents and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and safety of their children visiting the library and need to use the same caution with their children at the library as they would in any other public setting.

As per the Child and Family Services Act, 1990, children under the age of ten must be directly supervised by a responsible caregiver and may not be left alone in the library.

When children under the age of ten attend library programs, parents or caregivers are required to either attend with their children or remain within the library and return to the programming area by the end of the program.

Requests for Information Regarding Children

As a public facility, the library does not monitor the activities of its customers of any age unless there is a problem with their conduct.

If a school age child is noticed to be spending multiple days in the library during school hours, staff may check with the child and ask that a parent or caregiver confirm with the library that they are aware of the child's whereabouts or contact Halton Children's Aid Society for guidance if there are concerns about the child's well being.

Staff will not give information to any person over the telephone as to whether a child is currently in the library or has been in the library recently. Staff may offer to take a message and ask the child (if present in the library) to call the person back. In the case of a missing child or a child in danger, Library staff will share information with the law enforcement agency requesting specific information.

Appendices

Appendix 1: References

- Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11, s.79(4):
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90c11#BK132>
- Effective Date: March 2019
- Projected Review Date: 2026
- Motion #/Date: #19-19, March 21/19
- Amended Dates: May 25/23; #23-21
- Associated Procedures: