

CARLSBAD PUBLIC LIBRARY

SAFE CHILD POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Carlsbad Public Library welcomes children of all ages and their families. Visiting the library encourages literacy, improves reading ability, and fosters attitudes of discovery and lifelong learning. The library offers an array of programs and services for young patrons, in addition to collections that hold a wide assortment of materials of interest. The children's and teen areas are reserved for children, their parents, guardians, teachers, caregivers, and people researching children's or teen literature.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Library attempts to maintain a secure environment for young people, but staff members cannot monitor the behavior and whereabouts of each child at all times. Library staff cannot provide child care or assume responsibility for children's safety, either within the Library building or on Library grounds. Parents and caregivers are reminded that libraries are public places and, as in all public places, "stranger danger" is a real concern. Library staff cannot prevent children from interacting with or leaving the library with persons who are not appropriate caregivers. ***Parents, guardians, teachers and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and safety of children visiting the library.***

UNATTENDED CHILDREN

An unattended child is a child of any age who is unaccompanied by a responsible adult. For children's safety and to maintain good order in the library, parents, guardians, teachers and caregivers may not leave children younger than 7 years of age alone, or in the care of other children who are themselves under 14 years of age. For example, young children may not be dropped off in the children's department while adults use other areas of the library.

Children at least 7 years old may attend library programs unaccompanied, provided a parent or caregiver picks up the child promptly at the program's end. Library staff cannot prevent children from interacting or leaving with persons who are not their appropriate chaperone. ***All unattended children must know how to reach an adult in case of an emergency.***

BEHAVIOR

Children are expected to behave in a manner appropriate to a learning atmosphere and comply with all provisions of the Rules Governing the Conduct of Patrons. If disruptive, a child is reminded of this policy; if disruptive behavior continues, the Librarian in charge will contact the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, the Librarian in charge will contact the Department of Public Safety.

LIBRARY HOURS

Parents and caregivers should be familiar with library operating hours and pick up children at least 15 minutes prior to closing time. If the Library is closing, at the regular time or in an emergency situation, and a child's parent or guardian cannot be located in the building or contacted by phone, the Librarian in charge will contact the Department of Public Safety.