



Section:	Board Policies	Policy No.:	OP-06
Sub-Section:	Operational	Effective Date:	October 18, 2018
Version:	3	Review Date:	October 2022
Policy Name:	Children at the Library		

OVERVIEW

The Oshawa Public Libraries (the “Library”) welcomes all children. We aim to make our facilities welcoming, educational, fun and safe for children of all ages. However, it is the responsibility of the parent or Caregiver to monitor the whereabouts and behaviour of their children. This policy extends to all Library programs and services held outside of the buildings. The policy is in compliance with *Ontario Child and Family Services Act* R.S.O. 1990.

DEFINITIONS

Caregiver means parents, guardians, Caregivers, baby sitters, older siblings, or relatives who are directly responsible for the care and well-being of the child, while at the Library.

Unattended child means a child left without visible supervision by a Caregiver while at the Library.

Competent means the ability of the child to accept social cues, be responsible for his/her own functions and behaviour, and accept the direction of Library employees.

POLICY

1. Responsibility for the welfare and the behaviour of children using the Library ultimately rests with the parent or Caregiver. The Library expects Caregivers to:
 - monitor the use of the services and resources of children including Internet services;
 - provide appropriate supervision when a child is not competent to be left unattended;
 - ensure children behave appropriately in accordance with the Library Use Guidelines.
 2. Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by a responsible Caregiver while in the Library. The assigned Caregiver must be a Competent and responsible agent, at least 12 years old. The Caregiver must know who to contact in an emergency situation.
 - Caregivers of children 5 years of age and under must remain on the same floor of the Library.
 - Children 6 to 9 years old must be accompanied by a Caregiver who will remain in the Library throughout the visit.
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3. Caregivers are responsible for ensuring that children in their charge behave appropriately in the Library and during Library programs. Failure of the Caregiver to control or amend a child's inappropriate behaviour may result in adult and child being required to leave the Library.
4. If it comes to the attention of staff that children are not behaving appropriately in accordance with the Library Use Guidelines or are frequently being left in the Library, the parents or guardians may be contacted and requested to make more appropriate child care arrangements.
5. Where it is apparent that it is contrary to a child's wishes or welfare to remain unattended, and the Caregiver cannot be located in the Library, staff may be required to contact the Children's Aid Society (CAS) and/or the Durham Regional Police Services as a legal obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Revision Dates: **October 2018**
 January 2012

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