

Carlsbad Public Library

Safe Child Policy

The Carlsbad Public Library welcomes young people 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 departments are reserved for children, their parents, guardians, teachers, caregivers, and people researching or reading children's or teen literature.

A. Responsibility

1. The Library attempts to maintain secure environments for children, but staff members are not able to 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.
2. Parents and caregivers are reminded that libraries are public places, and because of this children's safety cannot be guaranteed. Children may encounter hazards such as electrical equipment, doors, furniture or other Library patrons. **Parents, guardians, teachers and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and safety of their children when visiting the Library, and shall be required to monitor their children at all times.**

B. Unattended Children

1. An unattended child is a person under the age of 18 who is unaccompanied by an 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 anyone under 14 years of age. This means young children may not be dropped off in the children's department while adults use other areas of the Library.
2. Children at least 7 years old may be in the Library unaccompanied. **All unattended children must know how to reach their responsible adult in case of an emergency.**

C. Behavior

1. 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 will be 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 Carlsbad Police Department.

D. Access

1. The children's and teen departments are specifically designed to serve the needs of children. Adults in the departments not using children's materials or not using the departments for the purpose intended will be asked to use other areas of the Library. Staff members will place the safety of children first.
2. The restroom located in the children's department is specifically designed to serve the needs of children. Adults with children in their charge are the only adults allowed in this restroom.

E. Library Hours

1. 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, and a child's parent or guardian cannot be located in the building or contacted by phone, the Librarian in charge will contact the Carlsbad Police Department.

F. Questions or Exceptions Requests

1. Questions about this or any Library policy may be addressed to the Library Director during regular business hours. Exception requests to this Library policy may be made to the Library Board of Trustees at any regularly scheduled meeting.