

## **Children's and Teen Area Use**

### **101-02 Salem Public Library Children's and Teen Area Use and Children's Safety in the Library and Unattended Child Practice**

Adopted: 8/31/2015

Revised: 11/13/2017

#### **Introduction:**

Salem Public Library is committed to providing an inviting, safe space for youth that is responsive to their needs. The Children's and Teen areas of the Library are specifically designed to serve the needs of younger library users. The Children's area is intended for children (infants through grade 5) and their parent(s) or caregiver(s). The teen area is intended for teens (grades 6-12) and their parent(s) or caregiver(s).

#### **Practice:**

##### **Children's Area:**

Parents and guardians are welcome in the Children's area when accompanied by children and/or to attend a program with their child.

If an unaccompanied adult requires access to the children's collection, we ask that they limit their use to 15 minutes. Adults not fitting this description will be asked to leave the area. Library staff may make exceptions to the 15 minute time limit for unaccompanied adults who are (student) teachers, daycare providers or others who require access to the children's collection for research or other educational purposes.

Gaming and internet computers in the Children's area are reserved exclusively for use by children and/or teens. Adults who are supervising children and/or teens in the Children's area are free to use catalog computers and/or personal devices only.

Children's programs are held for the instruction and enjoyment of children and their caregivers. Adults attending programs without children may be asked to leave.

##### **Teen Area:**

Parents and guardians are welcome in the Teen area when accompanied by children and/or to attend a program with their child.

If an unaccompanied adult requires access to the Teen area, we ask that they limit their use to 15 minutes. Adults not fitting this description will be asked to leave the area. Library staff may make exceptions to the 15 minute time limit for unaccompanied adults who are (student) teachers, daycare providers or others who require access to the teen collection for research or other educational purposes.

Gaming and internet computers in the Teen area are reserved exclusively for use by teens. Adults who are supervising children and/or teens in the Teen area are free to use catalog computers and/or personal devices only.

Teen programs are held for the instruction and enjoyment of teens and/or their caregivers. Adults attending programs without teens may be asked to leave.

## **Children's Safety in the Library & Unattended Child Practice**

### **Introduction:**

The Salem Public Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment that encourages children to visit the Library, use Library collections and services, and attend Library programs. Library staff are available to assist and support children with their use of Library resources. The Library is a public building, open to everyone and a child's safety cannot be guaranteed. Children may encounter hazards in the Library such as doors, furniture, electrical equipment and other Library patrons.

The Library is not responsible for a minor's selection of Library materials, attendance at programs or use of the Internet or other services. Parents, guardians, or responsible adults are expected to accompany their minor children in the use of Library materials and services, including computer use.

The responsibility for the behavior and well-being of children using the Library rests with the parent, guardian, or designated caregiver. Library staff members cannot supervise children in the Library. The Library does not serve in loco parentis.

### **Practice:**

Children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or designated responsible caregiver (16 years of age or older) at all times while in the Library. Caregivers must supervise and provide guidance for children during the entire Library visit.

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 163.545: Child neglect in the second degree. (1) A person having custody or control of a child under 10 years of age commits the crime of child neglect in the second degree if, with criminal negligence, the person leaves the child unattended in or at any place for such period of time as may be likely to endanger the health or welfare of such child. (2) Child neglect in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

In the following situations, Library staff will take the actions outlined below for all children zero (0) to seventeen (17) years of age:

- A child is alone and frightened or crying in the Library
- A child is alone and doing something dangerous, or another person in the Library seems to be a danger to the child
- A child is alone and is not following the Library Code of Conduct
- No caregiver comes to pick a child up at closing time

Library staff members will evaluate the situation and try to contact the child's parent or guardian. If staff cannot reach the parent or guardian, he or she will place the child in the care of the appropriate local law enforcement agency.