

# **Children's and Young Adult Behavior Policy for the Durham Public Library**

## **Behavior Policy for Children**

The Durham Public Library strives to provide a safe, educational, and enjoyable place for children to explore the world of books and information. Library personnel take their responsibility to provide safe access very seriously. Parents should remember that the libraries are public buildings available for use by the community. For the protection and well-being of children, the following policy has been established:

### **Children up to Age 10**

All children under the age of 10 must be accompanied and continually supervised by a parent or caregiver while in the library. The caregiver must be 14 years of age or older.

Parents or caregivers, not library staff, are responsible for the actions and safety of children visiting the library.

Parents or caregivers must stay in the library building while their child under the age of 10 is attending a library sponsored program. Children attending library programs are supervised by the library staff only during the scheduled time of the program.

At the discretion of a responsible adult, a child age 10 or older may be left unattended. The child must know how to reach the responsible adult should this need arise. Children will be expected to display appropriate behavior [2], conducive to maintaining a safe library for all patrons.

Parents/caregiver or guardians must realize that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their children's actions. Disruptive behavior, such as shouting, running, pushing, or other loud or physical activities, will not be tolerated. Children who continue to be disruptive will be asked to leave the building. In the case of an unaccompanied child over the age of 10, an attempt will be made to contact a family member or caregiver to pick them up. If a family member or caregiver cannot be reached, the Durham Police Department may be contacted at the discretion of library staff.

The parent or caregiver is liable for all damage done by their children to the library facility or equipment.

The library cannot assume responsibility for children while a parent or caregiver is participating in a library program or other activity in the library.

Shoes and shirts must be worn while in the library. (Toddlers who are walking need to have shoes on.)

### **Children 10-17 years old**

At the discretion of the library, the Young Adult Room may be used for small programs, but will still be available for book selection.

Use of foul, offensive, or threatening language is prohibited. Drugs, smoking, and elicit behavior are not allowed. Appropriate behavior is required at all times.

Should it be determined that a child is engaging in disruptive or dangerous behavior, the following steps will be taken:

A staff member will advise the child to stop the behavior. If disruptive behavior continues, the child may be asked to leave the library. The child may not return for the duration of that day.

Should the child require a parent/guardian for transportation, the staff member will allow the child to call for transportation.

The Durham Police Department may be called to assist with disruptive children who do not adhere to disciplinary actions.

We ask that patrons leave the Young Adult Area the way they found it: discard garbage, and straighten chairs.

Group leaders and parents/guardians meeting in the library are responsible for the actions of all children who participate in their activity.

### **Unattended Children of all ages-closing time**

Children and their adult caregivers should be aware of the closing times of the library. If a child has been left at the library without a ride or assistance home at closing time, every attempt will be made to contact a family member or caregiver via work, home and cellular phone. If a parent/guardian does not arrive by the time the library closes, two staff members are authorized to stay with the child until someone arrives to pick him/her up. If a parent/guardian has not arrived within 30 minutes, the Durham Police Department will be called and alerted that a child has been left behind at the library. The police will then try to locate the parent or guardian. Under no circumstance will a staff member give a ride home to a child left at the Library.

If the police have picked up the child, a staff member will post a note on the door advising the parent/guardian of the circumstances and stating where the parent/guardian can locate the child. The incident will be reported to the Director's Office.

Adopted by the DPL Board of Trustees Feb. 2017

(2) Library General Behavior Policy