

Revision Date:	April 2023	Policy Type:	Public Service
Approval Level:	CEO	Distribution:	All Employees
Review Schedule:	5 Years (or as required)		

1. PURPOSE

Markham Public Library (the “Library”) is dedicated to providing a welcoming and safe environment for customers of all ages. It is for the safety of each child that the Library has adopted this “Child Safety Policy.”

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy:

Child/children – All persons who are below the age of twelve (12) years.

Guardian – A person with legal responsibility for the care and custody of the child.

Caregiver – Anyone age twelve (12) years or older to whom the parent/guardian has given responsibility for the care of the younger child.

Unattended Child – A child left without visible supervision by a parent, guardian or caregiver within a Library branch.

Staff – Library employees, volunteers, and community partners in shared facilities.

3. POLICY

3.1 Responsibility of Parent or Caregiver

- 1) Responsibility for the welfare and behaviour of children using the Library ultimately rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver.
- 2) The Library expects parents, caregivers and teachers to:
 - Monitor the use of its services and collections by such children
 - Not leave children requiring supervision unattended in or about Library premises
 - Be responsible for materials borrowed by children under their care
 - Be responsible for the appropriate behaviour of children under their care
- 3) Parents/guardians/caregivers must provide adequate care and supervision of children less than ten (10) years of age while in the Library.
- 4) Children under the age of five (5) attending programs must remain within the eyesight of their parents or, if in the confines of a room during a scheduled program, may be supervised by the Library staff only during the scheduled time of the program. In the latter case, parents must remain in the building throughout the duration of the program.

3.2 Responsibility of Library Staff

- 1) Staff will be guided by this Policy in all situations where an unattended child is found in the Library.
- 2) Where a responsible adult cannot be contacted, or the child is unable to provide the name and contact information of parent or guardian, Staff will:
 - Contact local police or the Children's Aid Society (CAS)
 - Remain with the child until the proper authorities can take the child into their protection
 - Refrain from giving the child a ride home

3.3 Duty to Report

Under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, section 125, Library staff have a duty to report if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is in need of protection. The duty to report applies to any child who is, or appears to be, under the age of 16 years.

When a staff member has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, they will advise their Manager or designate, who together with the staff member will promptly report the concern and related information to the local CAS.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**Managers / Supervisors shall:**

- Enforce this Policy.

Employees shall:

- Comply with and enforce this Policy.

Library Administration shall:

- Develop and distribute this Policy;
- Update this Policy per the Review Schedule.

5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS / POLICIES / LEGISLATION

- Unattended Child Procedures
- Unattended Child Log
- Unattended Child – Letter to Parents
- *Unacceptable Conduct Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)
- *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. S.O. 2017, c.C.14, s.74, 84(1), 125, 136(3)