

DERRY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Safe Child Policy
APPROVED 03/20/2023

INTRODUCTION

The Derry Public Library ("DPL") welcomes children of all ages. DPL is a doorway through which life-long learning takes place. As a public library, however, DPL is a public building. Any member of the public – law abiding or otherwise – may enter at any time during operating hours, and any number of situations or emergencies could take place in a public building.

DPL Staff have many duties to perform in order to serve all citizens of Derry. Staff cannot monitor the behavior or whereabouts of each patron, including children. Staff do not act *in loco parentis* for children who visit the library.

In order to make DPL a memorable, enjoyable and above all safe place for children, the DPL Board of Trustees ("Trustees") has adopted this Safe Child Policy.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

- DPL's Trustees and Staff assume no responsibility for any child left unattended in the library.
- Every child eight (8) years of age or younger must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, teacher, adult, or caregiver of at least sixteen (16) years of age ("responsible caregiver") who acknowledges responsibility for the child during their entire stay in the library. The responsible caregiver is accountable for their child's behavior while in the building, and the responsible caregiver must remain in the building even when their child is attending a library program.
- If a child 8 years of age or younger is left unattended and appears to be lost or frightened, DPL staff will make every attempt to locate the child's responsible caregiver. If a responsible caregiver cannot be located after a reasonable period of time and searching, or a lost or frightened child is left in the library at closing time, the Police Department will be notified.
- Children 9 years of age and older are responsible for their own behavior in the library and must follow library rules and regulations. Any unattended child 9 years of age and older must have contact information enabling DPL staff to reach their responsible caregiver.
- DPL's Patron Code of Conduct applies to all library patrons, children included. Accordingly, all DPL patrons must adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- If a child's behavior is disruptive while in the library, as described in the Patron Code of Conduct, DPL Staff may pursue appropriate actions, including but not limited to:
 - Asking the child to behave;
 - Informing the responsible caregiver that their child is being disruptive;
 - Asking the responsible caregiver to control their child; and/or
 - Requesting that the responsible caregiver remove the child from the library.