



# ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## SAFE CHILD POLICY

### PURPOSE

The Orange County Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use library materials and services. Our goal is to provide a safe and positive experience to all children when they are in the library. Library staff is available to nurture a child's love of reading, support learning and assist their search for information. Library staff is not, however, responsible for a child's care and supervision while they are in the library.

### POLICY STATEMENT

The responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of a child lies with their parent or caregiver. A caregiver is defined as an individual, at least 16 years of age, who acknowledges this responsibility for the child. Children under the age of 10 must be supervised by a parent or caregiver at all times while in the library. Supervision includes a parent or caregiver staying within earshot of the child and maintaining a clear line of sight. The only exception is when a child is attending a library program. In this instance the parent or caregiver must, however, remain in the library in case an emergency should arise.

In the event that a child under the age of 10 is left unsupervised, during normal library hours, a library staff member will make every effort to locate the child's parent or caregiver. If a parent or caregiver cannot be found within a reasonable amount of time, the police will be contacted.

In the event that a person under the age of 16 is left at the library at the time of closing, a library staff member will make every effort to locate a parent or caregiver. If a parent or caregiver has not arrived after 15 minutes, the police will be notified. Two staff members will remain with the child at the library until authorities arrive.

### Conduct and Courtesy

The library's Conduct and Courtesy policy applies to all patrons, regardless of age. Library staff will follow guidelines set by that policy to address any behavioral issues that may arise with children. Thank you for helping us make the library a safe and inviting environment for visitors of all ages.

### RESPONSIBILITY

The Library Director is the final authority with regards to enforcing this policy.

Policy Revised: May 2018