



Astoria Public Library Child Safety Policy

Purpose

The Astoria Public Library welcomes children and families. To make the Library an enjoyable place and to encourage a love of books, reading, and learning, we offer designated children's areas, Teen area, programs, and services for children. We hope you will help your children make effective use of the Library and assist them in selecting books and materials, using the computers, or attending programs. Together, we can provide a fun and positive experience when visiting the Astoria Public Library.

Access to Children's/Teen Areas

The Children's/Teen area of the Library is specifically designed to serve the needs of young customers. Adults in that area not using Children's materials or not using the area for the purpose intended will be asked to use other areas of the Library. Staff members will place the safety of children first.

Parent Expectations and Responsibilities

Because the Library is a public place, children's safety cannot be guaranteed. Children may encounter hazards such as stairs, elevators, doors, furniture, electrical equipment, or other Library customers. The conduct, safety, and supervision of children while on Library premises are the responsibility of parents, guardians, and caregivers. It is the responsibility of parents, guardians, and caregivers to determine the supervision needs of their children and to provide accordingly. While our staff values the safety of children, only parents, guardians, and caregivers can provide appropriate supervision of children. Appropriate supervision provided by parents, guardians, and caregivers will assist Library staff in creating a pleasant and safe environment for Library customers of all ages.

Staff Role

Library staff members have many duties to fulfill and cannot supervise children in the Library or when the child leaves the building. However, if a staff member is concerned that a child may not be sufficiently capable and mature to be on Library premises without supervision, the staff member may take action to correct the situation and will inform Library management of the concerns and the actions taken.

In order to ensure a positive Library experience for everyone, if a child appears not to be sufficiently capable or mature to be on Library premises without supervision:

- a. Staff will try to comfort the child if the child is ill, hungry or upset. Staff will make a concerted effort to locate the child's parent, guardian, or caregiver in the Library and express the Library's concern for the child's safety, and explain the Library's Child Safety Policy. If staff is unable to locate the parent, guardian, or caregiver in the Library, staff will make a concerted effort to contact the parent, guardian or caregiver to pick up the child. Staff will express the Library's concern for the child's safety and

explain the Library's Child Safety Policy. If the parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be located within a reasonable time, staff will call the Astoria Police Department. The Astoria Police Department will then assume responsibility for the child.

b. Staff will encourage any unattended child to contact his or her parent, guardian, or caregiver before closing time. If a parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within a reasonable time after closing, Library staff will call the Astoria Police Department to pick up the child. These same actions will be followed for emergency closures. Two staff members will remain with the child until the parent, guardian, caregiver or police arrive. Once the child is in the protective care of the Astoria Police Department, a note will be attached to the Library entrance or entrances, with the following information: "Unattended child is in the care of the Astoria Police Department." Neither the name of the child nor the name of the parent, guardian, or caregiver will be listed on the note.

c. Staff will not transport any child from the Library to another location.

Library Board Endorsement: 08/27/2019

Approved by City Council: 10/07/2019

Biannual review: 2023 (Review completed October 5, 2021)