TAY TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

Port McNicoll * Victoria Harbour * Waubaushene

CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY
POLICY # G-2020-4

This policy is to outline the criteria and guidelines in providing services to children that support and foster a life-long love of literacy, knowledge, and imagination. All programmes, events, and services will provide age-appropriate content and experiences to meet the diverse informational and recreational needs of the children in our communities. This policy also provides a framework for how the Library achieves its goals and strategic priorities when serving children. Our Library is committed to providing the best possible services for children and fully endorses the **Children's Rights in the Public Library statement adopted at the Ontario Library Association Annual General Meeting, November 1998 (Appendix 1).**

1. Children's Collection

1.1. The children's collection is selected to provide pleasurable reading for reading's sake and, insofar as it is possible, to provide information in all fields of knowledge for children from infants to grade eight. Acquisitions will be selected from a broad spectrum of materials with content and vocabulary suitable to the age, local school curriculum, reading levels, and special interest to a wide range of children in accordance with the Library's current Collection Management Policy.

2. Programmes

2.1. The Library provides programmes for children, both in and out of the library, to stimulate imagination, invoke curiosity, enrich their lives, and encourage life-long learning and literacy. All children's programmes support the Library's mission, values, goals, and strategic priorities by:

2.1.1. Making the Library a hub for discovery and experience; developing a strong community presence; and fostering a culture of innovation.

2.1.2. Providing a variety of programmes furthering the informational, cultural, learning and leisure interests of all ages.
2.1.3. Cooperating with community agencies and schools in providing children's programmes.
2.1.4. Ensuring that adequate funds are made available to support all children's programmes.
2.1.5. It is a priority for the Library to offer low or no-cost programs. Any fees associated with programmes are to offset the cost of specialized supplies.
2.1.6. If a participant attends a programme with an associated cost with a support person, there will be no charge for the support person to attend.

3. Advocacy and Outreach

3.1. The Library will take an active role in child advocacy through community outreach partnerships with schools and other community organizations serving children by:
3.1.1. Actively encouraging the continued cooperation of schools and other community groups in the use of the Library.
3.1.2. Providing expertise and support for community groups and organizations serving children.
3.1.3. Providing educational, entertaining, and literacy based programmes, which support children, families, parents/guardians, caregivers, and educators. These programmes share the goals and priorities of in-house programming.
3.1.4.Collaborating with local service agencies to emphasize the importance of fostering a love of reading and life-long learning in children.

4. Rights and Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian

4.1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for the behaviour of children in their care while in the library:

4.1.1. Monitor the use of services and collections by their children.

4.1.2. Be responsible for borrowed materials and fines incurred by their children.

4.1.3. Not leave unattended children requiring supervision, in or about Library premises. Supervision of children under the age of 12 years rests on the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the children. Library staff will strive to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children, but cannot be held responsible for their care.

4.1.4. Any child with or without a library card may use the services and collections within the Library facilities, unless use of the service or space specifically requires a card.

4.1.5. The Library provides unfiltered Internet use for children in accordance with the Tay Public Library Board's current Internet Services Policy.

5. Staff Intervention On Behalf of Children

5.1. Staff are obligated under the Ontario Child and Family Services Act to report suspicions of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse to children under the age of 16. Particular care must be taken to ensure a supportive environment for the child. In all cases of intervention staff will complete an Incident Report, and inform the Chief Executive Officer.

5.2. Staff will not under any circumstances drive a child home.

5.3. Staff will forthwith attempt to contact the parent/guardian of abandoned child or children left unattended in or about the Library premises. The Police will be notified if the parent/guardian cannot be reached. A staff member will remain with the child until the Police arrive.