



4. COMMUNITY LIAISON

Policy 4.7

Lithgow Library Learning Centre Child Protection Policy

Version 3

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4.7 LITHGOW LIBRARY LEARNING CENTRE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

OBJECTIVE:

To illustrate to users of the Lithgow Library Learning Centre the conditions of use regarding access to Library resources and supervision of access to information within the Library facilities.

POLICY:

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

The Library collections are available to all Library users without restriction. It is not the responsibility of the Library or its staff to exercise a supervisory or restrictive role in determining which Library resources young people may use or access. The Library encourages parents/carers to set their own family rules. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to monitor young peoples' selection and use of Library resources.

The Library has no censorship role in its choice of the Library resources from any collection.

The Library protects the public's right to know and does not monitor or control the content of materials offered through the Internet. Library staff are available to assist clients in the use of the Internet, and to recommend websites on particular subjects. Parents/carers are responsible for their child's use of the Internet, in line with the Library's Internet policy.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN

Unsupervised children can be at risk in any public place, including public libraries. Library staff do not supervise children in the Library, so there is a risk that unattended children may leave the Library at any time, hurt themselves, or be approached by strangers. Libraries are busy public places, open to all, and staff cannot judge which members of the public present a possible danger to children. In addition, libraries do not have the facilities to attend to children who are sick, injured or hungry.

Young children left alone in a library can become distressed, bored or disruptive. Library users, including young people who disturb other Library users may be removed from the Library under the Library Act 1939. If the person's condition, conduct, dress or manner is likely to give offence to any person in the Library they may be asked to leave (Library Regulation). Any child left unattended in a public library may be classed as a child or young person at risk of harm under the Child and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act, 1998 s23 and subsequently may be reported as such to the Department of Community Services under s24 or s27 of the Act.

Parents who leave a child unattended in a public library are exposing their child to potential harm and may themselves be committing an offence under the Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998, s 228.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN AFTER HOURS

Shift staff will ring police if children are left unattended at closing time.

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