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Category:	Operations

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## Children and Youth Services

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the parameters of Brampton Library's services to children and youth in order to address the unique needs of these user groups related to program and service design as well as to safety, security and privacy.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Child** - a person 12 years of age and under
- 2.2. **Youth** - a person between the ages of 13 and 17 years

### 3. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 3.1. Brampton Library is committed to designing and implementing programs and services that meet the unique informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of children and youth, and to serving children, youth and their families in a respectful, inclusive and equitable manner. The Library is guided in this regard by its Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) policies and strategies.
  - 3.2. Brampton Library endorses the [Children's Rights in the Library](#) and the [Teen Rights in the Public Library](#) adopted by the Ontario Library Association. Trained Library staff are responsible for designing and providing a wide range of appropriate programs, collections, services and spaces that respect the well-being and the needs of children and youth while also affording them agency in their choice of services. Parents and caregivers may make such choices on behalf of the children and youth in their care; however, Library staff are not responsible for enforcing these choices. The Library will designate specific collections as most appropriate for children and for youth, but will not restrict children or youth to accessing solely these collections; any such restriction is solely the choice of parents or caregivers. The Library may also designate specific spaces for children or youth but will not restrict children or youth solely to these spaces; however, the Library may restrict spaces designated for children solely to children or accompanying adults.
  - 3.3. As with customers of all ages, children and youth are expected to abide by BRD - 15 Customer Code of Conduct. The Library balances access to services for children and youth with their ongoing safety and wellbeing. Responsibility for the behaviour and wellbeing of any child or youth who uses the library rests with the parents, caregivers, or guardians. Library staff cannot assume responsibility for the safety and well-being of children and youth left unattended.
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Refer to BRD - 22 Library Membership and Use Policy for details about membership registration, privileges, and obligations.

#### **4. UNATTENDED CHILDREN**

- 4.1. Children under the age of 12 who require supervision should not be alone in the library.
- 4.2. Children ages 12 and over are welcome to use the library independently in accordance with the code of conduct.
- 4.3. Library staff may intervene with a child under the age of 12 if they become aware that a child in the Library is in these or similar situations:
  - A child is alone and visibly upset or ill
  - A child is alone with younger siblings
  - A child is alone and doing something dangerous or another person in the library seems to be a danger to the child
  - A child is alone and not following library code of conduct
  - A child is alone at the library at closing time

#### **5. DUTY TO REPORT**

- 5.1. The [Child and Family Services Act \(CFSA\), section 72 \(1\)](#), states that members of the public including professionals who work with children have an obligation to report to [Children's Aid Society \(CAS\)](#) if they suspect that a child or youth under the age of 16 is or may be in need of protection.
- 5.2. The duty to report applies to any child and youth who is, or appears to be, under the age of 16 years. It also applies to children and youth subject to a child protection order who are 16 and 17 years of age.

#### **6. PRIVACY**

- 6.1. Children and youth have the same privacy rights as adults. However, parents, guardians or caregivers are responsible for the accounts of their children under 16.
- 6.2. Parents, guardians, or caregivers may exercise the right to access afforded in [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\), section 54](#): "a person who has lawful custody of the individual may exercise the rights of access of an individual less than 16 years of age."

#### **7. EXTERNAL REFERENCES**

- 7.1. [Child and Family Services Act \(CFSA\), section 72 \(1\)](#)
- 7.2. [Children's Aid Society \(CAS\)](#)
- 7.3. [Children's Rights in the Library](#)
- 7.4. [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\), section 54](#)

**7.5.** [Teen Rights in the Public Library](#)

**8. RELATED POLICIES**

- 8.1.** BRD - 15 Customer Code of Conduct
- 8.2.** BRD - 20 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA)
- 8.3.** BRD - 22 Library Membership and Use Policy

This policy is available in alternative formats upon request.