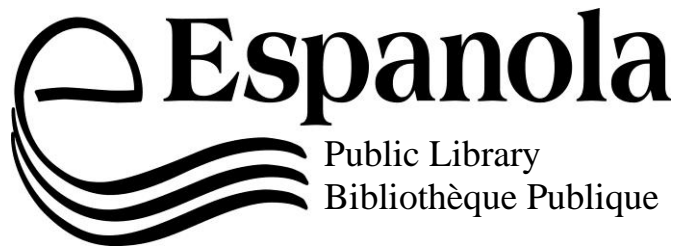


245 Avery Drive, Espanola, ON P5E 1S4
 Ph. (705) 869-2940 Fax (705) 869-6463
 E-mail: library@espanola.ca
 Website: www.espanola.library.on.ca



GST No. 12202 5059 RT0001 (Town of Espanola)

Children's Services Policy

The Espanola Public Library recognizes that the needs of young people are important in their own right: that their intellectual growth, their cultural appreciation and recreational activities should be fostered through quality library service, delivered with consideration and respect. This policy sets out the services to be offered for children in the library as well as parents, guardians and adults who work with children. This policy relates to the Unattended Children Policy S-1 in Board and staff responsibilities for the safety of children in the library.

The Espanola Public Library endeavors to provide this service based on the principles stated in the Ontario Library Association's *Children's Rights in the Public Library, 1998*. See Appendix A.

Section 1: Services

1. Collections:

- a) The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will ensure the maintenance and organization of a comprehensive collection of materials for and about children, based on the Collection Development Policy.
- b) The collections for children will meet high standards of quality and reflect the changing educational needs and personal interests of children and teens as well as trends in society.
- c) The staff will develop profiles of the collections to define the scope and to address the issues of:
 - i. Canadian authors and content
 - ii. award-winning titles
 - iii. non-fiction material that complement the local school curriculum
 - iv. age appropriate formats

2. Reference and Readers Advisory

- a) The qualified staff will utilize the full range of collections, technology and methods to answer all users' requests for advice on selecting books and for information, regardless of age and without judgment, with confidentiality and respect.
- b) Library staff should conduct interviews to better understand what each child wants and needs.
- c) Library staff will point out the variety of resources available in all areas of the library as appropriate.

3. Programs

- a) The library will provide programming for children and parents, both in and out of the library, to stimulate creative potential and to encourage and facilitate the habit of reading, independent learning and use of the library.
- b) Programming funding monies are an essential part of the annual budget requisition; additionally, programs may be run on a cost-recovery or revenue generating basis.
- c) The library will provide educational, entertaining and literature related programs and support for children, such as:
 - i. programs for parents/guardians, adults, caregivers that will educate them on the importance of early literacy, the role of the library in their children's lives, and the support the library can offer them
 - ii. programs for classes, children's groups (Brownies), daycare, etc., depending on age, that will emphasize early literacy and library orientation, and that encourage reading for leisure, or highlight various aspects of the collection
 - iii. programs for summer, school breaks and professional development days that will be primarily book based and will highlight various aspects of our collection while encouraging reading for pleasure or leisure activities.
- d) The number of participants for all programs will be restricted based on size of the facility, fire department limits, staff supervision availability, etc.; this will be enforced by the children's programmer in charge.
- e) Some programs may limit the age of children and the number of children per accompanying adult. This limit may be enforced by the staff as the program is designed for maximum benefit to the child/parent/guardian through one on one interaction. Leniency is given to parents of more than one child.

Section 2: Library Space

1. The library will provide a well-planned area for children that is distinct from the adult area with signage that is clear and age-appropriate.
2. These areas should be organized for easy access, visually stimulating so that children are able to readily distinguish their own space from the rest of the library.
3. These areas will have furniture, shelves and equipment that are designed for and accessible to all children.
4. The area for children is an interactive learning environment where controlled noise levels are tolerated and where young users are invited to explore the library materials and services in their own way.

Section 3: Staffing

1. The board will support a program of ongoing staff training and professional development in children's services.
2. The CEO will ensure that all staff members assigned to children's services receive appropriate training to provide knowledgeable library service.

3. The library staff will advocate for children's services in the community by:
 - a) collaborating with agencies to promote early literacy, love of reading, lifelong learning and children's well-being
 - b) seeking support for children's services from community organizations, fundraising, donations, etc.
 - c) networking with other agencies who provide service to children in the community, region and province
 - d) communicating with principals, teacher librarians and teachers in the community
 - e) promoting the children's services and collections to groups who could benefit from them (schools, daycares, etc.)
4. While library staff will assist young people with finding materials, using the Internet or attending programs, but parents/guardians are responsible for their children's use of the library.

Section 4: Promotion of Children's Services and Community Outreach

The Library actively promotes services for children via local media and publications; additionally, the Library communicates and cooperates with other community groups and organizations dedicated to serving children by

- a) encouraging cooperation of schools and groups in use of the library resources
- b) cooperating with and participating in community collaborative efforts for meetings, displays, and festivals

Section 5: Rights and Responsibilities of Parents / Safety of Children in the Library

The Library staff recognizes that children of all ages have a right to a welcoming, respectful, supportive and safe environment when they visit the library. However, the library is a busy public place and library staff cannot assume responsibility for children left unattended within our public facility.

The Library expects parents and guardians to:

- a) monitor their child's use of services – including computers (Computer Access Policy)
- b) be responsible for fines and materials borrowed
- c) not leave children requiring supervision unattended, in or about the Library (Unattended Children Policy)

Reference:

Ontario Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chap. C11, sect.72 (1).

Related Documents:

Unattended Children Policy

Computer Access Policy

Emergency Plan

Public Relations Policy

Revision History:

Date approved: Mar. 17, 2014

Previous policy dated: Feb. 2010

Date reviewed: April 9, 2018

To be reviewed by: April 2022

Appendix A – Ontario Library Association - Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library

OLA Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library

Children in Public Libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom
2. Equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
3. A full range of materials, services and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their needs.
4. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.
5. A library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.
6. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in children's services.
7. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service from birth through the transition to adult user.
8. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the library administration, library board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of children's services.
9. Library policies written to include the needs of the child.

Adopted at the Ontario Library Association
Annual General Meeting
November 1998

Posted at http://accessola2.com/data/1/rec_docs/380_ola3.pdf