

CHILD AND YOUNG ADULT SERVICE POLICY

Child Safety Policy

Adopted by the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency on January 5, 1998

Revised November 20, 2011

Revised April 21, 2014

Revised February 9, 2015

One of the primary missions of the Library is to provide a variety of services for children from birth through their teenage years. The Library encourages visits by children of all ages, and it is our desire to make these visits educational, memorable, and enjoyable. The Belvedere-Tiburon Library invites children to use the Library frequently for schoolwork, to find books or other materials that interest them, and to attend programs.

The staff realizes that the Library will be noisier at busy times and that children by nature can cause more commotion. It is an unfortunate consequence of the beautiful nave design of the Library that sound carries throughout the building much like in a cathedral. The staff does not assume that children will remain quiet at all times and staff does not discipline or make demands of children or teens unless a significant action occurs or dangerous behavior is identified.

Teens and middle school children have no separate room where they can study in groups and work together on projects. An alcove, service desk, and adjacent small area of the Library have been set aside for teens to use for group study and discussion and for individual study and use of the teen materials collection. Adults sitting there may be asked to move to another area by library staff. Although many children, especially teens, prefer to work in that alcove, they are not restricted from using other areas of the Library and are welcome to use the Library computers.

In order to ensure their safety and the enjoyment of the Library for patrons of all ages, we ask children and their parents to be aware of the following:

It is the policy of the Library that all children six years of age and under must be in the company of a parent/responsible adult while in the Library. Even if the young person is attending a program, it is required that the parent/responsible adult remain with the child while in the Library throughout the program. Children under six shall not be left unattended in the Children's Room, anywhere else on the Library premises, or in the parking areas.

It is the Library's policy that all children seven through nine years of age shall have a parent or responsible adult in the Library at all times and the parent or responsible adult shall always be aware of the whereabouts of the child/children and the children should know where the parent or responsible adults are within the Library.

Parents and caregivers are responsible for the safety and behavior of their children when they are in the Library. "Unattended" means that the parent or designated person is not in close proximity to the child. Library staff cannot be expected to assume responsibility for the care of unattended children in the library.

In the interest of safety, swinging on, standing on, or placing small children on tables or counters is hazardous to the individual and to the property and therefore is not allowed. Outdoor

use of steps, handrails, benches, statuary, landscaping features, or signage on the Library premises for any manner of play is hazardous to the individual and to the property and therefore is not allowed.

Neither the Library nor its staff members can be responsible for an unattended child in the case of a medical emergency. If at any time a parent or caregiver cannot be located, Library staff will notify the local law enforcement agency or the fire department.

If a patron finds that a group of children are bothersome, they should go to a Library service desk and ask for assistance. It is not appropriate for patrons in the Library who find children disruptive to discipline, direct, or make demands of children. The staff will assess the situation and may suggest that the patron move to another area of the Library or come in during the hours when children do not generally attend. The busy hours for group study and programs for school age children and teens is Monday through Friday from 3:00pm to 5:00pm.

The essential behavior while using the Library is to be considerate of others. To ensure that all people who use the Library can do so in a comfortable and safe environment, parents and caregivers should monitor the activities of their children. Children, teens, or adults behaving in a manner disrespectful or dangerous to others and to Library property may be asked to leave. If such persons are uncooperative, Library staff will notify the local law enforcement agency.