



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

Santa Clara City Library

POLICY FOR CHILDREN VISITING THE LIBRARY **POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS AT THE LIBRARY**

Service to children is an important goal at the Santa Clara City Library. The Santa Clara City Library is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for families, children, and teens, with trained staff to provide age appropriate readers advisory and programs. Children of all ages are welcomed and encouraged to use the library materials, programs and services. This policy is intended to promote the safety of youth and families that use the Library and to create a positive experience when visiting the Santa Clara City Library.

The City of Santa Clara Libraries and library bookmobile are public buildings facilities and that are open to all, regardless of origin, age, background and views. To protect the safety and well-being of children and

Library staff strive to ensure that all buildings are operated in a safe manner in order to create a space that invites reading, exploration, curiosity, learning, and making community connections, the Library provides designated children and teen areas. However, because the buildings are open to all, libraries cannot be considered safe places for unattended children. Tthe responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the Library rests with the parents, legal guardians, or other responsible adult caregivers age 14 or older (hereinafter "parent or responsible adult caregiver"). Library staff are not responsible for the care and safety of unattended children in the library.

In order to maintain a safe atmosphere where library visitors of all ages can use and enjoy the library reading and study are encouraged, children and teens are expected to follow the Library's Rules of Conduct. Parents or responsible caregivers are to ensure that these expectations are met as needed. the following policy has been adopted by the Board of Library Trustees.

Unattended Children

Young children (about ages 9-10 and under) must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult caregiver at all times; older children and young teens (about ages 9-14) are not to be left unattended for extended periods of time. Parents or responsible caregivers should consider the following when deciding whether their child is ready to visit the library on their own:

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- ~~Staff are available to assist children at the library, but staff may not act in the place of a parent or guardian for children at the library for any length of time.~~
- ~~The library contains collection for all ages, as well as unfiltered internet access.~~
- ~~Situations may arise when, due to unusual or emergency circumstances, it may be necessary for the Library to close without prior notice.~~
- ~~The Library does not observe the same schedule everyday.~~

Staff Intervention:

~~Library staff respects the privacy of all library patrons, and although the library is not responsible for determining if a child is at risk, staff may intervene and contact the parent/guardian of the child or the Santa Clara Police Department in the following situations:~~

- ~~A Children age 9 and young young child is left unaccompanied in the library. must be accompanied continually by a parent or responsible adult caregiver. A parent or responsible adult caregiver must remain with the children at all times and in the case of an adult caregiver, have emergency contact information with them or available to them.~~
- ~~If a child age 9 or younger is found to be unaccompanied in the Library, staff will try to locate the parent or responsible adult caregiver to remedy the situation. If a parent or responsible adult caregiver is unavailable, the Police, Santa Clara County Child Protective Services, or other appropriate government agency will be called.~~
- ~~An older child or young teen is left unaccompanied in the library for a long period of time. Children age 10 and older may use the Library without a parent or responsible adult caregiver present, but must be able to reach a parent or responsible adult caregiver immediately, either in person or by phone.~~
- ~~A child is not picked up by library closing time.~~
- ~~A child is not adhering to a library policy including, but not limited to, the All children in the Library must follow the posted Patron Rules of olicy for Public Conduct in the Library. Children and are expected to use the Library appropriately. Children who do not follow these rules are subject to the same consequences as other library users, including being required to leave the Library or losing library privileges.~~
- ~~Situations may arise when, due to unusual or emergency circumstances, it may be necessary for the Library to close without prior notice. In this event or in case of other emergencies, unaccompanied children age 18 years or younger who cannot transport themselves must be able to reach a parent or responsible adult caregiver for immediate pick-up.~~

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- ~~The Library does not observe the same schedule every day. Parents or responsible adult caregivers should be aware of library closing times. If a child remains at the Library after hours, staff may make an attempt to contact a parent or responsible adult caregiver, but also may, immediately and without recourse, contact the Police, Santa Clara County Child Protective Services, or other appropriate government agency. Staff will not transport a child nor will a child be allowed to sit in a staff person's vehicle.~~
- ~~The children's area of the Library is reserved for children, their parents or responsible adult caregivers, and adults interested in children's literature, such as teachers and college students taking children's literature classes. Out of concern for the safety of young patrons, adults who are unaccompanied by a child or children in the children's area of the Library may be questioned by staff, and may be asked to move to another area of the Library.~~
- ~~If it is unsafe for a child to leave the building without an adult, that child should never be left unattended in the Library.~~

PARENTS AND ADULT CAREGIVERS, NOT LIBRARY STAFF, ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY OF THEIR CHILDREN
WHILE ON THE PREMISES
OF THE
SANTA CLARA CITY LIBRARY.

~~Questions related to this policy should be directed to the City Librarian or designee,
Monday – Friday during regular business hours, (408) 615-2930~~

~~03/20/25 revision~~

POLICY FOR CHILDREN VISITING THE LIBRARY

Santa Clara City Library is a youth development organization designed to support children and teens to thrive in learning, health, literacy, exploration, and discovery. Children of all ages are welcomed and encouraged to use the library's materials, programs and services. This policy is intended to protect the safety and well-being of children that use the City Library and to create a positive experience.

Responsibilities of Parents or Caregivers

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The Santa Clara City Library, including the bookmobile, are public facilities that are open to everyone, regardless of origin, age, background, and views. Library staff strive to ensure that all facilities are operated in a safe manner. However, the responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with their parent(s), legal guardian(s), or other responsible caregiver(s)¹. **age 14 or older** (hereinafter "parent or responsible caregiver"). Library staff are not responsible for the care and safety of unattended children in the library.

In order to maintain a safe atmosphere where library visitors of all ages can use and enjoy the library, children and teens are expected to follow the Library's Rules of Conduct. Parents or responsible caregivers are to ensure that these expectations are met as needed.

Unattended Children

Children ~~about~~ ages 10 or under must always be physically accompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver ~~at all times, anywhere on library premises.~~ Children ages 11 and older may use the ~~Library~~ library without a parent or responsible caregiver present, but must be able to reach a parent or responsible caregiver immediately, either in person or by phone.

Parents ~~or~~ and responsible caregivers should consider the following when deciding whether their child is ready to visit the library on their own:

- Staff are available to assist children at the library, but staff may not act in the place of a parent as guardian for children at the library for any length of time.
- The library contains collection for all ages, as well as unfiltered internet access.
- Situations may arise when, due to unusual or emergency circumstances, it may be necessary for the ~~Library~~ library to close without prior notice.
- The ~~Library~~ library does not observe the same schedule everyday.

Designated Children's Spaces

In order to create a space that invites reading, exploration, curiosity, learning, and making community connections for children and their families, the Library provides designated children's and teen's areas. These spaces welcome children and their parent or responsible caregivers to access age-appropriate library collections, services, and programs.

At Central Park and Northside Branch Libraries, designated family restrooms are provided within or near the children's and teen's areas. These restrooms are intended and prioritized for the use of children and their ~~adult~~ parents or responsible caregivers. ~~with children.~~

¹ A responsible caregiver must be at least 14 years old.

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Staff Intervention-:

Library staff respects the privacy of all library visitors, and although the library is not responsible for determining if a child is at risk, staff may intervene and contact the parent/guardian of the child or the law enforcement in the following situations:

- Children of any age that have not been picked up at library's closing time will be given the opportunity to contact their parent or responsible caregiver. At least two staff members will remain with the child until the child has been picked up. If fifteen minutes after closing the child is still waiting at the library and staff are unable to contact their parent or responsible caregiver, staff will ~~contact law~~contact law enforcement to ~~report abandoned child and wait with the child until they arrive~~escort the child to a safe location until parents can be reached.
- All children in the Library must follow the Library's Rules of Conduct and use the Library library appropriately. Children who fail to comply may be subject to the same consequence processes as indicated in the policy.

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