

Libraries ACT: Children and Young People in the Library Policy

February 2025

Libraries ACT welcomes people of all ages.

Definitions

In this policy young people means both:

- Children under 12 , and
- Young people aged from 12 to 17 (anyone 18 or older is considered an adult).

When we say duty of care we mean:

- Acting to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who use or might use the library
- Taking reasonable action to prevent harm or injury, and
- Sharing information when required to do so by law.

What you can expect from us

- To protect the right to know, read and have equal access to information
- Welcoming, respectful and supportive services
- A wide range of free and inclusive resources, services, programs and spaces
- To meet diverse interests, cultural, physical and developmental needs
- Knowledgeable staff including expertise in services for young people and help using the library
- To ask permission before taking photos or videos

What we don't do

- Supervise children or young people in the library
- Limit young people's use or access to resources unless required to do so by law or library policies.
- Monitor or control content accessed through the internet, public PCs or Wi-Fi

What we expect from young people

- Be courteous, respectful and patient and meet our [service commitment expectations](#)
- Use resources, spaces and facilities with care and don't damage them

What we expect from parents/guardians/carers of young people

- Take responsibility for the behaviour and actions of young people in the library
- Supervise young people's library borrowing, use, access, and participation in programs



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- Set and manage your own rules about what your young people can borrow, use, or access
- Monitor and supervise young people's use of the internet and Wi-Fi
- Don't take photos or videos in the library without permission

Library membership

We encourage all library users to have their own membership. Children can be members from birth. If a parent/guardian/carer allows their young person to use their adult membership, they acknowledge that this increases the risk of their young person accessing restricted material. Parents/guardians/carers are responsible for ensuring the young person's safety when it comes to materials, and must also prevent offences under the *Classification (Publications, Films, and Computer Games) Act 1995*.

Legal restrictions

The law restricts resources classified MA or above. We may ask for identification with proof of age before lending material or giving access to some third-party resources.

Unsupervised and unaccompanied children

Libraries are busy public places, open to all. Children under 12 should be actively supervised by a parent/guardian/carer at all times, including while participating in library programs. Young people aged 12 and older may use the library unsupervised at the discretion of their parent/guardian/carer. Safety, comfort, behaviour and access to library resources remains the responsibility of legal guardians.

We have a duty of care to keep everyone safe. If staff think someone may be at risk or is behaving in a way that causes disruption or risk to others, we may attempt to contact their parent/guardian/carer. If staff are unable to contact a legal guardian, or believe there is immediate risk of harm, they may contact appropriate authorities including police.

Further information

Visit the [Libraries ACT website](#) for information about library services, resources and programs for young people. Contact the [ACT Children and Young People Commissioner](#) (CYPC) for information about the rights and safety of children and young people in the ACT and [age definitions](#).

Contact us

- In person: at your local library
- By email: library.customerinfo@act.gov.au
- By mail: PO Box 158, Canberra City, ACT 2601
- By phone: 6205 9000

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed by February 2027.



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