

## **HOMER TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT**

### **SAFE CHILD POLICY**

The Homer Township Public Library welcomes the use of the Library and services by children.

As an active community library with over 500 visitors daily, the safety and well-being of children and other visitors are of utmost concern. We want your child's library experience to be a positive one. Please recognize that the Library facility serves as a public destination point for many people. The Library encourages parents to consider the safety and well being of their children and the needs of other library users of all ages. Please do not leave your children unsupervised or unattended. Our staff is not licensed to provide for childcare needs that serve in lieu of parental responsibility.

In order to promote a safe environment for children, the Library Board of Trustees has set the following policies for the Library regarding children.

#### **General Guidelines**

Parents and/or caregivers are responsible for teaching their children the proper behavior in a Library and respect for other patrons and books. All children are expected to follow the Library's general patron behavior guidelines as to not be disruptive to other patrons.

- Children ten and older may be left unattended at the Library provided their behavior is appropriate for the Library and they are mature enough to stay alone.
- Children under the age of ten must be supervised by an adult or another responsible caregiver over the age of fourteen when using the Library facilities. If your child is uncomfortable or needs frequent personal assistance we request that you remain with the child.
- Children of ages five and under must remain in the immediate supervising vicinity of an adult or responsible caregiver over the age of 14.

#### **Library Programs**

No child under the age of five may be left in any program or special event alone. Some library programs are listed as independent for older children. Library staff will supervise children only for the duration of the program. The responsible adult should remain in the building so they are available for their child if for any reason the child must leave a program. The responsible adult is expected to join the child promptly at the end of the program.

## **Unattended Children**

Children who are at the library unaccompanied by an adult, or for an extended period of time unsupervised, may be approached for information concerning their parents' availability. (See Library Policy Manual Section 7, Unsupervised Children) If the adult is not located, Library staff will attempt to call the parents of the child. Generally, if an adult cannot be located within a reasonable time of the discovery of an unattended child, the child will be placed in the custody of the local authorities. If, at the discretion of the appropriate Library staff, the situation warrants immediate attention, local authorities may be contacted sooner.

## **Library Closing**

If any child does not have a responsible adult present in the library at closing time or at the time of an emergency closing, the librarian in charge will attempt to contact a parent or guardian by phone. If unsuccessful, the librarian will contact the local authorities. At least two staff members will wait with the child until the parents or local authorities arrive to pick up the child. An incident report will be undertaken for any situation of an unattended child.

9/06