



REV. 4-3-07

ESCONDIDO PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICY

CHILD SAFETY IN THE LIBRARY

The ability to access knowledge and information is essential to a child's growth, and equality of access to information for all ages is one of the highest priorities of the Escondido Public Library. The Library Board of Trustees urges parents to support and encourage their children in using library resources and programs to facilitate personal and educational growth and to engender a love of books and reading.

Additionally, the Board affirms the library's responsibility to promote the safety and well-being of children and teens as they use the library. Although the library cannot guarantee the safety of unattended children, the Board and staff have adopted policies and procedures designed to maximize safety for those attending a library facility or program.

RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR CHILD AND TEEN SAFETY

FACILITY

1. Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied at all times by a parent, guardian, or other responsible person. Staff will make every effort to contact parents who leave young children unattended at the library to let them know the rules and may call police in exceptional cases.
2. The staff will restrict adult use of children's and teen areas in order to ensure the adequate protection of library facilities and of persons and property therein. An adult who is not with a child, and who has no specific business relating to children's or teen materials, will be asked to leave the children's room or teen area.
3. Restrooms in the Children's Room are for the exclusive use of children. Children using the rest room may be assisted by their parents.
4. Children 12 years old and under who remain at library facilities after closing will be referred to the police in order to ensure their safety

COMPUTER USE

5. Children ages 12 and under may only use computers in the children's rooms. Only teens 13 to 17 years of age may use computers which are located in the teen areas.
6. All computers in the library are filtered, and viewing of inappropriate adult images on the library's computers is prohibited.
7. Proof that a user is 18 years of age, such as a driver's license, must be produced for access to an adult unfiltered computer.

8. The Library actively promotes and distributes information to teens and parents regarding the safe use of the Internet, including the publication Child Safety on the Information Highway from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
9. Library staff will monitor use of computers to the extent they are able. Any person accessing inappropriate material on a computer will be stopped and staff will immediately take appropriate action.
10. State law (California Public Records Act, Government Code Title 1, Division 7, Chapter 3.5) protects each user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received at a library and materials consulted or borrowed. For that reason, all adult computers are fitted with privacy screens. The screens have the added effect of protecting minors from mature subject material of any kind which might be accessed by an adult.
11. Users are prohibited from using library computers for purposes that violate federal, California or local laws, including the transmission or receiving of child pornography, harmful material, or fraud. Users must agree to this policy before each use of the computer by a mandatory introductory screen.

SECURITY

12. The library provides security officers at the Main Library who regularly patrol the children's and teen areas, the rest rooms, and all other public areas of the library and the parking lot. Security officers and staff are authorized to call Police Dispatch or 911 for any disturbances and emergencies.
13. In addition, all public service desks at all library facilities are equipped with a "panic button" which accesses 911 in an emergency situation.
14. Security cameras at the Main library record people entering and leaving the library as well as activity in the lobby area. The recording may be used to identify persons engaged in criminal actions. The live-action cameras may be accessed by Police Dispatch if needed.

CONDUCT

15. The Library prohibits any activity or condition that unreasonably interferes with Library user or staff comfort, safety, use or quiet and peaceful enjoyment of the Library, including but not limited to:
 - i. harassing or threatening library users or staff;
 - ii. being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
 - iii. bringing inappropriate items into the library, such as weapons;
 - iv. staring at, following or photographing library users or staff;
 - v. making any loud or unreasonable noise or other disturbance such as running or talking loudly;
 - vi. disruptive use of personal communications or entertainment devices, such as cell phones, head phones and radios.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

Library users who break the rules will receive a warning from the library staff to cease the violation, or they may be told to leave the library. Willful or repeated breaking of these rules may result in

suspension of library privileges. Family members may also be contacted to help alleviate issues, where appropriate. In addition, illegal activity will be reported to police and may result in arrest.