

## **Disruptive Children**

### **Introduction**

The Cranford public Library staff and board of trustees hope that children using the library will find it a warm, inviting place to be. Programs and resources are offered to make it enticing to children and to help them enjoy their visits and develop a love of books, reading, and libraries.

### **Policy Statement**

Library services are offered to all residents of Cranford regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic origin, religion, or economic status. All patrons are entitled to courteous and efficient service from library staff, access to appropriate materials, and pleasant surroundings free from harassment, discomfort, and stress.

Activities and behavior appropriate to a library environment are expected of children, young adult, and adult patrons. Appropriate library activities include reading, thinking, doing homework, writing reports, researching, browsing for materials, and using computers.

Disruptive behavior is not appropriate and will not be permitted. Disruptive behavior includes running, throwing, loud or abusive talking, fighting, moving or abusing furniture, or other equipment, excessive socializing, threatening or abusive actions, abnormal or erratic behavior that hinders normal use by staff or patrons, or any other activity that is inappropriate to a library environment. Vandalism and other illegal behavior will not be tolerated, and the police may be called.

Throughout this statement, the words *parent* or *parents* are also meant to connote a *responsible adult caretaker* or *responsible adult caretakers*.

### **Procedures**

1. Children who are disruptive shall be asked by staff members to behave in a manner appropriate to a library environment. The inappropriate behavior will be specified, alternative behavior may be suggested, and the child will be told that he or she may be asked to leave the library if the disruptive behavior does not stop.
2. If the disruptive behavior continues and the child's parent is in the building, the parent should be informed that his/her child is disturbing others.
3. If the parent refuses to cooperate or is unable to control the child, the parent and the child will be asked to leave the library.
4. If the disruptive child is 11 years old or younger and does not have a parent on the building, a staff member shall stay with the child until contact information for the parent is located through a search of library files, telephone directories, etc.. Library staff are not to search the Cranford Community Center for parents. The library and community center are separate departments with separate operations and separate staffs.
5. If contact information is available, the staff person shall contact the parent, explain the library policy on disruptive children, and request that the parent come for the child.
6. If the parent cannot be located or contacted after a reasonable length of time, the staff person in charge shall call the police to take charge of the child.

7. If the child is between 12 and 17 years old and the disruptive behavior continues, his/her parent may be called, told of the disruptive behavior, and asked to come for the child, or the child may simply be asked to leave the building for the rest of the day.
8. If a child older than twelve years is asked to leave the building and refuses, steps 5 and 6 will be implemented (in that order).
9. Under no circumstance shall a staff member take the child out of the building or provide transportation elsewhere.

The parents of children who are habitually disruptive will be informed of the situation; such children may be barred from the library for a period of time determined by the director.

*Approved by the Cranford Public Library Board of Trustees on October 22, 2015.*