



muswellbrook shire council

LIBRARY POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Policy No. L1/2

Authorisation Details:

Authorised by:	Council
Minute No:	20
Date:	9 February 2015
Review timeframe:	June 2016
Department:	Corporate & Community Services
Document Owner:	Manager, Community & Cultural Services

Review History:

Version No.	Date changed	Modified by	Amendments made

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Library Policy for Young People

L1/2

POLICY OBJECTIVES

Upper Hunter Regional Library, Denman and Muswellbrook branches, provide a wide range of services to young people.

This policy provides guidance on the management and provision of services to children and young people in our libraries.

POLICY STATEMENT

Children and Young people are core public library clients in their own right, and are potentially the future adult users and supporter of public libraries. Upper Hunter Regional Library (Denman and Muswellbrook Branches) are committed to serving the information and recreation needs of children and young people.

Denman and Muswellbrook Branches strive to provide a welcoming environment, and provide targeted resources and programs to meet the needs of young people including;

- Fiction, non-fiction and recreational books
- Magazines
- Computer games for in-library use
- CD's
- Videos and DVD's
- Computer and internet access
- Assistance from staff in accessing collections and information
- Homework help
- EBooks
- Internet training
- Storytime
- Space and activities for study and connectivity

LEGISLATION

NSW public libraries operate under the Library Act 1939 and the library Regulation 2005 Clause 14 of the Library Regulation 2005 which defines the proper use of a library and, by extension, the scope of library services.

It is council's responsibility to ensure that all staff have current approval to work with children and young people through Working with Children checks on a biannual basis.

PROCEDURE

1. Parental responsibility statements

The following part to this policy defines the responsibilities of parents/guardians with regard to their child's use of Denman and Muswellbrook libraries, including access to resources and unattended children.

1.1 Access to library resources

The Denman and Muswellbrook branches of Upper Hunter Regional Library contain publications that have been classified 'Unrestricted' and films and computer games that have been classified 'G' (General), 'PG' (Parental Guidance) or 'M' (Mature) in accordance with the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (Cth)*. This material is available to all persons, including young people without restriction.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child's selection and use of materials in the Denman and Muswellbrook Libraries general collection accords with any restrictions the family may wish to set. Upper Hunter Regional Library encourages parents/guardians to consult with their child to develop clear rules regarding access to resources that accord with the family's personal values and beliefs.

Denman and Muswellbrook branches promote and support young people's access to information, including electronic information through its Internet facilities. Library staff are available to assist young people in the use of the Internet, and to recommend websites on particular subjects. A number of appropriate websites have been selected for inclusion in the libraries electronic collection as a 'white list'.

Parents and guardians are responsible for their child's use of the Internet, in line with the Upper Hunter Library Internet policy.

1.2 Unattended children

For the purposes of this policy, children under the age of **13** must be supervised by a parent/guardian.

Unsupervised children can be at risk in any public place, including public libraries. Denman and Muswellbrook library staff do not supervise children in the library, and there is a risk that unattended children may leave the library at any time, hurt themselves, or be approached by strangers. In addition, libraries do not have the facilities to attend to children who are sick, injured or hungry.

Children left unattended in a public library may be classed as a child or young person at risk of harm under s23 of the *Children and Young*

Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and may be reported as such to the Director-General of the Department Family and Community Services. Parents who leave a child unattended in a public library are exposing their child to potential harm, and may be committing an offence.

Young people left alone in a library can become distressed, bored or disruptive. Young people who disturb other library users may be removed from the library under clause 17 of the *Library Regulation 2005*.

Author

The Manager of Community and Cultural Services - with the guidance of the NSW State Library template for Library Policies relating to Young People.

Date November, 2014