



western riverina  
LIBRARIES

## **Children's Policy**

**2017**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 POLICY OBJECTIVES

Western Riverina Libraries are committed to serving the information and recreation needs of children and young people. The Libraries strive to provide a safe, welcoming environment, and provide resources and programs to meet the needs of children and young people.

## 1.2 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy is relevant to all WRL branch libraries and their patrons / visitors.

WRL comprises of six branch libraries and two mobile libraries across five Local Government Areas (LGAs):

- Griffith City Library
- Carrathool Shire Library
- Narrandera Shire Library
- Hay Shire Library
- Jerilderie Library, Murrumbidgee
- Griffith and Murrumbidgee Mobile Library
- Carrathool and Narrandera Mobile Library

## 1.3 DEFINITIONS

Library – Western Riverina Libraries

Clients – Library members, visitors and users of any library facility or equipment.

WRL – Western Riverina Libraries

## 1.4 ADOPTION OF POLICY

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Western Riverina Libraries Committee.

Date of adoption: 26 October, 2017

## 1.5 AVAILABILITY

A copy of this policy can be located on the Western Riverina Libraries website:

[www.wrl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wrl.nsw.gov.au)

## 1.6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- WRL Inappropriate Behaviour Policy
- WRL Public PC and Internet Policy
- NSW Library Regulations 2005
- NSW Child Protection Act 2000
- NSW Anti Discrimination Act 1977
- NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act (2000)

## 2. POLICY

### 2.1 ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Western Riverina Libraries' collection includes publications that may have mature content and films and computer games that have been classified "G" (General), "PG" (Parental Guidance) or "M" (Mature). Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child's selection and use of materials in the Libraries' collection accords with any restrictions the family may wish to set. Western Riverina Libraries encourage 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.

Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's use of the Internet. Our Libraries promote and support young people's access to information, including electronic information through their 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 our electronic collections on the Libraries' website [www.wrl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wrl.nsw.gov.au)

### 2.2 UNATTENDED CHILDREN

Unsupervised children can be at risk in any public place, including public libraries. Western Riverina Libraries' 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 who are left unattended in a public library may be classed as a child or young person at risk of harm under s. 23 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)* and **may be reported as such to the Police**. Parents who leave a child unattended in the Library are exposing their child to potential harm and may be committing an offence under s. 228 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*.

Young children left alone in a library can become distressed, bored or disruptive. Young people who disturb other library users may be asked to leave the Library under clause 17 of the *Library Regulation 2010 (NSW)*.

Appropriate signage in the Libraries advises patrons that

*"Children must be supervised by an adult at all times. Library staff do not supervise children".*