

## **Sinking Spring Public Library Program Policy**

Programs are an integral component of the many services that libraries provide to their respective communities. The Sinking Spring Public Library seeks to present a variety of programs that provide opportunities for the promotion and support of literacy and lifelong learning as well as for cultural enrichment and recreational enjoyment.

We have limited resources and a diverse community therefore we avoid duplicating story times and services available elsewhere in our community while reflecting our community's needs. The Library seeks to present a broad variety of programs to address and meet the needs of a diverse community. Beliefs and opinions expressed within do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the Library or the Borough. Library programming should not exclude topics, books, speakers, performers or other resources because they may be controversial.

Most programs are free and open to the general public. However, due to inflation and cost increases outside of the library's control, some programs may require a charge for materials and instruction in order to be able to provide them to patrons. Usually, the library will share the cost of the program with patrons to make it more affordable. Programs that are part of a fundraising effort may have an admission charge that the library does not contribute towards.

Programs may be targeted toward a particular audience (adult, teen, children, general, etc.) The selection and presentation of Library programs, speakers, classes and resource materials will be made by the library staff on the basis of the interests and needs of Library users and the community. Ultimate responsibility for programming at the Library rests with the Director, who administers under the authority of the Board of Trustees. The Director delegates responsibility to the Children's Librarian or other staff.

Library programs may be held in the Library as well as in the Borough Council Room, the Executive or at an off-site location. All Library programs are subject to the same rules and guidelines regardless of location. If attendance at a program exceeds the capacity of the particular meeting space, people may be prevented from attending a program or event. When the safety or success of a program requires it, attendance may have to be limited and will be determined on a first come, first served basis. In compliance with Borough regulations and the Library Code of Conduct, attendees must not attempt to disrupt or otherwise interfere with a program or hinder or prevent other attendees from participating in the program. Any violation of the Library Code of Conduct will result in the attendee being asked to leave the program and/or the Library/Borough property.

The Library Director, the Sinking Spring Public Library Board and the Borough of Sinking Spring have the authority to approve or veto any performance or program. Programs may be cancelled due to severe weather, absence of the presenter or any other reason at the discretion of the Library Director.

Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a responsible adult, defined as a person 18 years of age or older. In accordance with our Code of Conduct and Child Attendance Policy, the parent or guardian must remain with the child during the library visit. Children ages 6 and under

must be within their parent or caregiver's sight at all times. Unattended children ages 12 and older are expected to follow the Library's Code of Conduct and may not remain unattended in the Library for more than 4 hours. If an unattended child of any age is still on the library premises at the time the library is closing, the Library Director will be contacted and the police will be called.

Should the parent or guardian choose to disregard this policy, they may be asked to leave the Library and/or the proper authorities will be contacted.

The Sinking Spring Public Library recognizes that the ultimate responsibility for the welfare and behavior of children in the Library rests with the parent or guardian. In order to provide a safe and constructive environment for all patrons, strict adherence to these guidelines must be followed. All library staff and volunteers are mandated reporters and are required to have the following clearances: PA Criminal Background Check, FBI Fingerprint Clearance and Child Abuse Clearance. The Library hold the safety of all patrons, especially children, to be of paramount importance. However, library staff do not act as daycare workers and cannot be held responsible for supervising unattended children.

---

### **Children's Performer Requirements:**

Since the Library has limited resources and a diverse community, we avoid duplicating story times, services and programs that are available elsewhere in our community while still reflecting the needs and diversity found in our community.

The Library prefers to hire performers that focus on a literary or educational element rather than those that would merely provide entertainment. We seek to provide a meaningful impact that extends beyond the program.

Performers are required to have the following current clearances; PA State Police Criminal Background, PA Child Abuse History and FBI Criminal Background Check.

A program timeline and agenda must be provided to the Children's Librarian or otherwise discussed and agreed upon verbally with the Children's Librarian before an agreement is made and a date is set. The Sinking Spring Borough needs to approve all programs that take place within the Council Room or the Executive Room. The use of both rooms is subject to availability.

Performers will receive a check for the agreed upon amount for the contracted service/program on the date of the program, unless otherwise agreed upon.

The Children's Librarian, Library Director or other staff member(s) will be present for the duration of the program and will assist with set-up/tear down as needed.

The Library Director, Children's Librarian, Library Board and/or the Borough of Sinking Spring have the authority to approve or veto any program or performance.

**Guest Storyteller Requirements:**

Since the Library has limited resources and a diverse community, we avoid duplicating story times, services and programs that are available elsewhere in our community while still reflecting the needs and diversity found in our community.

The Library prefers to focus on storytellers that have experience working with children and/or are children's authors.

Storytellers are required to have the following current clearances; PA State Police Criminal Background, PA Child Abuse History and FBI Criminal Background Check.

An outline of the story time must be provided to the Children's Librarian or otherwise discussed and agreed upon verbally with the Children's Librarian before an agreement is made and a date is set. The Sinking Spring Borough needs to approve all programs that take place within the Council Room or the Executive Room. The use of both rooms is subject to availability.

Story times are generally 15 - 30 minutes long and may include music/singing, etc. The story time may be followed by a craft activity. Story times should focus on a specific age group (e.g. Pre-K or Elementary)

The Library prefers that books used during the story time are from the Sinking Spring Public Library or otherwise available from other libraries with the Berks County Public Library System. The Library will purchase book(s) from the author in advance of an Author Story time if needed. Author may bring copies of their books to sell after the story time has concluded.

A storyteller who is being paid for his/her services will receive a check for the agreed upon amount for the contracted service/program on the date of the program, unless otherwise agreed upon.

The Children's Librarian Director or other staff member(s) will be present for the duration of the program and will assist with set-up/tear down as needed.

The Library Director, Children's Librarian, Library Board and/or the Borough of Sinking Spring have the authority to approve or veto any program or performance.

---

This policy will be reviewed every three years from the date of first approval by the Sinking Spring Public Library Board. 11/13/23