

Group Visits to the Children's Room



The library can be a fun and educational place to visit, and we welcome child care groups, preschools, clubs, and classrooms to bring groups of children to the library. Groups of 6 or more should schedule visits at least one week in advance.

To schedule your visit to Manhattan Public Library's Children's Room, call 785-776-4741 ext. 125.

Scheduling Your Visit

Please call (785-776-4741 ext. 125) at least one week in advance and have several dates/times in mind.

Librarians must schedule group visits around regular library programs and staff availability, and groups may need to be flexible to find a time that works for everyone. Remember that your group is sharing the library and its resources with other people who are using the library at the same time.

Each group may schedule visits as often as once per month. Staff may not be able to schedule a visit more than 30 days in advance. During the summer, visits may be scheduled more frequently so children can participate in our Summer Reading program, but staff will still be limited to presenting only one storytime to your group per month.

Storytimes and Tours

Groups may request to have a storytime and/or tour of the Children's Room presented by a librarian.

Storytimes for group visits consist of 20-30 minutes of stories read aloud. If librarians are given enough notice, they may be able to tell stories based on a requested theme or topic. In the late spring and summer, storytimes/tours may also include information about the library's annual Summer Reading program.

Tours of the Children's Room can include an explanation of the different kinds of books in the room and where they are shelved, how to use the online library catalog, and information about what librarians do and how libraries work. Tours can last 10 min. – 45 min. depending on the depth of information requested. Tours of other parts of the library are also available if scheduled in advance.

Space Limitations and Supervision

Preschool groups are generally limited to no more than 20 children. The optimal group size for older children and adults is 30 or less. At least one adult for every 10 children must accompany a group. Large groups should consider breaking into smaller groups for a more effective and productive visit.

The length of tours and group visits is generally 45 minutes or less. Teachers or adult sponsors are expected to stay with the group at all times and to handle all behavior issues. They should be prepared to help children locate library materials, as there is often not enough staff to help each child individually.

Set Group Goals

Please explain to children before the visit what they will be doing at the library. It often helps to set a specific goal, such as "find 2 books and sit at a table while you look at them."

Discuss appropriate behavior in the library, which includes respect for other children and adults, walking, sitting at the tables or on the floor in the storytime room, using inside voices, and not disrupting others who are using the library.

Please share with children how to use books with care – not throwing books, tearing or folding pages, or leaving them on the floor where they can be stepped on. We ask all library patrons to place books on the re-shelving cart after looking at them, rather than putting them back on the shelves. This ensures that all books will be put back in their correct spots so they can be easily found next time.

Library Cards

If your group plans to check out materials or use Internet/game computers, please be aware that each child will need to have a valid library card. Library cards are only issued to individuals, not to schools or businesses.

Children must have a parent present to get a card, so new or replacement cards for minors must be issued at the library prior to the scheduled visit so that a parent/guardian can sign for them.

If parents are planning to send library cards with their children, they should call the library in advance to make sure there are no fines or blocks on their accounts; otherwise, children may not be able to check out books or use computers. **Call 776-4741 ext. 153 for library card information.**

Card owners and their parents are responsible for all materials checked out on their cards. Likewise, group leaders or teachers who check out materials for children on their personal cards will be responsible for those items.

Computers

The Children's Room has several computers with children's game software and filtered Internet access. Children must have a valid library card with them to use these computers. The game computers can be difficult to use in a group setting because there are limited spaces as well as time limits. Please be aware that other children in the library who are not with your group may also be signing up for the computers at the same time.