

This policy is written for the safety and well-being of children, and in order to provide for the general welfare of all persons using the library. Even if the parents are not present, the parents are responsible for and liable for their children's behavior in the library, for damage to materials, equipment, and furnishings, and for injury to themselves and others. Children are expected to adhere to the same rules as stated for all patrons.

1. Unattended Children

Responsibility for the behavior and well-being of children using the library rests with the parent, guardian, or caregiver assigned by the parent, and not with the library staff. It is not the library's function to offer childcare.

No public place, including the library, can guarantee the safety of unattended children. During regular service hours, if library staff judges that a child under the age of 8 is not coping adequately staff will attempt to locate a parent or adult caregiver to attend to the child. If the parent or adult caregiver cannot be located within 30 minutes, the police will be contacted.

Children aged 8 and over may be left unattended at the discretion of the parent or adult caregiver. If the adult feels it is unsafe for the child to leave the building without adult supervision, the child should not be left in the library unattended.

For children ages 6-7

- Caregivers must be at least 13 and must carry emergency contact information.
- A parent or caregiver must be somewhere on the library premises.

For children under 6 years of age:

- Caregivers must be at least age 13 and must carry emergency contact information.
- A parent or caregiver must continually attend to children and be within close physical proximity at all times, including during programs, so that the child may feel secure.

2. Use of computers

Children are encouraged to use the online catalog computers as well as the public access computers featuring Internet access and games. A parent, legal guardian, or caregiver **MUST** accompany any child under the age of 6 who is seated at an Internet workstation. It is the responsibility of a parent or caregiver to ensure appropriate use of the online terminals and other electronic library resources by young children. Pounding on keyboards and other potentially damaging activities are not permitted. In case of such behavior, library staff will attempt to

restore appropriate behavior. If this proves impossible, the disruptive individuals will be asked to discontinue use of the computer.

3. Appropriate behavior

Reading is encouraged. Adults may read quietly to children. Quiet play with toys, games, and art materials is allowed. Children must walk while in the library.

4. Disruptive behavior:

- a. Unacceptable behaviors and the consequences of them are described in the library's policy on the Conduct of Library Users, policy number 301.
- b. If a child under the age of 8 is bothersome or unruly, the library staff will make every attempt to restore appropriate library behavior. If this proves impossible the library staff will try to locate the child's parent or adult caregiver. If the child's parent or adult caregiver cannot be located within 30 minutes the police will be called.
- c. Climbing on tables, shelves, chairs and other furniture is not allowed.

5. Cleaning up

Out of consideration for others, children should be encouraged to put away puzzles, toys, games and art materials in their proper places. Books should not be reshelved but placed on the reshelving cart in the area.

6. Unattended children under the age of 13 at closing time:

- a. Unattended children must be picked up at least 15 minutes before closing time.
- b. In the case of a child who is unattended at closing (including emergency), the library staff will try to notify the child's parent or adult caregiver. If the child's parent or adult caregiver cannot be located within 30 minutes, the police will be called.
- c. Children will not be left alone in the library or on library grounds. Two library staff members will wait with the child until the child's parent or adult caregiver, the police, or a protective services worker arrives.
- d. Library staff members will not take the child home or anywhere away from the library site.

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