

## **Safety of Children in the Library Policy**

Children are welcome in our library and we are concerned about their safety and welfare. Children are encouraged to use the library as a place of study and inquiry. However, parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring the activities and regulating the behavior of the children in their care while the children are in the library. Parents or caregivers are responsible for the behavior of the children in their care.

Children under the age of 13 must be accompanied by an adult or caregiver 14 years or older. The library recommends that children using the library independently have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency and have a library card account with current up-to-date information. Children 14 and over are welcome to use the library independently, but parents are still responsible for the behavior of any children while in the library.

### **Staff may, as needed:**

- Use reasonable judgment when estimating the age of a child or work with a child to determine their age
- Inform children behaving inappropriately of the library rules
- Ask children to leave if they are being inappropriately
- Attempt to notify parents, guardians, or responsible caregivers when their children need additional supervision
- Contact the Police to assist with violations of the Behavior Policy or to ensure the safety of unattended children

The library is not responsible for the safety or security of children unattended.

### **Individuals at Closing**

If a child is left at the library at closing time or in the event of an emergency situation, the staff person in charge will attempt to contact the parents or caregivers. If the parent or adult caregivers cannot be contacted within 1- minutes after closing, staff will notify the police. At the closing of the library, staff will remain with any unattended child no longer than 15 minutes past closing. If a responsible party does not arrive to claim the child, the Police Department will be called, and the child will be released to police custody. Library staff will not transport or take any child away from the library building.

### **Requests for Information Regarding Missing Children/Runaways**

Staff will not give information to any person as to whether a child is currently in the library or has been in the library recently. Staff may offer to take a message and ask the child to call the person back. In the case of a missing child, the library's staff in charge may share information with the law enforcement agency requesting specific personal information.

## **Requests for Information Regarding Truant Children**

The library does not encourage or condone truancy, but it is not the responsibility of Library staff to enforce truancy ordinances. As a public facility, the library does not monitor the activities of its visitors unless there is a problem with conduct or a child is inappropriately left alone as outlined above.

Approved by Library Board April 22,2025