

Child's Safety Policy

The staff of the Woodward Public Library knows the importance of a library in a child's life; therefore, the library welcomes library use by children hoping to develop a lifelong love of books, reading, and libraries. **The library is also concerned about their safety and welfare and desires to provide a safe and secure environment for customers of all ages.**

The library is a public building with staff trained to serve the public and has many duties to perform in order to help all of our customers in the best way possible. As a result, the staff cannot monitor the location, safety, or behavior of your child. It is not the staff's responsibility of your child's care while your child is at the library.

For the protection and well-being of the children who enjoy the public library, the Woodward Public Library and its board of directors has adopted the following children's policy.

Parents, Guardians, Caregiver's Responsibilities

- Parents, guardians, or legal caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of their children at all times while in the library and on the library's property.
- Parents, guardians, or legal caregivers are responsible for their children even when the parent is not present in the building.
- The library expects children left unattended to be mature enough to follow the library's rules on their own, to be able to take responsibility for their own safety, and to be able to leave the library without an adult.
- Parents, guardians, or legal caregivers should not view the library as an alternative to long or short-term childcare. Unlike a childcare facility, the library is not a closed environment. Staff cannot monitor everyone who enters, and all customers are free to use any public area within the library.
- Please remember this is a public building. For the child's safety, we expect parents, guardians, and legal caregivers to keep children ages birth through age 9 within sight and supervision. You are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of your child at all times.
- Parents, guardians, and legal caregivers shall monitor their child's activities on the computer.

Children's Responsibilities

People who come to the library want to read, use the computer, and study. So please

- Use your inside voice and maintain inside behavior
- Walk
- Take hiding, jumping, and running games outside the library
- Be patient and wait your turn

Staff Procedures for Unacceptable Behavior of Children

1. A staff member will advise the child to stop the disruptive behavior.
2. If the disruptive behavior continues, a staff member will inform the parent, guardian, or legal caregiver of the library's Children's Safety Policy.
3. A staff member will advise the child and his/her parent, guardian, or legal caregiver of future incidents of disruptive behavior which may result in eviction from the library.

Guidelines for Unaccompanied Children

Children are welcome in the library for a period of time to research an assignment, complete a homework task, attend a library program, or for a period of time to select books and read in the library. The library expects parents, guardians, or legal caregivers to set reasonable time limits for their children's library visits. Children must know how to reach a parent, guardian, or legal caregiver in case of an emergency, and all parties should be aware of library hours.

- Children under the age of 10 must be directly supervised by a parent, guardian, or legal caregiver except during children's programs.
- Parents, guardians, or legal caregivers of children attending library programs are strongly encouraged to remain in the library. Due to unexpected circumstances, programs may end before or after the posted time. Children attending programs can be supervised by library staff only during the program.
- Children, 10 years of age or older, may use the library unattended as long as their conduct is acceptable in a library setting; however, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Staff Procedures for Unaccompanied Children

A staff member will comfort unattended children who become frightened or who are crying.

The following procedures will be followed:

1. Staff members will try to locate the child's parent, guardian, or legal caregiver.
2. Staff members will stay with the child until the parent, guardian, or legal caregiver is located.
3. If no one is located, or if the library is closing, staff members will notify the Woodward Police Department.
4. Unless the child is in danger or harming him/herself or others, staff members will not touch or pick up the child.
5. Under no circumstances will staff members take a child out of the building or transport a child to another location.

Unaccompanied Children at Closing Time

Children must be picked up at closing time (Monday- Thursday, 7:00p.m. Friday, 5:00p.m. and Saturday 4:00p.m.).

Staff Procedures

1. One half-hour prior to the library's closing; the staff will urge all children to call their parents. If a parent, guardian, or legal caregiver cannot be located by closing time, the child will be placed in the care of the Woodward Police Department.
2. If a parent, guardian, or legal caregiver have been contacted and are on their way, two staff members will remain with the child up to fifteen minutes after closing time. After fifteen minutes, the child will be placed in the care of the Woodward Police Department.
3. If the child has been picked up by the Woodward Police Department, a staff member will post a note on the door advising the parent, guardian, or legal caregiver of the circumstances.

The Woodward Public Library reserves the right to take the appropriate action to ensure compliance with this policy. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the library's Rules of Conduct Policy.

Amendments

The Woodward Public Library with the support of its board of directors is authorized to amend or revise this policy as deemed necessary.

Adopted May 2004; Revised April 2009; May 2013; March 2018

