

Unattended Child Policy

The Mansfield/Richland County Public Library wants children to use its facilities and services. The safety of children left alone in a library building is a serious concern of the library staff. The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent/caregiver and not with the library personnel. Library staff cannot be responsible for children who are unattended or demonstrating inappropriate behavior. Children in the library should always be accompanied by a parent / guardian or assigned caregiver, according to the guidelines listed below.

Children from birth through age 6 must have a parent /caregiver in the immediate vicinity of the child. The assigned caregiver must be at least 13 years old and should carry emergency contact information.

Children ages 7 through 9 must have a parent / caregiver in the library building with them, though the assigned caregiver does not have to be in the immediate vicinity of the child. The assigned caregiver must be at least 13 years old and should carry emergency contact information.

Children ages 10 through 12 may use the library on their own, however, parents are still responsible for the actions of their child(ren). Children using inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library. If a child of this age group is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library without an adult. All children should have the telephone number of someone who could assist them in an emergency.

Young people ages 13 through 17 are treated as adult users. However, they are still legally the responsibility of their parents and should have an emergency contact available.

Closing time: Children of all ages who do not have transportation home at closing time will be asked for telephone numbers of people who can pick them up at the library. If transportation is not available within 30 minutes of closing, the police will be asked to pick up the child(ren).

Approved by the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library Board of Trustees, December 2010.

Revised by the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library Board of Trustees, April 2015.