

Safe Child Policy

The Owen County Public Library welcomes children of all ages. It is a doorway through which all life-long learning takes place. A public library is just that: a public building. As such, anyone can come into it. It is important that parents monitor the safety and well-being of their children just as if they were in a shopping mall, park, or any other public place. No public place, including the Library, can guarantee the safety of children.

The Library asks parents and caregivers to observe these rules to keep their child safe:

1. A responsible caregiver must be at least 14 years of age.
2. Preschool children must have a parent or responsible caregiver stay with them. Parents or the responsible caregiver may not leave young children unattended while using other areas of the library. Parents or the responsible caregiver must remain with preschool children while the child is attending library programs.
3. Children through the age of 10 must have a parent or responsible caregiver in the immediate vicinity.
4. Children ages 11-18 may use the Library unattended for any length of time as long as their conduct is acceptable in a library setting and general conduct rules are observed.

Children of any age with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities which may affect decision making skills or render supervision necessary, must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver at all times.

Unattended child (13 years or less) at closing:

1. 15-30 minutes before closing, the child will be asked to call a parent or otherwise confirm that he or she has a ride or will be picked up no later than closing.
2. If a child has been left unattended at the library at closing time, or during an emergency closing, every effort will be made to contact the parents or legal guardians.
3. If none of the above arrive within 15 minutes of closing, the child will be treated as an abandoned child and the police will be contacted. Two staff members will stay with the unattended child/children until the police arrive. This is compensated time for the two staff members who remain with the child.
4. Under no circumstances will library staff take a child out of the building and transport him or her to another location.
5. In any instance in which the police are called because a child has been left unattended, the staff members will reassure the child that the police are there to help them and will stay with the child until police arrive.
6. Staff members will leave a note on the Library door stating, "Unattended child is in the custody of the Owenton police 484-2313 or 1-800-222-5555, 220 South Main Street." Names will NOT be stated on the sign.

Behavior on the Library premises:

1. Disruptive behavior is any behavior that disturbs other borrowers while they are using the Library. This includes but is not limited to loud, offensive, abusive, or threatening speech or actions toward other borrowers or library personnel.
2. Quiet voices should be used at all times.
3. Running, throwing any object, hitting and noisy playing are not allowed.
4. Library equipment and furniture must be used with care and for their intended purposes.
5. Disruptive children will be asked to leave the Library. Any child unable to leave the Library without an adult should not be in the Library alone.

Disruptive behavior – Procedures:

1. A child whose behavior is disruptive of the Library environment will be approached by a staff member and asked to cease that behavior and if they do not, will be told to leave the Library property.
2. Failure to leave the Library property immediately will be grounds for staff to call the Police for help.
3. An incident report must be written up for all occasions when a child is asked to leave.