

Unattended Child and Patron Behavior Policies

Unattended Child Policy Statement

A primary mission of the library is to provide a safe, secure, comfortable, and convenient facility for patrons and staff. This is especially true for children who visit the library. Although staff are available to assist and provide general guidance, **the library does not provide childcare services.** Attaining the desired and appropriate environment for children requires the communication and cooperation of both staff and parents/guardians.

Definitions for the Purpose of this Policy:

Unattended Child

An unattended child is any young person, seven years or younger, unaccompanied by a responsible adult or babysitter who is unable to care for themselves or use the library responsibly.

Adult, Parent, Caregiver, Babysitter

These terms are used in this policy to designate a person 12 years old or older who is legally responsible for the welfare and behavior of the children they are accompanying and who can take responsibility should an emergency arise.

Inappropriate Behavior

Examples of inappropriate behavior may include but are not limited to:

- Disruptive behavior**, such as running, shouting, climbing, rude actions, horseplay, etc.
- Verbal or physical abuse of staff or other people in the library**, such as cursing, demeaning comments, talking back, rude comments, hitting, biting, kicking, punching, teasing other children, hiding property, etc.
- Damage to property of the library or others**, such as breaking or ruining supplies, improper use of furniture or equipment, theft, etc.

Regulations

1. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to assure the appropriate behavior of their children while in the library
2. Children exhibiting inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior may be asked to leave the library building and grounds.
3. Children seven years of age and younger must be attended and supervised (within sight) at all times by a responsible person. This person must be twelve years of age or older and be assigned to the care of the child.
4. Library staff is not responsible for the supervision of children left unattended. Staff response to children left unattended can include:
 - a. Sending the child home.
 - b. Calling parents/guardians to come to the library and pick the child up.
 - c. Calling the police, or the appropriate authorities including child welfare agencies, to assume responsibility for the child.
5. Chronic offenders will be denied use of the library.
6. Individuals of any age with mental, physical, or emotional problems which render supervision necessary shall be accompanied by a parent or other caregiver at all times.

7. Finally, be aware that when the library closes, the doors are locked, lights are turned off, and no one is available to supervise the areas outside the library. Please arrange to pick up your child BEFORE closing time. If a child is still in the library at closing time and we are unable to locate the caregiver, for the safety of your child, the local authorities will be called to assist in locating a parent/guardian. Two staff members will stay inside the library with the child until the child has been picked up.

Patron Behavior Policy Statement

The Patron Behavior Policy encourages behavior that supports the library's mission. Those unable to comply with acceptable behavior may be required to leave and may lose library privileges. This policy is enforced on all library premises. The library staff may enforce this policy by checking bags, requesting identification, or searching/removing unattended items.

Expectations of patron behavior:

1. Patrons will demonstrate self-respect, respect for others, and respect for all things in the library environment.
2. Patrons will help maintain a safe, orderly, and productive library environment through the use of self-discipline.
3. Patrons will handle all conflicts without the use of violence and with courtesy and respect for the rights of all.
4. Patrons will dress in an appropriate manner including that which demonstrates a concern for public health, hygiene, and decency.

Unacceptable behaviors can include but are not limited to:

1. Any behavior that is physically and/or mentally threatening to others or that is illegal. Examples include:
 - a. Carrying, displaying, or entering the premises with weapons of any type unless authorized to do so.
 - b. Theft.
 - c. Fighting or threatening physical harm.
 - d. Gross disrespect toward any individual, including cursing and name-calling.
 - e. Defiance of library rules and the efforts of staff to enforce them.
 - f. Entering the premises with or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - g. Smoking in the building.
 - h. Engaging in sexual harassment of any kind.
 - i. Engaging in inappropriate touching.
 - j. Transporting explosive devices or any portion of such onto the premises.
 - k. Vandalism.
 - l. Accessing, creating or displaying information by any means, including via the library's public computing service, that is obscene as defined by Kansas law. K.S.A. 21-6401 is listed as Appendix E.
 - m. Disclosing or disseminating personal information by any means, including via the library's public computing service, that could threaten or create vulnerability for any person or the library.
2. Any behavior that negatively affects an orderly environment. Examples include:

- a. Disruptive behavior in any part of the library including the hallways and restrooms.
 - b. Disruptive behavior during programs.
 - c. Disruptive behavior on library grounds.
 - d. Destruction and defacement of property.
 - e. Leaving a child aged seven or younger unattended in the library.
3. Any behavior that interferes with the library use of other patrons. Examples include:
- a. Failure to follow reasonable requests by the staff.
 - b. Playing audio/video equipment so that others may hear it.
 - c. Engaging in horse play.
 - d. Disturbing other patrons in any way.
 - e. Disrespect/defiance of staff and/or library policies and procedures.

Engaging in unacceptable behavior may result in loss of privileges, expulsion from the library, and/or contact and referral to the appropriate legal authority. Library privileges may be temporarily revoked by the director and may be permanently revoked by vote of the library board.