

Lincoln County Public Library
Child Safety Policy
Developed January 28, 2013, Reviewed July 30, 2013, Approved August 12, 2013
Revised & Approved April 15, 2024

Child Safety Policy

The Lincoln County Public Library aims to provide a welcoming and safe environment for all patrons, including children. While staff cannot supervise children, parents/guardians are responsible for their behavior and safety. All visitors must adhere to conduct guidelines to avoid disruption or harm. Children displaying inappropriate behavior will receive warnings and may be asked to leave. Parents are liable for any damage caused by their children.

Definitions

The following definitions shall apply:

- A “child” is considered to be a patron who is 17 years of age or younger.
- A child is considered to be “unattended” when the caregiver is unable to communicate with the child verbally at a reasonable volume.
- A “disruptive” child is one whose actions disturb others or damage items belonging to the library or others.
- A “caregiver” must be over 14 years of age (meaning a “child” might also be a “caregiver” to other children who are under the age of 14).

General guidelines for children in the library:

The library is not responsible for unattended children and is mandated by statute to report suspected neglect or abuse. (KRS 620.030)

It will be considered neglect in the following cases:

- Children aged 7 or under are left unattended for any length of time.
- Children aged 8-13 are left unattended for more than 30 minutes.

Library staff can take action against policy violators, such as contacting parents, asking to leave, or involving the police. Repeated incidents may lead to loss of library privileges for the child and caregiver.

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Unattended Children Procedure

If a child is left unattended in the library, staff will try to locate the parent/caregiver. Before closing, young patrons will be reminded and given a chance to call for transportation. If a child remains at closing, staff will gather their information and make efforts to contact a family member for assistance.

If a child is found without a parent/guardian or caregiver, the staff will:

1. Attempt to comfort the child, if necessary.
2. Locate the parent or caregiver in the Library and explain the Child Safety Policy.
3. Make an effort to contact the parent or caregiver who is not in the Library to come and pick up the child. Staff will express the Library's concern for the child's safety and explain the Child Safety Policy.
4. Encourage an unattended child to contact the parent or guardian if it is within 15 minutes of closing time. If a parent or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within 15 minutes of closing, Library Staff will call the police to pick up the child. Staff will notify the Director that police have been called.
5. Remain with the child until the parent/guardian, caregiver, or the police arrive. This is compensated time for the two staff members who remain with the child.
6. Leave a note on the Library door stating "***Unattended child is in the custody of the Stanford Police***" once the child is in the care of the police. Names will not be stated on the note.
7. Staff will **not** transport any child from the Library to another location.