

Unattended Children

The Mansfield Public Library is intended to be a place where children are welcomed. They are encouraged to read, to explore various materials, to attend programs, and to make full use of the library's resources.

However, because unattended children can be a risk in a public place, the Mansfield Public Library requests that children under the age of 10 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver 14 or older. At no time, or for any reason, may that parent or caregiver leave the child unattended. The library can assume no responsibility for the safety of a child on library premises. Parents or other caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior.

At the discretion of a responsible adult, older children may be left unattended to enjoy library materials, services, and programs. The child must know how to reach the adult in case the need should arise.

Children attending library programs are supervised by library staff only during the scheduled time of the program. Staff do not track when children arrive or depart from a program.

All library patrons, regardless of age are subject to the Patron Behavior Policy concerning disruptive behavior. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with the child. Library staff does not serve *in loco parentis*, in place of the parent. If the child's behavior is inappropriate for the library, and he/she does not respond to appropriate guidance from library staff, the parent will be contacted to remove the child from the library. If the parent cannot be reached and the child's behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the Temple-Greenville Police Department may be called.

If a child is left at the library without a way home at closing time, library staff may call the child's home or parent's place of business. If the parent cannot be located or if a parent has not picked up the child within 30 minutes, the library staff may contact the Temple-Greenville Police Department. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the library or give a child a ride home.

As used in the policy, the term "parent" may include legal guardians or other person having custody or control of a minor.

Adopted 6/8/23