



## CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Adopted 9/12/2018

The Jefferson County Library District welcomes children of all ages to its facilities and programs. Serving them is a vital part of our mission, and we strongly encourage families with children to make full and frequent use of the library.

The safety and welfare of children left alone in the library is a serious concern for the Jefferson County Library District, its Board of Trustees, and library staff. The library is a public place. Anyone may enter, use the facility, and leave. Children left alone in the building may be vulnerable and at risk. They are also subject to the same [Standards of Behavior](#) and consequences as other library users, including being asked to leave the library. It is for the safety of each child that the Jefferson County Library has adopted this policy.

### Responsibility

It is the responsibility of a parent/guardian to monitor their minor child's (under age 18) safety, behavior, and access to library materials and electronic resources. Library staff is available to assist parents, guardians, and their children in the use of the library; however, the library is not equipped, nor is it the library's role, to provide long- or short-term child care or act "in loco parentis" (in place of a parent). Parents/guardians are responsible for their minor children, and their behavior in the library or on library grounds, whether or not they accompany them.

### Supervision

Levels of child supervision required in the library:

- Children eight (8) years of age and younger must have a parent/guardian or an authorized caregiver *in the immediate vicinity of or in visual contact with the child*. An authorized caregiver must be at least thirteen (13) years of age and carry emergency contact information for the child's parents/guardians.
- Children nine (9) years of age and older *who carry emergency contact information for their parents/guardians* may use the library on their own. If a child fails to carry emergency contact information, parents/guardians will be contacted and informed of the policy so that they can take corrective action. Future violations of the policy may result in the revocation of the child's unaccompanied visit privileges.
- It is strongly recommended that a parent, guardian, or other responsible party be present to supervise children ages 12 and younger.

## **Unattended Children**

An unattended child is a child eight (8) years of age or younger inside the library without the required level of supervision. A good faith attempt to contact a parent/guardian will be made if an unattended child in the library comes to the attention of library staff due to concerns about the child's welfare, including situations such as:

- A child perceived to be frightened or in distress
- A child exhibiting inappropriate behavior
- A child perceived to be endangering him or herself, or another person in the library posing a perceived threat to the unattended child
- A child not met by a responsible caregiver at closing time

In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached within 15 minutes of closing, staff will follow the policies outlined in the [Standards of Behavior](#), including contacting local law enforcement. At least two staff members will stay at the library until the child has been picked up by a parent/guardian, caregiver, or the Sheriff's Department.

Under no circumstances will library staff transport or escort a child home or to any other destination.