

XIII. CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULT POLICY

DEPARTMENT GOAL

The West Plains Public Library encourages children of all ages to visit the library to take advantage of the resources available for them to meet their informational, recreational, and educational needs.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULT USE OF THE LIBRARY

Children and young adults have access to all library materials and services with age restrictions when using computers and the Internet. (See Public Access Computer Policy.)

Restricting access to library materials and services to children is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

The responsibility for materials used by minors rests completely with their parents or legal guardians. Materials selected for the Adult and Young Adult collection are intended for mature readers. Checkouts to minors from these collections are allowed with the signed parental permission on a minor's library card form. Minors will be allowed checkouts from each library collection that has been approved with signed parental permission. Separate collections are available for children and young people, but it is not the responsibility of the Library, its Board of Trustees, staff, or volunteers to determine which collection they should use or what item in the approved collections is suitable for an individual.

SUPERVISION OF MINORS IN THE LIBRARY

For purposes of this policy, minors shall be defined as library patrons under the age of eighteen(18).

The safety and responsibility for minors lie solely with the parent, guardian, or chaperone of that minor and not with the library staff.

To ensure the safety of all library visitors, West Plains Public Library requires that children under the age of twelve (12) be accompanied by a parent, guardian or responsible adult aged seventeen (17) or older while on library property. The library is not responsible for caring for children who are left unattended in the library or who come to the library without an adult or other responsible person. Persons of any age with mental, physical or emotional needs who require supervision or personal assistance must also be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult or caregiver. Unattended children exhibiting behavior in violation of library policy, or the law may be asked to leave the library. Children being asked to leave library property or remaining on library property at closing time may be offered assistance in contacting a parent or guardian prior to being allowed to leave.

UNATTENDED MINORS IN THE LIBRARY

For the purpose of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” refer to all persons under the age of twelve (12).

When unattended children are present in the library, staff will attempt to contact parents or caregivers to collect their children or to be present with them in the library.

Under certain circumstances staff may assist children in getting a ride home or in contacting the police. Staff will ask the child left unattended at closing time to contact a parent or caregiver. If the child cannot reach a responsible adult, staff will attempt to make contact.

- Police or other appropriate authorities may be contacted when children are left unattended in the library at closing time, if parents or caregivers cannot be reached.
- Unattended children waiting after closing for the arrival of a parent, caregiver, the police, or other appropriate authorities should be accompanied by at least two staff members.
- If unattended children leave with police or other authorities after the library closes, staff should place a note on the door of the library informing the parents or caregivers where they may find their child/children.
- At no time or under any circumstances is a child to be taken from library property by library staff.

Policy approved at the August 19, 1998 meeting of the West Plains Public Library Board of Trustees by Board President Mike Newton. Policy revised at the August 16, 2000 meeting of the West Plains Public Library Board of Trustees by Board President Mike Newton. Policy revised regarding the age of minors at the June 17, 2002 meeting of the West Plains Public Library Board of Trustees, Peggy Kissinger, President.

Amended by West Plains Public Library Board of Trustees July 10, 2023.
Jarryd Alsup, President

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