



Safe Child Policy

The Staunton Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use its collections and services, and are committed to fostering a safe environment for all library users. Library staff are available to assist children in finding materials and navigating library resources, but are not responsible for their care. Parents and other caregivers are responsible for the behavior and wellbeing of children in their care while in the library or on library grounds. As with any public place, the Staunton Public Library is open to all and may be unsafe for a child who is left unattended, even for a brief time. Parents or caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior regardless of whether or not they accompany their children.

For safety reasons, children age 7 and under must be under the direct supervision of a parent or caregiver at all times in all areas of the library, except when attending a scheduled library program. If a child 7 or under is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the child's parent or caregiver. If they are unable to do so, law enforcement will be notified.

Children ages 8 – 11 must be accompanied by an adult somewhere on the library premises.

Children 12 and older may use the library without a parent or caregiver present provided that their behavior is not disruptive to other patrons and they are mature enough to follow library rules and observe proper conduct. Library staff will contact the parent or caregiver of any child behaving inappropriately.

Patrons of any age with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities which affect decision-making skills or render supervision necessary must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver at all times.

Unattended Child at Closing

The staff of the Staunton Public Library is concerned about the safety of children who may remain at the library at closing time. If an unattended child is observed, employees will ask the child if pick-up arrangements have been made. A child under 18 who does not have firm arrangements for transportation will be encouraged to begin calling for a ride at least 15 minutes before closing time.

Upon closing, the library staff may take action they deem appropriate and necessary to provide for the welfare and safety of an unattended child, including, but not limited to, contacting local law enforcement. If library staff notice a child left at the library at closing time, two staff members will wait outside the building with the child for 15 minutes. Staff will call the local police to pick up the child if the child's ride does not come within that time. Under no circumstances may staff members offer transportation to children left unattended after closing.