

Thomas Crane Public Library

Safe Child Policy

Policy Statement

The library is a public building and as such can be a dangerous environment for children alone. Library staff are not responsible for supervising children. Caregivers as defined below are responsible for monitoring their children's safety and behavior in the library. This Safe Child Policy has been established for the protection and wellbeing of children using the library.

Definitions

Caregiver

An adult or teen aged 14 or older who is responsible for monitoring a child aged 9 or under.

Unattended Child

An unattended child is any child aged nine or under using the library unaccompanied by a responsible adult, or a responsible child aged 14 or older.

Regulations

1. The children's areas within library facilities are reserved for use by children, their caregivers, and adults interested in the children's collection. Patrons not included in these categories may be required to leave the children's or teen areas and instead use other areas of the Library.
2. Children aged four and under must always be within sight of their caregiver, regardless of where they are in a library building.
3. Children between the ages of five and nine must have a caregiver supervising them in the same room or distinct area of the Library.
4. Caregivers must remain in the building while a child aged nine and under is attending a library program.
5. If an unattended child comes to the attention of staff, staff will attempt to locate the adult caregiver in the building or by telephone. If the caregiver cannot be located, staff will notify the police.
6. If an unattended child has no caregiver present at least half an hour before the library's closing time, or should the library close early due to unexpected circumstances such as inclement weather or a power outage, staff will attempt to locate the caregiver for any unattended child. If no caregiver is located or arrives by closing time, staff will notify the police. No fewer than two staff members will wait with the child until a caregiver or the police arrive and can take charge of the child.
7. Library staff are not authorized to transport any child away from the library under any circumstances.
8. In case of a medical emergency involving an unattended child, the staff will call 911 for emergency assistance and then attempt to contact a caregiver, in that order.
9. If a caregiver repeatedly leaves a child unattended in the library, after being informed of the library's Safe Child Policy, staff will notify the police.
10. The library will have written copies of the Safe Child Policy available at all service desks and will provide copies of the policy to caregivers of unattended children and to any other relevant parties.

The Thomas Crane Public Library affirms the rights and responsibilities of parents and legal guardians to guide and monitor their minor children's access to all library materials and resources, including those available via the Internet.

Adopted by vote of the Library Board of Trustees, October 18, 2004; Amended January 10, 2011, November 13, 2017; Amended October 9, 2025