

UNATTENDED CHILD AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR OF MINORS POLICY

This policy is designed to provide guidelines for staff in dealing with children left at the library or with children who are disruptive. Children and individuals who are incapable of taking care of themselves are not be allowed to stay in the library by themselves. Our staff will not take responsibility for the safety of children at the library nor will they provide transportation for children left at the library at closing.

1. Unattended Child Policy

- A. Children under the age of 9 must be attended by a parent or a responsible child care provider (e.g. an adult or mature adolescent at least 11 years old) while at the Grimes Public Library. Children age 5 and under must be accompanied, monitored, and within eyesight of the caregiver at all times. It is not the library's intention to seek out unattended children but rather to have a reasoned response prepared as problems present themselves.
- B. Children between the ages of 6 and 9 shall be accompanied and monitored by a responsible caregiver at all times.
- C. The staff should make an effort to locate the parent and contact them by phone. When the responsible adult is located, they should be informed of this policy and asked to either come to stay with them at the library or pick the child up immediately. If the parent can't or won't come immediately, the Polk County Sheriff's Department will be called upon to take custody of the child.
- D. If the parents have not been located within an hour or if the library is closing, the staff shall call the Polk County Sheriff's Department at 911. The Polk County Sheriff's Department will take custody of the child.
- E. Under no circumstances shall a staff member take the child out of the building.

2. Children Left Unattended at Closing

- A. If the parent is not in the building at closing, a staff member should attempt to locate the parent through searching the library's records or the phone book.
- B. If the parents have not been located within 15 minutes after closing, the circulation desk staff shall call the Polk County Sheriff's Department who will assume responsibility for the child.
- C. Under no circumstances shall library staff leave a child alone outside that is waiting for a parent after closing or take the minor in their car.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR OF MINORS

1. Disruptive Attended Children

- A. Children who are misbehaving should be asked by the staff to correct their behavior.
- B. If the child continues to be disruptive, a staff member should inform the parents that their child is disturbing others.
- C. If the parents refuse or are unable to correct the behavior of the child, the family will be asked to leave for the day.

2. Disruptive Unattended Children

- A. If a child is unattended and is misbehaving or requiring constant attention, the staff member will ask the child to correct the behavior.
- B. If the child persists, the staff member will attempt to contact the parent. When the parent is contacted, the parent will be told that the child is being disruptive, will be reminded of the library's policy, and will be told that he or she must pick the child up immediately. If he or she is unable to come immediately, the Polk County Sheriff's Department will be called.
- C. If the parent cannot be contacted or if the library is closing, the Polk County Sheriff's Department will be called upon to take custody for the child unless the child is being picked up.
- D. If the child has come to the library unattended the child can leave unattended unless specified otherwise.

Approved by the Grimes Public Library Board of Trustees on February 2003

Reviewed July 2012

Reviewed January 2013

Reviewed September 2015