

Chesterfield Public Library Children's Safety Policy

STATEMENT:

The Chesterfield Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy its facilities, collections and programming. The library attempts to provide a safe environment for children to select books and other materials and to attend library programming. However, the library staff does not function as child care or provide supervision. The library does not act in *loco parentis* (in place of the parent), and therefore assumes no responsibility for children left unattended on library premises.

AGE:

Children aged 9 or younger (or at the discretion of the Library Director) must be accompanied and adequately supervised by a parent, or a caregiver who is actively attending to the younger child. Children aged 10 or older may use the library unattended provided that their behavior does not interfere with others' use of the library and adheres to the library's safety/behavioral policies. Children must be able to contact a parent/guardian at all times.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN:

Children who are not being actively supervised by a parent/guardian/child care provider and whose behavior is inappropriate (see Behavioral Policy) will be asked to stop the behavior.

1. If the inappropriate behavior continues and the parent/guardian of the child is in the building, he/she will be notified about the library policy. If the parent/guardian refuses, or is unable to control the child, they will both be asked to leave.
2. In the event that the parent/guardian is not in the building, the unattended child (aged 10 or older) will be asked either to leave the premises under his/her own supervision or to call a parent/guardian to arrange to be picked up. If a reasonable accommodation cannot be made, then the child will be placed in the care of the Chesterfield Police Department.

CLOSING TIME:

Parents/guardians are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the library, bearing in mind that these hours can and do change. Power failures, bad weather or other emergencies can necessitate the unexpected closing of the building. Children who have been left at the library after closing time, or as the result of an emergency closing and who are unable to contact a parent/guardian, will be placed in the care of the Chesterfield Police Department.

DISABILITIES:

Children of any age with mental, physical, or emotional problems which render supervision necessary shall be accompanied by a parent/guardian at all times.

This policy has been adopted in order to protect the safety of all children in the library and the rights of everyone to enjoy the library.