

Unattended Child Policy

The Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Library System is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment that encourages children to visit the library, attend programs, and utilize the library's collections, computers, and game consoles. However, parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for monitoring their children's activities and regulating their behavior while in the library.

Breakdown of Ages:

- **Children ages (6) and younger** must be in the immediate vicinity of a parent, guardian, or caregiver at all times.
- **Children ages (12) and younger** are to be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver at all times. Young children cannot be left alone in any area of the library unless they are in a staff-supervised program.
- **Young adults (13-17) years of age** are treated as adult patrons in this policy. However, parents are still responsible for the actions of their children.

All caregivers must be at least 16 years of age. All patrons are expected to use the library in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the **behavior policy**. Failure to comply with this policy may result in being asked to leave the Library.

General Guidelines/Procedures:

If a child under 12 is left unattended, or if any child under the age of 14 is deemed to be at risk of coming to harm (as in the case of being left unattended when the library is ready to close), an effort will be made to locate the responsible parent, guardian, or caregiver, unless the child is sure that a parent, guardian or caregiver is picking the child up in a reasonable time period.

If parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be located, the police, child protective services or a juvenile welfare-related agency may be called if children under 14 years of age are left unattended prior to regular opening time or have not been picked up prior to closing time, or if the child is 12 and younger left at the Library unattended.

For the child's best interest, parents/caregivers are responsible for their child's safety and behavior while on the Library Premises, whether the parents/caregivers are present or not. However, the Library is not able to provide short- or long-term childcare or be responsible for unattended children. The Library assumes neither responsibility nor liability for the actions, care, supervision, or safety of the child.