



Unattended Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy

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The Scott County Public Library welcomes all children and vulnerable persons (individuals who may be unable to take care of themselves or are unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation.) Library staff strive to provide a safe and appropriate environment for all library users. However, responsibility for children and vulnerable persons using the library rests with the parent/legal guardian/caregiver. The Library will adhere to the following guidelines concerning the care and behavior of children and vulnerable persons:

- A responsible parent/legal guardian/caregiver, over the age of 16, must accompany vulnerable persons and children under 12 while they are using the library.
- At all times, the parent/legal guardian/caregiver should remain within eyesight with children under 12 and vulnerable persons while using the library
- All children under the age of 12 who are attending a children's program must have a parent/legal guardian/caregiver remain in the Children's area for the duration of the program.

While these ages are set for policy, they do not guarantee the safety of your child or vulnerable person. The Library urges parents/legal guardians/caregivers to remember that the Library is a public building. Should a child under the age of 12 or a vulnerable person be discovered in the Library without adequate supervision, the parent/legal guardian/caregiver will be notified, and if cannot be reached on the first try, the Georgetown Police Department will be called.

Children aged 12-17 may use the Library unattended and are subject to the Scott County Public Library **Public Conduct Policy** which governs acceptable behavior for all Library patrons. Library staff will be guided by this policy in giving verbal warnings for disruptive behavior, followed by notifying the parent/legal guardian/caregiver or the police if such behavior continues.

All children under the age of 18 must be picked up before the library's posted closing time. If a child is alone in the Library at closing time, the closing supervisor will attempt to call the parent/legal guardian/caregiver. If the parent/legal guardian/caregiver is reached, the closing supervisor will inform them that staff will wait no more than 10 minutes for the parent/legal guardian/caregiver to arrive before placing the child in the care of the Georgetown Police Department by calling dispatch at 502-863-7820. If the parent/legal guardian/caregiver cannot be reached on the first attempt, the child will be placed in the care of the Georgetown Police Department by calling dispatch at 502-863-7820. A note of explanation will be placed on the library's main entrance door. Under no circumstances shall a library staff member transport a child away from the library building. Please note that the Library is not responsible for children under 18, who leave the Library on their own volition.

Parents/legal guardians/caregivers should be aware of the library's hours and keep in mind that those hours may change due to holiday schedules, inclement weather, or other unforeseen emergencies. Parents/legal guardians/caregivers must make contingency plans for the child's immediate pick-up due to unexpected closings. Teachers, daycare providers, or other youth leaders may not leave groups of unattended students in the library or on the bookmobile, regardless of the age of the students. While the library staff provides a wide variety of materials and services to children, including some supervised programs, library staff do not assume parental responsibility and are not considered *in loco parentis*.