

UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

The Boone County Public Library (BCPL) welcomes people of all ages, and Library staff strive to provide a safe and appropriate environment for all library users, especially children. Library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide childcare and should not be used for this purpose. Libraries are public places, and it may become unsafe for a child who is left unattended. A child left alone at the Library may become bored or frightened, which may lead to behavior that disrupts library services. While BCPL strives to create a safe environment for all users, the care of children is ultimately the responsibility of the parent/guardian, who must adhere to the following rules:

- Children ages **five and younger** must be within sight of the caregiver at all times
- Children ages **six through eleven** must be supervised by a caregiver in the same area of the building, unless the child is participating in a library program.
- Children ages **twelve and older** are free to use the library's resources unattended, provided that their behavior is not disruptive. Disruptive behavior may include, but is not limited to, disturbing others, damaging items that belong to the Library or other users, or violates the [Library's Standards of Public Conduct](#).

Caregivers must be age thirteen or older, be able to effectively supervise young children, and be willing and able to provide contact information for a parent or guardian upon request. Children using inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the Library.

Children of any age with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities which affect decision-making skills or render supervision necessary must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver at all times.

Library staff are required to comply with state regulations ([KRS 620.030](#)) regarding suspected child abuse and neglect. If a situation arises that jeopardizes the safety or welfare of an unattended child, Library staff may take action they deem appropriate and necessary to provide for the welfare and safety of that child. This action may include, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

- Locate the parent or caregiver in the Library
- Attempt to contact a caregiver who is not in the Library
- Call the local police to pick up the child if the caregiver cannot be reached

Library staff are not expected to remain with an unattended child after the Library has closed. Library staff may not transport any child from the Library to another location. In the event a child is left at closing, the staff will make an attempt to contact the caregiver. If the caregiver cannot be reached, local police will be called to take custody of the child. Staff will remain with the child until law enforcement arrives.

Ultimately, library staff will use their own judgment in each individual circumstance as to how to best apply the aforementioned policy.