

Hickory Public Library Child Safety Policy

Hickory Public Library welcomes children of all ages. The following guidelines are established to maintain a safe, welcoming environment for children and families.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for the care, safety and behavior of their children under the age of 18, both within the library building and on library grounds, regardless of whether or not they accompany their child(ren). Parents are responsible for ensuring their children comply with the Hickory Public Library's Library Use Guidelines, regardless of age.

SUPERVISORY GUIDELINES FOR CHILD SAFETY

For reasons of safety, all children younger than age twelve (12) must be accompanied by a responsible caregiver, 16 years of age or older, while visiting the library. Caregivers must remain within the library for the full duration of the child's visit.

Children age nine (9) and younger must remain in the immediate presence of a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver at all times.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN

If library staff identify a child younger than twelve (12) who is unaccompanied by a responsible caregiver in the building, they will attempt to contact the child's parent or guardian. If a responsible caregiver cannot be reached within minutes, staff may contact the local police department to reunite the child with family.

In the event an unaccompanied child is in the building near closing time, staff members will attempt to contact the child's parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian has not arrived by fifteen (15) minutes after closing time, staff will call the local police department and will wait with the child to ensure his/her safety until a law enforcement officer arrives.

USE OF LIBRARY CHILDREN'S AREA

To promote the active and safe use of the library by children, adults unaccompanied by children are not to remain in the children's area of the library. Adults unaccompanied by children may enter the children's area only to obtain books or other materials. Violations of this policy will be addressed according to the Library Use Guidelines.

Revised March 2022

