

<b>Richmond Memorial Library</b>	
Manual Name: Library Policy Manual	Date Effective: 2/10/2026
Section: Safe Child Policy	Date Created/Revised: 1/11; 6/23; 2/2026

### **Safe Child Policy**

The Richmond Memorial Library welcomes all children and their families to use its facilities, resources, and services. Responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver.

While it is tempting to believe the library is a safe place that your child can visit without worrying about their safety, the library is a public building open to the entire community. Parents/guardians/caregivers should use the same precautions for ensuring their child's safety in the library as they would in any other public location.

Though staff will always respond with care and concern, they cannot assume responsibility for the safety, behavior, and comfort of unattended children. Library staff will not, under any circumstances, be responsible for determining whether someone is a legally authorized caregiver, custodian, or custodial parent of a child.

The following rules apply:

- Children 12 and younger are to be under the direct supervision of a parent/guardian or responsible caregiver 15 years of age or older who assumes full responsibility for the child during the entire library visit. The parent/guardian/caregiver may not leave the premises without the child. If the child is found to be unattended and/or displaying disruptive or inappropriate behavior, the staff will attempt to find the child's parent/guardian/caregiver. If the staff member is unable to locate anyone in this position, a law enforcement official may be notified.
- Children ages 10-12 may attend library programs after-school (between the hours of 2:30 pm- 5 pm on school days) without an adult, but they must stay in the program for the full time and an adult parent/guardian/caregiver must pick them up immediately following the program or come into the library to supervise them.
- For children attending a program held in the library, the parent/guardian/caregiver must remain in the building or inform the facilitator that they are leaving and return by the end of the program time. It is important if the child needs to leave the program for any reason that the parent/guardian/caregiver be present to ensure their safety.
- Children 13 to 17 are young adults and are considered independent users. Parents are responsible for the conduct of any child under the age of 18 whether they are in the company of that child or not.
- It is recommended that children visiting the library have some form of identification in their possession during the entire visit. This information should also include a telephone number.
- In the interest of confidentiality and safety, library staff will not relay messages or confirm the presence of a child or any other patron using the library.

When a child engages in behavior in the Library that is potentially dangerous to themselves or engages in activities that persistently disturb other library users, a staff member will speak to the responsible adult concerning the problem and request that they provide closer supervision for their child. Library staff will not physically restrain a child. If the problem continues, the Library Director will be notified.

### **Unattended Children During Open Hours**

To ensure a positive Library experience for everyone, if an unsupervised child appears not to be sufficiently capable of caring for themselves or unable to abide by the Library's Code of Conduct, they will be deemed to be on Library premises without supervision and staff will take the following actions:

- Staff will try to comfort the child if the child is upset.
- Staff will attempt to locate the child's parent, guardian, or caregiver in the Library facility.
- If staff is unable to locate the parent, guardian, or caregiver in the Library, staff will attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or caregiver to pick up the child.
- If the parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be located within a reasonable time, the library will contact the Batavia Police Department. The Batavia Police Department will then assume responsibility for the child. Staff will report the incident to the Library Director and prepare an incident report.

### **Unattended Children at Closing**

- If a parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within a reasonable time after closing, Library staff will call the Batavia Police Department to pick up the child. Staff will notify the Library Director that the police have been contacted. Staff will complete an incident report. These same actions will be followed for unscheduled emergency or inclement weather-related closures.
- Two staff members will remain with the child until the parent, guardian, caregiver, or police officer arrive. Under no circumstances will a Library staff member remain in the facility alone with an unattended child. Staff will not transport any child from the Library to another location.
- Once the child is in the protective care of the Batavia Police Department, a note will be attached to the Library entrance, with the following information: "Unattended child is in the care of the Batavia Police Department." Neither the name of the child nor the name of the parent, guardian, or caregiver will be listed on the note.

### **Children's Area of the Library**

The children's area of the library, located in the lower level of the library, is specifically designed to meet the needs of young library users. The children's area is available for use by children and their accompanying adults, and by adults requiring access to the collection (such as teachers and students of children's literature) for study or work. In such cases, once materials are retrieved they can then be checked out or taken to the adult section of the library for review or checkout.

Adults that are not accompanying children and do not require immediate access to children's materials will be asked to relocate to another section of the library, regardless of the time of day, presence or absence of other children, or activity level in the room.

### **Teen/Tween Area of the Library**

The teen/tween area, located on the northwest corner of the building, is designated for those under 18 and their caregivers during the hours of 2:30 pm – 5 pm on weekdays or when Teen/Tween programming is taking place. Adults that are not accompanying minors or dependents and do not require immediate access to young adult materials will be asked to relocate to another section of the library during these times, or during Teen/Tween programming. Tutors and students will have priority use of the space outside of library programming and initiatives.

Approved by Board: 2/10/26	
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