

SAFE CHILD POLICY

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Safe Child Policy* is to ensure the safety of children using the library. The *Safe Child Policy* also applies to dependent adults with designated caregivers.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

The Henderson County Public Library welcomes patrons of all ages to use library materials and services. Library staff are available to assist and encourage children as they develop a love of reading and learning, but staff members do not assume responsibility for the care and supervision of children while they are on library property.

Responsibility

The responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of children lies with the parent or designated caregiver. This includes times when the parent or designated caregiver is not present within the library building or on library grounds.

Supervision

Per the *Library Code of Conduct*, children aged 10 and under are to be supervised by a parent or designated caregiver at all times. Designated caregivers must be responsible individuals aged 17 or older. If a child is found unattended within the library, the child will remain with a staff member until the parent or designated caregiver can be located. If a parent or designated caregiver cannot be located when needed, staff will contact the appropriate authorities.

During library-sponsored programs, the parent or designated caregiver must remain in the library building if given the option of leaving the programming area.

Unattended Minors at Closing

Beginning 15 minutes before closing, library staff will ask unattended minors (individuals aged 15 and under) if they were accompanied by a parent/designated caregiver or have arranged to be picked up by closing time. If not, the minor or staff member will immediately call a parent or designated caregiver to arrange for pick up by closing time.

If the minor has not been picked up within 15 minutes after closing, staff will contact the appropriate authorities and remain with the child until authorities arrive.

Disruptive Behavior

The *Library Code of Conduct* applies to all patrons regardless of age.