



## **Antlers Public Library**

### **Safety of Children Policy**

Children of various ages comprise a significant proportion of the customers of the library. Services to children are among the main goals of the Library, and children are encouraged to use the library and to enjoy the programs offered for them.

However; library staff cannot be responsible for children left at the library. The responsibility for the safety and well-being of children in the library rests with the parent, guardian or assigned adult chaperone and not with the library personnel. It is suggested that the chaperone have a signed permission slip from the parent, in case of emergencies.

#### **Can my child come to the library alone or with friends?**

Children under the age of seven must be accompanied by an adult guardian and remain in view of said adult at all times. The library is not equipped or staffed to provide adequate supervision for young children.

#### **What if my child misbehaves?**

Children whose behavior is either disturbing others or presenting a hazard to themselves or to others will be informed that such behavior is unacceptable in the library.

If the behavior continues, staff will ask the children to leave the library if they came alone and are able to get home alone. If the children are too young, or were brought by a parent/guardian, the staff will attempt to locate him/her and request that the child be picked up.

If the problem is not resolved using the above measures, staff may call the police for assistance. Any staff member calling the police will be expected to fill out and sign an incident report or other document as required by the police. Staff members are to understand that they may be required to testify in court regarding the incident. Calling the police is to be regarded as a last resort.

One of the primary responsibilities of the staff is to preserve a pleasant atmosphere for the majority of the library's customers. The presence of unruly children makes a visit to the library unpleasant for others.

### **What if my child is attending a library program?**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to remain in the library while their children are attending the children's programs. Programs occasionally end either before or after the expected time. Children attending programs can be supervised by library staff only during the time of the program.

### **What if I'm delayed picking up my child?**

Approximately fifteen minutes prior to closing time, unattended children will be asked to call their parents or in some appropriate manner make arrangements to get home.

If a child age 10 or younger notifies the librarian that his ride has not arrived by closing time and does not leave the library, a staff member will attempt to locate a parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian is not located, the staff member will be expected to remain at the library with the child for up to thirty minutes prior to taking further action. After thirty minutes, the library director is to be called. He/she may contact the Child Welfare Division of the DHS and request that they attempt to locate the child's parent/guardian. The library director will contact the city manager if the above procedures do not result in the child being taken home by his parent/guardian. Should the staff be unable to locate the library director, they are to contact the city manager.

An older child may be left to wait at the library for a ride if he/she has already made appropriate arrangements.

Under no circumstances shall a staff member transport a child to another location.

The above policy has been designed for the protection of the children using the library.