

**POLICY REGARDING
SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN**

Approved 2/2/2006

This policy is written for the safety and well-being of children, and in order to provide for the general welfare of persons using the Marion Public Library. Even if the parents are not present, the parents are responsible for their children's behavior in the library, for damage to materials, equipment, and furnishings, and for injury to themselves and others.

1. APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Reading is encouraged. Adults may read aloud to children. Quiet play with toys and games is allowed. Children are allowed to study quietly in small groups of no more than four. Children must walk while in the library.

2. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

- a. Unacceptable behaviors and the consequences of them are described in the library's policy on the Conduct of Library Patrons. This policy applies to all patrons, regardless of age.
- b. If a child or youth is bothersome or unruly, the library staff will make every attempt to restore appropriate library behavior. If this proves impossible, the disruptive individuals will be asked to wait in the lobby until picked up.
- c. Climbing on tables, shelves, chairs and other furniture is not allowed.

3. CLEANING UP

Out of consideration for others, children should be encouraged to put away puzzles, toys, and games in their proper places. Books should not be re-shelved, but left stacked neatly on tables.

4. CHILDREN AGES 3 AND UNDER

- a. Must be within the visual contact of a parent or adult caregiver at all times while using the library.
- b. May be required to be accompanied by a parent or adult caregiver through some library programs.
- c. Must be accompanied to the restroom by a parent or adult caregiver.
- d. Must have a parent or adult caregiver with them at all times.

5. CHILDREN AGES 4 AND 5

- a. May attend library programs without an adult at the discretion of library staff.
- b. Must have a parent or adult caregiver with them when using computers.

6. CHILDREN AGES 6 AND OVER

May be left on their own to attend library programs or to do homework, providing they are not disruptive. Even if parents are not present, the parents are responsible for and liable for their children's behavior in the library, for damage to materials, equipment, and furnishings, and for injury to themselves and others.

7. UNATTENDED CHILDREN AT CLOSING TIME

- a. Unattended children must be picked up at least 15 minutes before closing time.
- b. In the case of a child who is unattended at closing (including emergency), the library staff will try to notify the child's parent or adult caregiver. If the child's parent or adult caregiver cannot be located within 30 minutes, the police will be called.
- c. Children will not be left alone in the library or on the library grounds. A library staff member will wait with the child until the child's parent or adult caregiver, the police, or a protective service worker arrives.
- d. Library staff members will not take the child home or anywhere away from the library's site.