

The purpose of this policy is to inform patrons of the Rapid City Public Libraries of the expectations and guidelines for use of the Libraries' premises by children. Safety of children is of the utmost concern for the Libraries' Board and staff. However, the safety and responsibility of children at the Libraries remains with the parent or caregiver and not with the Libraries.

The Rapid City Public Libraries welcome children of all ages, but requires supervision of children 8 years of age and under. The Libraries are educational and enriching community spaces but can pose hazards for unattended children, who may encounter circumstances they are unprepared to handle effectively. This may lead to potentially unsafe situations or behavior policy infractions.

Under this policy, children age 8 and under must remain in the immediate vicinity of a parent or a responsible caregiver. Caregivers may be a sibling, relative or anyone a parent designates as a responsible party, and caregivers shall be over the age of 16.

Children of every age are expected to adhere to the Behavior Policy. Failure to adhere to this policy may warrant loss of library services as outlined in the Libraries' Behavior Policy.

Should a child be found unattended on the Libraries' premises, staff will attempt to reach a parent or guardian to pick up the child. If a parent or guardian is unavailable, the appropriate authorities will be contacted, to reach a parent or guardian and/or escort the child home. Likewise, if children aged 8 or younger violate the Behavior Policy to the extent that a suspension is imposed their responsible party must remove them from the Libraries for the duration of their suspension.

~~Because of the unique relationship with the General Beadle School/Community Center, this policy is enforced at that location on weekends, during summer hours, and after 5:30 PM weekdays during the school year. However, all aspects of the Behavior Policy are enforced at all times.~~

Additionally, children under the ages of 12 who do not have transportation at closing time will be asked how to contact a parent or guardian. Staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian by phone and ask that person to pick up the child within 15 minutes. Should there be no response to the calls; staff will contact the appropriate authorities.

Revised: May 9, 2016, Adopted September 9, 2013