

## CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Galesburg Public Library is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for children and families. To that end, the Galesburg Public Library Children's Library provides resources specifically for children, including computers with Internet access for children ages 12 and younger and their accompanying caregivers, and programs targeting the needs of specific age groups.

### Unattended Child Policy and Procedure

The Galesburg Public Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. Library employees are available to assist children with library materials or services. They are not responsible for childcare. For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible adult or caregiver should accompany children to the library. **Parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring and regulating the safety and behavior of their children. Library personnel are not responsible for the safety and behavior of the children.**

The following guidelines will be followed concerning the care and behavior of young library users:

**Minors under age 8** must have a parent-caregiver in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. An exception would be children attending a library program without a parent/caregiver in the room. However, the parent/caregiver is expected to remain in the library building and immediately join the child at the end of the program.

If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate parent/caregiver in the library and inform him/her of the rules. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, the police will be called for assistance. If inappropriate behavior continues, the family may be asked to leave the library.

**Minors age 8 and older** may use the library on their own. Parents are still responsible for the actions and the well-being of their child. Children behaving inappropriately may be asked to leave the library. If a child in this age group is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone. This is a particular concern in inclement weather and after dark. All minors should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency. If an emergency contact cannot be reached and weather/dark conditions make it unsafe for a child under age 12 to leave the library building alone, library staff may contact the police at the non-emergency number (309-343-9151) to transport the child to the public safety building.

**Closing Time:** Children under age 12 who do not have transportation home at closing time will be asked for telephone numbers of people who can pick them up at the library. A minimum of 2 library staff will stay with the child. If transportation is not available within 15 minutes after closing, the police will be called at the non-emergency number

(309-343-9151) to transport the child to the public safety building. A note will be left on both library entrances. The note will read:

“The library closed at \_\_\_\_\_. To ensure your child’s safety, he/she is at the Public Safety Building, 150 South Broad Street”

### **Unaccompanied Adults in the Children’s Library and Teen Zone**

The Children’s Library is specifically designed to serve the needs of children from birth through age 12. Adults may visit the Children’s Library in the following circumstances: (1) when accompanying children, (2) when using or retrieving Children’s Library materials for research or check out, and (3) when attending a meeting or program taking place in the Children’s Programming Room. Adults may visit the Teen Zone when retrieving young adult materials for checkout. Out of concern for the safety of youth in the library, adults not using youth spaces for the purposes intended may be questioned by staff, and may be asked to move to another area of the library.

Unless otherwise specified, children's programs hosted by the Children's Department are open to children and their adult caretakers. Adults unaccompanied by a child may not attend a children's program without permission of the Children's Department Supervisor. Teen programs are open to students ages 12 through 18 or grades 7 through 12. Adults may not attend teen programs without the permission of the Teen Librarian.

### **Missing child reported**

In the event that a child is reported missing, staff will immediately respond by following procedures outlined in the disaster manual, including notifying police immediately.

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Unattended Child Policy and  
Procedure Adopted April 7, 2006  
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Galesburg Public Library  
Board of Trustees