

SAFE CHILD POLICY

It is the Library's goal to provide a safe, welcoming environment for patrons of all ages, including families and young children. Illinois law (705 ILCS 405/2-3) states that parents/caregivers must not leave minors under the age of 14 years without supervision for an unreasonable period of time. With that goal in mind, and in accordance with state law, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following Safe Child policy:

While the Library does have designated areas for children and adults, the Library is a public building. This means it is not possible for Library staff to guarantee children's safety while they are on the premises, nor is it possible for Library staff to serve in place of a responsible caregiver. The cooperation of parents, guardians, and caregivers is essential to maintaining a pleasant and safe environment for both children and other Library patrons. Therefore, children under the age of 9 must be supervised by a responsible caregiver aged 16 or older. Caregivers of children under the age of 9 must remain in visual range of the child at all times.

If a child appears to be unsupervised or a child requests assistance, Library staff will take the following steps:

- 1) Attempt to locate the child's caregiver and inform them of the Library's Safe Child policy with written copies provided on request.
- 2) If the caregiver cannot be located, Library staff will attempt to contact the caregiver (if contact information is available).
- 3) If the safety of an unattended child is in doubt, or if caregiver cannot be located or contacted, or if the Library is closing, Library staff is authorized to contact the Freeport Police Department and 2 Library staff members will remain with the child until the police or other authorities arrive.

All children covered in this policy must follow the rules of conduct set forth by the Patron Conduct Policy. If a child engages in any prohibited activity, the enforcement policy laid out therein will be followed.

Adopted: 3/14/2018