

Pollard Memorial Library Unattended Children Policy

In an effort to provide a library environment that allows all patrons to use library materials and resources in a safe, relaxed manner, the Board of Library Trustees of the Pollard Memorial Library has adopted a policy statement concerning unattended and/or disruptive children.

Children who are **ten (10) years of age and older** may stay independently in the library. They may use the library unattended, provided they are able to maintain proper library behavior.

Children who are **nine (9) years of age** may stay independently in the library when they are participating in a library program.

If an unattended child behaves in a disruptive manner, the child will be asked to correct her/his behavior. If the behavior persists, library administration may, at their discretion, contact the parent/guardian/designated adult, or direct that the child leave the library. In addition, the library reserves the right to summon the police to preserve the library's operations and/or protect the interests of the child.

Children **8 years old and younger** may not be left unattended in the library. If the child is participating in a library program, and has the permission of the library staff to be there unsupervised, the parent/guardian must stay in the Children's Department.

Children **9 years old who are not participating in a library program and those who are younger** may use the library if there is a responsible parent, legal guardian, young adult, or sibling of at least **13 years of age** with them.

Parents/guardians – whether present or not – are ultimately responsible for their children's behavior while in the library. Children and young adults who are disruptive in the library or on library property interfere with library service to all patrons. The Pollard Memorial Library is not a daycare institution and staff members are not babysitters. It is a public institution where all patrons have an equal right to quality library service in a friendly and peaceful environment.

If a child 9 years old (unless participating in a program) or younger is left unattended in the library, the staff will inform the parents/guardians of library policy prohibiting this. If the child is repeatedly left unsupervised, parents/guardians will be notified that their child is no longer permitted to use the library and police may be notified.

Parents/guardians should make arrangements for the child to be picked up at the appropriate time. Parents/guardians should be aware of the library's opening and closing hours.

This policy is subject to review by the Pollard Memorial Library Board of Trustees.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees, February 4, 2009.
Revised May 4, 2011.*