

Youth Safety Policy

A. Purpose

The Jeffersonville Township Public Library welcomes and encourages youth to visit the library, use library resources and services, and attend library programs. This policy is intended to outline expected behaviors, safety measures, and use of the library related to youth.

B. Unattended Youth Policy

1. Youth 12 years and younger may not be left unattended in the library under any circumstances and must be supervised by a responsible caregiver at least 16 years of age.
2. Youth 13 years and older may use library services unsupervised. However, caregivers are responsible for the children's behavior even if they are not present with the children. An unattended child should know how to reach a responsible caregiver; they may use the library business phone in case of an emergency.
3. A child of any age who appears lost, confused, afraid, or in distress will receive help from library staff. If it is closing time and the caregiver cannot be reached, the police will be called.

C. Staff Procedures: Unattended Youth Under the Age of 12

1. If it is determined that a child is lost or unattended, a staff member will accompany the child to try to locate the responsible caregiver by:
 - Asking the child where the caregiver is
 - Walk around the library with the child to find the adult
 - Paging the responsible person (if the child can provide their name)
2. If the caregiver is not found in the library, a staff member will stay with the child until the responsible person is located and contact the Person-in-Charge.
3. If the caregiver cannot be located within thirty minutes, a library staff member will call the police.
4. A staff member should never take a child out of the library building unless it is for a fire or natural disaster when the safety protocols require the evacuation of the building. Under no circumstances should a staff member provide transportation to youth.
5. An incident report should be filled out.

D. Child Behavior Policy

1. The Jeffersonville Township Public Library is not responsible for the care or behavior of children visiting the library.
2. Caregivers are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, including in designated play spaces. They should encourage their children to respect library staff and property and the rights of others who use the library.
3. Playground behavior is not appropriate in the library building, including but not limited to climbing, running, and screaming.

4. Shoes and full-coverage clothing must be worn while on library property.
5. Disruptive or criminal behavior can result in the loss of library privileges. Refer to the *Library Standards for Public Behavior Policy* for a detailed list of disruptive and criminal behavior.

E. Staff Procedures: Disruptive Youth Under the Age of 18

1. When disruptive behavior is recognized, and the responsible caregiver is present:
 - a. Staff will inform the youth's caregiver of the disruptive behavior and explain the *Standards for Public Behavior Policy*.
 - b. If the youth continues the inappropriate behavior, staff will issue a warning to the caregiver
 - c. If the misbehavior continues, the family will be asked to leave. The supervisor or Person in Charge should then be notified.
 - d. An incident report should be filled out.
2. When disruptive behavior is recognized for youth 13 and older and the responsible caregiver is not present:
 - a. Staff will inform the youth the behavior is disruptive and ask them to use the appropriate library behavior.
 - b. If the youth continues the inappropriate behavior, staff will issue a warning to the individual.
 - c. If the inappropriate behavior still continues, the caregiver will be called and asked to pick up the youth. If a caregiver cannot be contacted within thirty minutes, the police will be called.
 - d. An incident report should be filled out, and the supervisor notified.

F. Use of Children's Spaces

1. The Youth Services area at both library locations and the Pocket Park area at Jeffersonville are designated for the use of children 0 – 18, their caregivers, or those in need of youth services resources. Adults who are not accompanying children and do not require immediate access to children's materials will be asked to relocate to another section of the library, regardless of the time of day, presence or absence of other children, or activity level in the spaces. See *Computer and Internet Use Policy* for adult use of Youth Services computer labs.
2. Adults unaccompanied by a child are not permitted to attend Youth Services programs unless the program is advertised for all ages or the individual has prior authorization at least two days in advance from a Youth Services librarian or library director.
3. Adults unaccompanied by a child are not permitted to use the Youth Services restroom facilities and must utilize the family/adult facilities in the building. If the adult and/or family restrooms are closed, adults may ask staff to use the Youth Services restrooms.

Adopted by the Jeffersonville Township Public Library Board of Trustees on November 16, 2021; Updated October 18, 2022; March 19, 2024; September 16, 2025.