

NEWTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

The Newton County Public Library strives to provide an environment that is enjoyable for all Library patrons. This policy has been implemented out of concern for the safety and security of children using the Library.

- Preschool children must have a parent or responsible individual stay with them while they are visiting the Library. Parents or responsible individuals may not leave their young children unattended in the Library except during the actual time the children are attending Library programs.
- When registering elementary school-aged children for programs, parents and/or guardians need to specify if children will walk home, or if they will be picked up, and by whom. Adults picking up children after programs need to come into the building to get their children.
- School-aged children up through 10 years of age may use the Library unattended for one hour as long as their conduct is acceptable or they are attending a specific Library program *or meeting*.
- School aged students, 11 through 18, when not attending a program or meeting, may use the Library unattended for any length of time as long as their conduct is acceptable.
- A Library staff member, in consultation with his or her supervisor, will contact parents or guardians if any child's behavior warrants such action. If no parent or guardian can be reached each Library staff member has the authority, *in consultation with his or her supervisor*, to contact the Newton County Sheriff's Department regarding an unattended or disruptive child.
- Parents need to make arrangements to pick up children prior to the Library's designated closing time. Staff members may report unattended children that remain at the Library 15 minutes after closing time to the Newton County Sheriff's Department.
- Regardless of age, parents and/or guardians are responsible for their children's actions while visiting the Library, including any damage or vandalism to the property.
- Parents and/or guardians are encouraged to talk to the Library Director, Assistant Director or Branch Manager if they have any questions or comments regarding this Policy.

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