



**Augusta-Richmond County Public Library**  
**UNATTENDED CHILD AND CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

The Augusta-Richmond County Public Library is committed to ensuring the safety of all its patrons, with a special emphasis on the safety of children in our libraries. For everyone's safety and enjoyment of the library experience, adults should respect the boundaries of the children (ages 0-10) and young adult (ages: 11-17) areas of library branches and its purpose to centralize the information and recreation resources of these age groups. Children's and young adult rooms are reserved for children, young adults, and their parents, guardians, teachers, caregivers, and people researching children's literature.

Others needing to access materials or services specific to the children's area do so with the understanding that the library staff will use their complete discretion whether or not a particular use or activity is appropriate in the children and young adult areas. Thus, patrons may be asked to use alternative areas of the library.

The purpose of this policy is to inform parents, guardians, and caregivers that the Library cannot ensure their children's safety if left unattended and to provide guidelines in the event a child is left unattended in the library.

Library staff will not assume responsibility for the safety and well-being of any child.

Children who are age 12 and under may not be left unattended anywhere in the Library or on the Library's premises, including areas designated for children.

Children who are age 12 and under must always be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or assigned caregiver who is in the immediate vicinity and within line of sight of the child. The person providing the oversight for children under the age of 12 must be age 18 or over.

Children 13 years old or older may use the Library on their own in accordance with the Patron Behavior Policy, in order to select materials, complete school assignments or attend a Library program.

Library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide basic childcare needs or emergency care.

Library staff may not drive children to any location, even at the request of the parent, guardian, or caregiver.

Library staff is not responsible for the safety and well-being of children left at the Library at closing time.

Any child left unaccompanied for an extended period of time may be approached for information concerning his/her parent, guardian, or assigned caregiver's availability and informed of the Library's policy. If the situation continues, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified. If a child is left unattended at the time of closing, and attempts to reach the parent, guardian, or assigned caregiver have failed, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be called.