

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

The Worth Public Library welcomes and encourages children to use its facilities, materials, programs, and services. Parents, legal guardians, and caregivers are reminded, however, that libraries are open, public buildings, and the well-being and safety of unattended children is a matter of concern.

In order to provide for the general welfare of children, and for the benefit of all those using the Library, the following policy is established.

1. Children under the age of nine [9] must have a parent or responsible adult eighteen [18] years of age or older with them at all times while in the library. The child may not be left in one department of the library while the responsible adult goes to another part of the library except when that child is participating in a library-sponsored program during that particular visit. During library-sponsored programs, the responsible adult must remain in the building and must return to the program area by the end of the program.
2. Children nine [9] years of age and older may use the library unattended. Parents are reminded that they are responsible for supervising their child's access to Library materials. While staff members are available to lead young people to materials selected with children's interests and needs in mind, it will be assumed that children who visit the Library unattended are authorized to use the full range of materials available to our patrons. A Parental Permission Form signed by the parent and placed on file is required before children may use Internet computers.
3. Unattended children must know how to contact a parent, legal guardian, or other responsible adult.
4. Children are subject to the rules and regulations of the Patron Behavior Policy. Parents, legal guardians, and caregivers must be aware that disruptive children may be asked to leave the Library building and property. Children with repeated or serious violations of the policy may have their library privileges suspended for a period of time.
5. Unattended children under the age of nine [9] who are asked to leave the Library shall be asked to call a parent or other responsible adult to pick up the child immediately. The child may be allowed to return to the Library that day only if accompanied and attended by a parent or legal guardian.
6. The Worth Public Library may close due to emergencies because of inclement weather, power outages, etc. If the Worth Public Schools close because of inclement weather, the Library may also close. No child may be sent to the Library if the schools close early due to emergencies. When the library closes because of inclement weather or an emergency, and school is still in session,

schools will be notified and an announcement that the library is closed will be requested.

7. If a child is unattended at the time of closing, an attempt to reach the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver shall be made. If the attempt to contact the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver fails, the Worth Police Department shall be called to take responsibility for the child. Two staff members will remain with the child inside the Library entrance until law enforcement officials arrive. A note will be placed on the door notifying the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver that the child is in the care of local law enforcement officials. Staff will not transport children home or to any other destination under any circumstances.
8. No public phone is available at the Library.
9. If a child is unattended over a mealtime, it is the parent's responsibility to provide a meal and a place for the child to eat.
10. The Library must not be used as a childcare service. Any child unaccompanied by a responsible adult or a caregiver for an extended period of time may be approached by staff for information concerning his/her parent's availability. Every unattended child must, upon request of the staff member in charge, furnish his/her first and last name as well as the name and telephone number of a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver who is responsible for him/her. A child who refuses to provide this information may be asked to leave the Library for the remainder of the day. A child who provides false information may have his/her Library privileges suspended for a period of time.
11. A letter will be mailed to the parent or legal guardian of a child whose privileges have been suspended. The letter will delineate the unacceptable behavior as well as the consequences of the unacceptable behavior.
12. The parent or guardian of a child whose privileges have been suspended may request in writing that the decision be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at the next monthly Board meeting. The parent or guardian shall be notified of the Board's decision by the Administrative Librarian within seven [7] days of the regular Board meeting.

Approved, December 9, 2003

Revised, August 12, 2008

President, Board of Trustees