

# Children in the Library

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The Children's Area of the library is meant to be a welcoming place for children, caregivers, and educators. Children are invited to read, use computers, play with puzzles and blocks, do homework and quietly socialize.

For their safety and security, children age seven and below must be directly supervised throughout the Library, including in the Children's Area, by a caregiver 16 years of age or older. For children 8-10 years of age, it is recommended that they are accompanied by a caregiver 16 years of age or older and that the caregiver remains in the Library. Regardless of age, the Library maintains the right to refer to the unacceptable patron behavior policy in asking a misbehaving child to leave Library property. At all times, parents and caregivers are responsible for the behavior of their children.

Any patron is allowed to select items from the Children's Area; however, to establish safe environment for children, we do not allow adults to loiter in the Children's Area unless they are with a child as a parent/guardian, educator, or caregiver.

Computers in the Children's Area are limited to use by children and their caregivers. There are tablets for younger children, which are to be used only for the games available and do not have online access. There are other computers in the Library that have Internet access that can be used by older children and caregivers. We do not allow other games, music, or movies to be inserted or downloaded to the public computers

The entire Library, including the Children's Area, should be used only for its intended purposes; rough housing, yelling, bullying, foul language, threatening or abusive behavior are not permitted. Any behavior considered disruptive or aggressive by the staff may result in asking the child to leave the building.

Children asked to leave the library property will be asked by the staff member if they need to use a phone to notify a caregiver. The police will be notified for children under age 11 that are unattended at the library that are unable to contact a caregiver. At closing time, unaccompanied children on library property without a 16 year old or older caregiver present will also be asked if they need to use a phone. At least two library staff members, including at least one adult/librarian, will offer to wait with them for up to 15 minutes past closing before calling the police. Ultimately, according to Indiana code, a parent (or guardian) is responsible for supervision of their child until they reach age 18 and not the library or library staff that are busy doing their jobs for all patrons.

Food and drink are not allowed throughout the Library, including the Children's Area, but both are allowed in the downstairs lobby. Exceptions may also be made for Library sponsored activities.

Items in the Children's Area are selected for a wide range of readers. Library Staff will not monitor a child's selection. Parents are responsible for deciding which items they feel are appropriate for their children.

**Revised and adopted July 2014; revised and adopted again June 2017.**