



# NEW CASTLE • HENRY COUNTY

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## PUBLIC LIBRARY

### CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY POLICY

The following policy has been implemented by the New Castle-Henry County Board of Trustees in order to protect the children who visit the library. The Library welcomes and encourages children and families to use and enjoy the library. While visiting, it is important to keep in mind that while we strive to provide a safe and welcoming environment, the library is still a public place open to anyone and everyone. As such, responsible caregivers must ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in their care while in the library and on library property. Library staff cannot assume the responsibility of supervising children while on library property. The library reserves the right to ask any adult lingering in the children's area to leave if they are not accompanying a child to further protect our younger patrons.

#### **Children nine (9) years of age and younger:**

1. Must be supervised by a responsible person 13 years of age or older at all times, and must follow library rules and policies. While attending library programs, children must have a responsible person in the library;
2. Supervision is defined as being actively engaged with and located in the immediate vicinity of the child or children;
3. The library in no way assumes responsibility for any child left unsupervised on library property;
4. If a child in this age group is found unsupervised, library staff will attempt to locate the responsible person in the library and present them with this policy;
5. In the event the responsible person cannot be located, staff will contact law enforcement.

#### **Children ten to seventeen years of age:**

1. Children must follow library rules and policies;
2. Children 10-12 must have a responsible person 13 years of age or older somewhere in the library;
3. Children 13 years of age and older may be in the library without adult supervision;
4. The library no way assumes responsibility for any child left unsupervised on library property.

If the library is closing and a parent or guardian of a child under age 13 cannot be contacted or located, the library will contact the local Police department. Under no circumstances are library staff permitted to give children rides, allow them in their vehicle, or leave the library property with them. Two library employees must stay with the child until either law enforcement or a responsible party arrives to take charge of the child.

The library is a mandatory reporting agency under state statute; repeat offenders of this policy as well as other situations of suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to the Indiana Department of Child Services.