

Child & Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy

The mission of the Grinnell Public Library District is to serve as a center for the community offering each individual the opportunity to develop personally, academically, culturally, professionally and socially. The Library welcomes individuals of all ages to use our services in a secure, friendly and safe environment. The Library encourages children and vulnerable adults to use its facilities and services. However, the Library is not responsible for these individuals while they are in the building or on the library premises.

Supervision:

Parents and guardians, not the Library Staff, are responsible for the care, behavior, and supervision of their children while using the Grinnell Public Library District and on its property. As the Grinnell Public Library District is a public place, the Board of Trustees has adopted the following policies:

1. Children **9** years old or younger who are using the Library's resources or who are participating in a Library program shall at all times be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult. A responsible adult is defined as a parent, guardian, teacher, or assigned caregiver over the age of **16**. That person must remain with the child in the Library for the duration of the visit. When a child (9 and under) seems to be unaccompanied, a staff member will observe to see if parent/caregiver is near. If parent/caregiver is not found in a timely manner, the Local Police will be contacted.
2. Children **10** to **13** years of age may use the Library on their own for a reasonable period of time provided they are able to maintain proper Library behavior. Parents are always responsible for the actions of their children. Children who behave inappropriately may be asked to leave the Library. Unattended children must have the phone number of a parent, guardian or caregiver to contact in case of an emergency or any other circumstance where the child must leave the Library.
3. Children/young adults aged **14** to **17** are treated as full library patrons. Parents are advised that even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their child's behavior.

Disruptive Behavior:

1. If a child behaves in a disruptive manner, even if they are accompanied by a responsible adult, they will be given a warning that they must correct their behavior or leave the Library.
2. If the child continues to be disruptive after this warning, then the Library Staff may:
 - For children **9** and under: ask the parent to remove the child from the library.
 - For children **10** and over, ask the child to leave the library and, if necessary, contact the responsible adult.

Unattended Children after Closing Time – Regular Scheduled

The Grinnell Public Library District will exercise appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of unattended children when the Library is closing. Parents must be aware of the Library's hours. It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements to pick up their children or make advance arrangements to have their children picked up by a responsible adult by closing time. If an unattended child is still in the Library at closing time, then the Library Staff will act according to the following guidelines:

1. If a child is not picked up by the time the Library closes, 2 staff members will wait with the child for 15 minutes outside the building. At the end of 15 minutes if the child/teen is not picked up staff will call Local Police to come and wait with or transport the child. At that time the child will be in care of the police. No Library staff member will transport any child from the Library to another location.

Unattended Children – Emergency Closing

Emergencies and inclement weather may force the Library to close without warning.

Children should know what to do if the Library closes unexpectedly. Parents are responsible for their children and must make arrangements to pick them up. If a child is left unattended during an emergency closing, the same guidelines outlined above under regularly scheduled closings will apply.

Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is an individual over the age of 18 who is mentally or physically challenged to a degree that may significantly impair that person's ability to provide adequately for his/her personal needs and manage his/her behavior without assistance. Vulnerable adults must have a parent/guardian or caregiver 18 years of age or older with them while they are in the Library who can manage their behavior and provide adequately for their personal needs.

Physically challenged adults who are capable of providing for their own needs are welcome to remain in the library without supervision so long as a contact person is available in the event that the adult's health or safety is in doubt. The rules for vulnerable adults at closing time shall be the same as the rules for an unattended child.

Violations of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy may result in suspension of library privileges for the family.

Approved by the Grinnell Library Board of Trustees on June 15, 2016.