



Unattended Children Policy

PHILOSOPHY

The Grafton-Midview Public Library welcomes individuals of all ages to use its facility, services, and resources. The Library is committed to the well-being of all library patrons, including children.

POLICY

This policy intends to guide the public on instances of unattended or disruptive children in the Library.

The Grafton-Midview Public Library is open to the public. To ensure the safety and well-being of children in the Library and to maintain an atmosphere of constructive library use throughout the building, the responsibility for the welfare and behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver.

Library staff does not monitor the interaction of patrons, including children. Though staff will respond with care and concern, they cannot assume responsibility for children's safety and comfort when unattended. The Library defines *unattended children* as eight (8) years and under without close supervision, even though a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver may be in the building.

The Library defines a *responsible caregiver* as twelve (12) years or older who acknowledges responsibility for the children. Children eight (8) years and under are to be in sight of and supervised, at all times, by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver. We expect parents/guardians or caregivers to remain in the Library while children attend programs. Children nine (9) years of age and older who can maintain proper library behavior may use the Library unattended; otherwise, they should have supervision by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver.

Staff may notify parents, guardians, or responsible caregivers whose children need additional supervision. Staff may also contact the police to enforce proper library conduct. At closing, staff will make a reasonable effort to ensure children leave the Library safely. Staff may contact the Grafton Village Police Department to provide safe transport.

Approved by GMPL Board of Trustees on November 14, 2023

PROCEDURES

Unattended Child or Vulnerable Adult

1. If a child seven (7) or under is considered lost or unattended, staff should bring the child to a Youth Services Department staff member or person in charge. If deemed lost or alone, staff should bring a vulnerable adult to an Adult Services staff member or person in charge. The staff member will attempt to contact a parent or guardian. Employees should handle an occurrence positively, emphasizing our safety concerns.
2. If a parent does not respond within an hour of the first attempt or fifteen (15) minutes after closing time, the staff member or the person in charge will notify the Grafton police. Under no circumstances should a staff member take a child or vulnerable adult from the premises. If the Library is closed, two staff members must stay until a parent/caregiver or the police arrive.
3. If the parent or caregiver does not arrive before the police, staff will post a note on the Library's doors stating that *the Unattended child is in the custody of Grafton Police, 1009 Chestnut Street, Grafton, OH (440) 926-2662.*

Library staff will attempt to contact a parent or caregiver when:

- The health or safety of a child or vulnerable adult is in question;
- A child seven (7) or under is unattended;
- An unattended child or vulnerable adult is frightened while alone at the Library;
- The behavior of an unattended child or vulnerable adult is deemed disruptive and has already received one warning;
- A vulnerable adult or child twelve (12) or under has not been met by a parent or caregiver at closing time.

Disruptive Behavior

Library staff will use sound judgment and assess the facts and conditions of a disruptive child or vulnerable adult situation. If a child or vulnerable adult is acting disruptively, staff will:

1. Ask them to correct the behavior and notify them that this counts as a warning, and the next step is for them to leave the premises. If a caregiver is present, staff will request that they intervene with the child.

2. If the behavior continues, staff will ask the child or disruptive adult to leave the premises for the rest of the day. If the child or vulnerable adult is at the Library alone, the staff member will attempt to contact a parent or caregiver. Once reached, the staff member will inform the parent or caregiver of the behavior or incident and the library policy. If a staff member cannot handle situations that arise following the procedures, they should ask a manager for assistance.

Staff should handle an occurrence positively, emphasizing our concern for the child's or vulnerable adult's safety. If an employee cannot contact the parent or caregiver within an hour of the first attempt, the person in charge will notify the Grafton police.

A manager will mail a letter specifying the nature of the violations and request acknowledgment of the incident through a phone call, email, or an in-person visit. If a parent does not acknowledge the letter, the Library will follow up with one call.

After three incidents, the continued disruptive behavior shall result in longer suspensions of library privileges not to exceed one year. The Library notifies parents in writing, specifying the nature of the violations.

Staff must submit an incident report to the Director after asking a child or vulnerable adult to leave the premises or remain fifteen (15) minutes after closing.

The Grafton-Midview Public Library has adopted the following grievance procedure for those wishing to file a complaint:

- The complaint should be in writing and contain information such as the complainant's name, address, phone number, location, date, and description.
- The complainant should address the complaint as soon as possible to the Grafton-Midview Public Library Board of Trustees at 983 Main St., Grafton, OH 44044.

The Board of Trustees has 45 days to respond in writing to the complainant.

Approved by GMPL Board of Trustees on April 8, 2014
Approved by Grafton Chief of Staff April 10, 2014
Procedures revised 11/11/2016 & November 14, 2023