

UNATTENDED & DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN

The staff of the Hermiston Public Library strives to create a warm, inviting and fun environment for children. The library offers many programs and services that encourage children to develop a love of books, reading and learning. The safety and wellbeing of children at the library is of great importance. It is the intention of this policy to clarify to both the community and staff what responsibility the Library assumes in regards to children visiting the Hermiston Public Library.

I. Parents/caregivers (caregivers must be at least 12 years of age) are responsible for the behavior of the children under their care while visiting the Library and on Library property. The Hermiston Public Library staff is committed to helping children with activities related to the Library. It is not the responsibility of the Library staff to serve as baby-sitters or teachers. As it is for adults, violations of the library's Patron Behavior Policy by children or those responsible for their behavior is grounds for suspension of library privileges. As need occurs Library staff will notify parents/caregivers of incidents involving an unattended or disruptive child. It is strongly recommended that all children are accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Though staff will always respond with care and concern, they cannot assume responsibility for children's safety or comfort.

II. UNATTENDED CHILDREN

A. Children age 9 or under must be accompanied by a parent/caregiver in the library (accompanied means "within sight".) Should a child in this age group be found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library and inform them of the rules. If the responsible party cannot be found, the police may be called for assistance to locate the child's parent/caregiver.

B. Children age 10 and older may use the library unaccompanied.

III. DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN

All users of the Library are expected to comply with the Patron Behavior Policy. Violations of that policy by persons of any age are not tolerated and are considered

disruptive behavior. Library staff will approach disruptive children in the following manner:

A. Give a verbal warning to the child indicating what specific behavior is disruptive or unacceptable and must stop.

B. If the disruptive behavior continues, approach the parent or caregiver with the same warning. If the child is unattended, section II above of this policy will be applied.

C. If the disruptive behavior continues, request the parent or caregiver to escort the child from the library premises.

IV. Newborns, infants and their caregivers will be offered accommodations as available.