



Child Safety Policy

BOARD POLICY

Pikes Peak Library District (PPLD) strives to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all community members, including the youngest patrons. Areas designed for children and their caregivers help them make effective use of the children's spaces, books, programs, and services to provide an engaging, educational, and meaningful Library experience.

PROCEDURES

I. Access to Children's Areas

The children's areas in PPLD facilities are intended for the use of children and their caregivers. Only parents, guardians, teachers, caregivers, and children's literature researchers can sit in the designed areas; other adults in children's areas will be asked to use other parts of the Library. This ensures that children and their families have adequate access to the resources provided specifically for them. Adults with children present are the only adults allowed to use the restrooms in the children's areas.

II. Parental Expectations and Responsibilities

Parents or caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior and safety. Children ages 8 and under must be directly supervised at all times by a parent, guardian, or caregiver (who is at least 12 years old) while inside the Library.

III. Staff Role

PPLD staff and volunteers do not act "in loco parentis." Library staff and volunteers cannot provide childcare or assume responsibility for children's safety. PPLD staff will not, under any circumstances, be responsible for determining whether someone is a legally authorized caregiver, custodian, or custodial parent of the child.

IV. Staff Procedures for Dealing with Child Safety Situations

If Library staff determine that an unattended child is either age 8 or under, or ill, disruptive (as defined in PPLD's Code of Conduct Policy), hungry, or frightened to be left alone, staff will do the following:

- A. Comfort the child and locate the parent or responsible caregiver in the facility. Explain the situation and advise the parent of our concerns, inherent risks, and Library policies and procedures. (See also [Code of Conduct Policy](#).)
- B. Call the child's parent if the responsible person is not found in the facility, if possible. Inform them of Library policy and request that he/she pick up the child immediately. Upon arrival, provide the parent with a copy of the policy statement, as well as the Unattended Child Letter signed by the Chief Librarian and CEO and co-signed by the in-charge staff member.
- C. Call appropriate law enforcement to assume responsibility for the child if PPLD staff is unable to reach the parent within one hour, or the parent does not arrive within the agreed upon time. Each facility should identify the appropriate phone number to call for assistance and train the staff to call the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- D. Keep the child in the children's area or at a safe, staff-designated area. Notify PPLD Security, if applicable.
- E. Library staff will complete an incident report.
- F. Under no circumstances will Library staff remain in the facility alone with an unattended child. They also will not transport or take children away from the Library.

V. Unattended Minors at Closing

Security officers at East Library, Library 21c, and Penrose Library, and designated staff at other PPLD libraries, walk through the library facility 15 minutes prior to closing. If they encounter an unattended minor (anyone under the age of 16), they inquire about transportation and allow them to use the telephone to call a parent or caregiver, if needed.

Staff will follow these procedures in the event a minor is still at the Library at closing:

- A. Ensure that two staff members remain with the minor inside the library.
- B. Obtain the parent's name and telephone number, if possible, and call the parent.
- C. Inform the parent of Library policy and request that he/she pick up the minor immediately.
- D. Require the parent to come inside to pick up the minor. Upon arrival, provide the parent with a copy of the policy statement, as well as the Unattended Child Letter signed by the Chief Librarian and co-signed by the in-charge staff member.

- E. Call appropriate law enforcement, if the parent cannot be reached within 15 minutes after closing. Each Library Manager will identify the appropriate number to call for assistance and train their library staff to call the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- F. Two PPLD staff members will remain with the minor until authorities arrive. The staff Library will place the minor in the care of the law enforcement agency.
- G. Library staff members will post a note for the minor's parent, guardian, or caregiver on the front door of the Library, stating that the child is now in the care of law enforcement, with the appropriate telephone number to call.
- H. Library staff will complete an incident report.
- I. Under no circumstances will Library staff remain in the facility alone with an unattended child. They also will not transport or take children away from the Library.
- J. If an unattended minor decides to wait outside of the library facility after closure, follow the above procedure, waiting 15 minutes before calling law enforcement.
- K. Library staff will not take any action if a child over 8 years old is walking or riding a bike home and is no longer on library grounds.