

Slinger Community Library

Safe Child Policy

The Slinger Community Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. Responsibility for the safety and behavior of children while in the Library rests on the parents or legal guardians, whether or not a parent or guardian is present. Certain areas, spaces, and equipment within the Library are designated for children. Parents or guardians are responsible at all times for the supervision, behavior, and safe use of all Library facilities by children in their care.

Children Ages 5 and Younger

Children age 5 and under must have a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver (age 13 or older) within arm's reach at all times while in the Library. Children in this age group must also be accompanied by a parent or guardian while attending Library programs and events.

Children Ages 6 to 9

Children between the ages of 6 to 9 must remain within eyesight of a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver (age 13 or older) at all times in the Library. During story times or other Library programs, caregivers who do not attend the program with the child must remain in the building and be visible when the program concludes.

Children ages 10 and Older

Children 10 and older may use the Library unattended, provided their behavior complies with all Library policies. Unattended children must have the ability to immediately contact a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver if necessary.

Behavior

All children and their caregivers are subject to the Library's Code of Conduct. Copies of the Code of Conduct are posted within the library and available on the Library's website.

Safety

No public place, including the Library, can guarantee the safety of children. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for their children's behavior at all times.

If a child becomes disruptive, Library staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver within the building. If a parent or caregiver is unavailable, staff members will ask the child to attempt to contact them. Parents and caregivers are expected to remain accessible and be able to retrieve their child at any time.

If a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver cannot be located within a reasonable timeframe, Library staff members will contact the Slinger Police Department for assistance. Staff members will remain with the child until authorities arrive.

Staff Responsibilities

Library staff members serve all patrons and are not able to monitor the whereabouts of unsupervised children or assume responsibility for children who are demonstrating inappropriate behavior. Library staff members, unlike teachers or school employees, are not authorized or mandated to act *in loco parentis* (in place of the parent).

Children using the Library are not supervised as they would be in a school setting. The Library should not be viewed as an alternative to daycare or after-school programs, and Library staff members are not a substitute for childcare.

Library staff members do not monitor the arrival or departure of children from Library programs or the building.

To protect the safety and privacy of patrons, the Library will not disclose over the phone whether a specific individual is present in the Library, nor will staff members locate a patron at the request of a caller. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Library staff member in the case of an emergency.

Closing Time

Fifteen minutes prior to closing the Library on regular days or in an emergency, Library staff members will notify minors in the building and ask them to confirm they have a safe means of returning home. If a parent or caregiver cannot be reached by the time the Library closes, the Slinger Police Department will be contacted to assist. A staff member will remain with the child until the authorities arrive. Staff members will not transport children who are not part of their family or associated with their family.

Children's Section

The Children's Section is specifically designed to meet the needs of children and their caregivers. Computers in the Children's Section are reserved for use only by children and their parents, guardians, or caregivers, except in extenuating circumstances.

Approved 2/9/2026

Replaces Appendix A – Unattended Children

Replaces Appendix B – Disruptive Children