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Safe Child Policy

The Big Bend Village Library Board of Trustees dedicates itself to providing a safe and welcoming environment for patrons of all ages by setting policies to promote safety within the building. A caregiver is defined in this policy as a parent, legal guardian, or responsible person twelve years of age or older, who provides direct care for a younger child.

Staff members will always respond with care and concern, but responsibility for the welfare of children using the Library ultimately rests with the caregiver. Staff members cannot and will not assume responsibility for unattended children.

Children twelve years of age and older may use the Library unattended. However, the child must have contact information to be able to reach a caregiver immediately if need arises.

Children under the age of twelve must be accompanied by a caregiver while in the Library. When children under the age of twelve attend a Library program their caregivers are required to remain in the Library.

All children are expected to use the Library appropriately. Children who do not follow the Library's Code of Conduct are subject to the same consequences as other Library users, including being required to leave the Library. Children who are frequently unable to use the Library appropriately may be required to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Staff may, as needed:

- Notify caregivers whose children need additional supervision.
- Contact authorities such as the Big Bend Village Police Department either to assist with the enforcement of discipline in the Library or to ensure the safety of an unattended child.
- Notify appropriate personnel if a child is deemed truant.

Staff will undertake reasonable efforts to ensure children leave the Library safely at closing time. If any children remain at the Library after closing, staff will attempt to contact the caregiver. If the party cannot be reached or fails to arrange to pick up the child within a short, reasonable amount of time, law enforcement personnel will be contacted for advice and assistance.