

Children in the Library

The library encourages children to visit the library and welcomes them to use library resources and services and attend library programs. It is important to note that the library is a public facility. Parents, guardians, or designated caregivers are solely responsible for their child's safety, well-being, behavior, and their use of the library and its resources. The library is not equipped, nor is it its role, to provide long- or short-term childcare.

Children under the age of 11, or children of any age who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves, may not be left unsupervised in any area of the library. Caregivers accompanying children under 11 must be at least 16 years of age and able to monitor the behavior of the child and be responsible for and responsive to their needs. Unattended children must have the knowledge and ability to contact a parent or guardian at all times.

Children who, in the judgment and sole discretion of the library staff, behave in a disruptive manner may be asked to leave the library.

Children who have not been picked up at closing time will be given the opportunity to call a parent or guardian. Children under 16 who have not been picked up within 30 minutes after closing will be left in the care of the Fort Smith Police Department.

In accordance with A.C.A. § 12-18-402, library staff are mandated to report suspected child maltreatment to the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline.