



**CITY OF LONGMONT | Longmont Public Library**

# Child Safety Policy

The Longmont Public Library values creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space for youth and their caregivers. To create a safe environment that encourages community, fun, learning, and reading, we offer designated areas, programs, and services for children and teens.

## **Access to Children and Teen Areas**

The Children's area is specially designed to serve the needs of children. As such, adults who are not using or browsing Children's materials, or who are not accompanied by a child, are asked to use other areas of the Library that are designed for adults.

Similarly, our Teen space is intended to serve teens (6th through 12th graders). Adults or children without a teen or not browsing the collection are asked to use other areas of the Library.

The bathroom in the Children's area is intended to be used by children, teens, and families only.

## **Caregiver/Parent Expectations and Responsibilities**

The Library is a public space and therefore the safety of children cannot be guaranteed. To ensure a positive experience for everyone, children should generally be under the supervision of a responsible caregiver while at the Library. A child must be sufficiently capable or mature/responsible to be in the Library without supervision. The behavior, safety, and supervision of children while in the Library is the sole responsibility of the child's parents, guardians, and/or caregivers. While Library staff is here to assist with children's use of the Library and its resources, neither the Library nor its staff members act in loco parentis (in place of parents).

## **Staff Role**

Library staff cannot supervise children in the Library or monitor when a child leaves the building. If it is deemed by a staff member that a child's safety is at risk or they may not be sufficiently capable and mature/responsible to be in the Library without supervision, the staff member shall take action to correct the situation and will inform a supervisor of the concerns and the actions taken.

## **Unattended Children**

### **During Operating Hours**

If a staff member decides a child appears not to be sufficiently capable or mature/responsible to be left unattended while in the Library during operating hours, staff shall take the following actions:

- Staff will try their best to comfort/calm child if needed
- Staff will try to locate the child's parent, guardian, and/or caregiver in the Library and explain the Child Safety Policy

- If staff are unable to locate the parent, guardian, and/or caregiver in the Library, staff will make an effort to contact the parent, guardian, and/or caregiver to pick up the child.
- If the parent, guardian, and/or caregiver cannot be located within a reasonable time, a staff member in charge/a supervisor (if available) will call Boulder County Social Services, and they will assume responsibility for the child. Staff will promptly notify Library Administration that Boulder County Social Services were notified and collect information and document the incident as identified below.
- If Boulder County Social Services is unavailable, Library staff should call Longmont Police Department to pickup the child.

#### **At Closing**

- Library staff will encourage any unattended child to contact their parent, guardian, and/or caregiver before the Library's regularly scheduled closing time.
- If a parent, guardian, and/or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within a reasonable time after closing, Library staff will call the Longmont Police Department to pick up the child. Staff will promptly notify Library Administration that Longmont Police Department were notified and collect information and document the incident as identified below.
- If necessary, two staff members will remain with the child until the parent, guardian, caregiver, or police officer arrive. Staff members will never remain alone in the Library with an unattended child. Staff will also not transport any child from the Library to another location.
- Once the child is in the care of the Longmont Police Department, a note will be attached to the Library's East Side entrance stating the following: "Unattended child is in the care of the Longmont Police Department."

#### **Collect Information and Document**

In instances when Library staff is required to contact law enforcement or Boulder County Social Services to assist with reuniting a child, the Library staff should ensure the following information is obtained and preserved:

- The name of the child if available.
- A physical description of the child.
- A summary of the incident, including timeline, names of Library staff involved, names of law enforcement or Boulder County Social Services involved, etc.
- Video records and still photographs identifying the child's arrival, the party that dropped-off the child, and the departure of said party.
- Any other information that may be pertinent to reunification.



### **Enforcement of Child Safety Policy**

The Child Safety Policy will be fairly and reasonably enforced. Please see the Library's Standards of Behavior, Collection Development Policy, and Computer Use Policy for more on how these apply to children and teens' Library use.

*Adopted by Longmont Public Library on March 21, 2024.*