

Gowanda Free Library Child Safety Policy

Policy:

The Gowanda Free Library welcomes and encourages children to use its facilities and services. However, the Library cannot provide long or short-term care for children of any age. Parents/guardians/caregivers should remember that the Library is a public building, open to all and must use the same precautions for ensuring their child's safety as they would in any other public location. While our staff is concerned about the well-being of our patrons, the Library is not responsible for keeping your child safe from harm.

- Parents, guardians or caregivers are responsible for the care, safety and behavior of children of any age while the child is using the Library.
- **Children 8 years old or under and not yet in third grade must be directly supervised by a parent, guardian or caregiver while in the Library.**
- A caregiver must:
 - Be at least 12 years of age
 - Provide direct supervision of the child in their care
 - Not be using the computers during the time they are supervising the child
- Parents, guardians or caregivers who do not attend a Children's Room program with their child must remain in the Library if the child is 7 years old or under **and** not yet in second grade, in case the child needs to leave the program.
- Children 8 years old or older and in third grade or higher may use the Library unattended for an amount of time appropriate to their age and maturity.
- All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.
- **The Library is not responsible if children leave Library property unattended.**

Inappropriate Behavior

- Inappropriate behavior by children will be noted by the staff. Inappropriate behavior includes not treating other patrons and Library staff with courtesy and dignity; rough play and excessive running; inappropriate use of Library property; and other behaviors as per the Library's User Behavior Policy. The child and parent, guardian or caregiver, if present, will be informed that their behavior is inappropriate and will be asked to stop the activity.
- If inappropriate behavior continues, the child and/or parent, guardian or caregiver will be asked to leave the Library. If the child and/or parent, guardian or caregiver refuses to leave after being told to do so, the police will be called to escort them from the building.

At Library Closing Time

- Children must be picked up before the closing time of the Library.
- Unattended children will be asked to contact their parent, guardian or caregiver 30 minutes before closing time. If a parent, guardian or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive by closing time, the child will be placed in the care of the Gowanda Police Department.

After closing time, Library staff will leave a note on the Library door stating *"Unattended child is in the custody of the Gowanda Police, 27 East Main St. Gowanda, NY 14070; Phone no. 532-2020"* once the child is in the care of the police. The child's name will not be listed on the sign.