

Rio Rancho Public Libraries' Child Safety Policy

The Rio Rancho Public Library and its branches are public buildings and are open to all for approved use. Library staff strives to ensure that all buildings are operated in a safe manner. Children are very welcome in the Libraries. However, because the buildings are open to all, our Libraries cannot be considered safe places for unattended children.

The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the Library rests with the parents, legal guardians, or other responsible caregivers ("parent or responsible caregiver") and not with Library staff.

In order to maintain an atmosphere where reading and study are encouraged, the library's policy provides:

1. Children age 11 and under must be continually accompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver. A parent or responsible caregiver must remain with the children at all times;
2. If a child age 11 or under is found to be unaccompanied in the Library, staff will try to locate the parent or responsible caregiver to remedy the situation. If a parent or responsible caregiver is unavailable, law enforcement will be called;
3. Children ages 12 and up may use the Library without a parent or responsible caregiver present. All children in the Library must follow all Rio Rancho Public Library Behavior Policies and are expected to use the Library appropriately. Children who do not follow these rules are subject to the same consequences as other Library users, including being required to leave the Library;
4. It may be necessary for a Library to close, without prior notice, due to unusual or emergency situations. Unaccompanied children 18 years and younger who cannot transport themselves must be able to reach a parent or responsible caregiver for immediate pick-up in case of emergency;
5. Parents or responsible caregivers should be aware of Library closing times. If a child remains at the Library after hours, Library staff may make an attempt to contact a parent or responsible caregiver but may also immediately without recourse contact law enforcement, and/or the Children Youth and Families Department of the State of New Mexico or other government agencies. Staff will not transport a child nor will a child be allowed to sit in a staff person's car; and the children's area of the Library is available for children, their parents, responsible caregivers, or adults.