

## **WEEKS PUBLIC LIBRARY UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY**

The Weeks Public Library welcomes children to visit the library and encourages them to read, to explore various electronic formats, to attend programs and to make full use of library resources. Although staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children using the library, our facilities are not designed or licensed to provide childcare or emergency care. Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is unattended by a responsible adult or caregiver. Parents or guardians are advised that the library is not responsible for children who are left unattended on library premises.

The library reminds parents to consider the safety and well being of their children and the needs of other library users. Children should be supervised at all times and taught and reminded that the materials in the library must be respected and treated with care. With these considerations in mind, the following rules apply:

1. Children under 10 must be accompanied by a responsible adult or caregiver aged 16 or older. A responsible caregiver must have contact information for an adult who is legally responsible for the child.
2. Children 5 years old and younger must be directly supervised by a responsible adult or caregiver aged 16 or older in all rooms of the library, including the Children's Room.
3. Parents/guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, whether or not the parent or guardian is present.
4. At the discretion of the parent/guardian, a child 10 and older may be left unattended in the library for a reasonable period of time needed to select materials, work on a homework assignment or attend a library program. The child must know how to reach the parent/guardian or responsible caregiver (aged 16 or older) should a need arise. Children should not be left for excessively long periods of time.
5. When older children are visiting the library by themselves, the adult responsible for the child will be contacted if the child's behavior is inappropriate for the library and guidance from the staff has been ignored. If the adult cannot be reached and the behavior is deemed dangerous or unacceptably disruptive, the police will be notified.
6. Children must be picked up before closing time. Children left unattended at closing time will have the opportunity to contact an adult. If no contact can be made, or if a ride has not arrived within 10 minutes of closing, the police will be called to supervise the child until the adult arrives. Library employees are not permitted to transport children to another location. Parents should note the library's hours of operation: Monday – Thursday 10am-8pm, Friday 10am-5pm and Saturday 9am-1pm.