



BLOUNT COUNTY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
*Bound Together*

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Approved Date: 11/18/2025  
Date of Adoption: 09/24/2002

Signed: Hugh Brakebill

## Public Use of the Children's Area Policy

**APPLICABLE TO:** All Users of the Blount County Public Library

### DEFINITIONS:

- **Actively Supervised:** The adult parent/guardian/caregiver remains in close proximity to the child and is attentive to the child's activities and behavior at all times.
- **Adult:** A person who is eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- **Child/Children/Minor:** Any person under the age of eighteen (18).
- **Parent/Guardian/Caregiver:** An adult who is responsible for the child's supervision.
- **Unattended Child:** A child who is not accompanied by an adult parent/guardian/caregiver as required by policy.

**PURPOSE:** To ensure that the Blount County Public Library (BCPL) provides a safe, welcoming, and enriching environment for all patrons, with particular attention to the safety and well-being of children. This policy establishes guidelines for the appropriate use of the Children's Area, clarifies the responsibilities of parents and caregivers in supervising their children, and outlines procedures for library staff to follow in situations involving unattended or at-risk minors.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** Blount County Public Library (BCPL) aspires to create an enriching atmosphere that welcomes all. BCPL strives to provide a safe and appropriate environment; it is the responsibility of parents or legal guardians to ensure courteous and considerate behavior and the well-being of children at all times while inside the library and around the library grounds.

The children's area is for use by children and their caregivers who are attending children's programs and utilizing other services. Our Youth Services staff are available to assist children/caregivers with materials, services, and programming that support the growth and development of each child. It is also for use by those patrons who are accessing the special materials contained in the children's collection. Adult Patrons need to be in the company of a minor or actively browsing the collection in order to remain within the Children's Area.

Please note:

- Children six (6) and under must be actively supervised by their parent or adult caregiver at all times.
- Those seven (7) to thirteen (13) must have their parent or adult caregiver inside the building.

In the event of the following:

- An unattended child is found frightened or crying in the Library;
- An unattended child is perceived to be endangering him or herself, or another person poses a perceived threat to the unattended child;
- An unattended child exhibits inappropriate behavior (such as that listed above);
- An unattended child has not been met by a responsible caregiver at closing time.

Library staff members will attempt to contact the parent or guardian of the unattended child. If the parent or guardian cannot be located within fifteen minutes, the staff is authorized to notify the Department of Children's Services or the Maryville Police Department, which will take custody of the child.

**POLICY REVIEW:** To be reviewed every two years.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** The Board of Trustees Secretary is the point of contact for this policy.

*Blount County does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state-sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d).*