

Hornell Public Library Child Safety Policy

The Hornell Public 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 and caregivers should remember that the Library is a public building, open to all and must use the same precautions for ensuring your child's safety as you 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. **The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent or caregiver and not with the Library personnel.**

- Parents or caregivers are responsible for the care, safety, and behavior of children of any age while the child is using the library or on library property.
- Children 5 years old or under must be directly supervised by a parent or caregiver while in the library. If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver in the library and inform them of the rules. Children ages 6-10 must be in the building with a responsible adult or caregiver.
- A caregiver must be at least 12 years of age and provide direct supervision of the child in their care.
- Parents or caregivers who do not attend a Children's program with their child must remain in the Library if the child is 10 years old or under and not yet in second grade, in case the child needs to leave the program.
- Children 10 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 must have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.
- The Library is not responsible if children leave Library property unattended.
- Out of concern for the safety of young patrons, adults who are unaccompanied by a child or children in the children's area of the Library may be asked to move to another area of the Library if need be.

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 or abuse of library property; and other behaviors as per the Library's Rules of Conduct for Patrons Policy. The child and parent or caregiver, if present, will be informed that their behavior is inappropriate and will be asked to stop the activity
- If inappropriate behavior continues, library staff will follow appropriate steps as indicated by the Library's Rules of Conduct for Patrons Policy.

At Library Closing Time:

Unattended children, age 10 or younger, will be asked to contact their parent, guardian or caregiver 15 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 Hornell City Police Department. Two staff members will wait with the child until the Hornell City Police Department arrives. An incident report describing the situation will be filed the next day. After closing time, Library staff will leave a note on the Library door stating "Unattended child is in the custody of the Hornell City Police, 110 Broadway, Hornell, NY; Phone no. 607-324-2860" once the child is in the care of the police. The child's name will not be listed on the sign.

Adopted by the Hornell Public Library Board of Trustees

18 Feb 2025
(Date)

