

# **Great Bend Public Library**

## **Safe Child Policy**

### **Board Policy**

It is the policy of the Great Bend Public Library to keep our youngest patrons safe while visiting the Great Bend Public Library.

### **Administrative Policy**

The Great Bend Public Library welcomes all residents of the community to use its facilities and services. We encourage visits by children and it is our desire to make these visits both memorable and enjoyable for each child and their families. The library is a public place, therefore children's safety cannot be guaranteed. Also the library does not provide childcare services. However, children of all ages are encouraged to use the library for homework, recreational reading and attending programs. Staff is happy to help children use the library for finding materials and by providing programs.

### **Procedures**

The following procedure has been adopted by the Great Bend Public Library to maintain a safe environment for children.

- The responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the library rests with the parent, guardian or caregiver not with library staff members.
- We encourage parents to keep sick children at home and to not bring them to the library, as illness may easily spread to other children.
- Parents, guardians, or caregivers are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, in accordance with the behavior policy.
- All children age 6 and under must be accompanied and directly supervised by a parent, guardian, or caregiver at all times. This caregiver must be at least 13 years of age. Library staff members may contact the parent in the event a child (6 years or younger) is left unsupervised in the library. If the parent is unable to be reached the staff may contact the police department.
- Children whose behavior is disruptive to library policies and instructions will be asked to leave the library grounds. If a child is unable to leave the library without an adult due to age or prior arrangement, that child will be given the opportunity to place a phone call to inform a parent or guardian of the circumstances. Children should know how to reach an adult at all times. If a ride is unavailable, the police may be called to pick up the child. If this occurs, the child will be taken to Juvenile Intake, per police protocol.

- Library staff will ask young people if they have a ride or need a ride fifteen minutes before the library closes. Under no circumstances will staff take young people home, instead two staff members will stay with the child(ren), after the library closes until a ride picks them up or up to 15 minutes. At that point library staff is authorized to call the police. Again, if this occurs the child will be taken to Juvenile Intake, per police protocol.
- The library is not responsible for any consequences of parents forfeiting their responsibilities.
- The Children's and Young Adult areas of the library are specifically designed to serve the needs of our younger patrons. Adults in these areas not supervising children or searching for youth materials will be asked to use other areas of the library at the staff's discretion. Staff members will place the safety of children and young adults first. Adults with children in their charge are the only adults allowed to use the restrooms located in the children's area.