

S P O K A N E C O U N T Y L I B R A R Y D I S T R I C T

Policy Title	Children’s Safety in Libraries		
Approval Date	March 19, 2013	Revision Date	March 18, 2025
Related Policies	Access to Library Services Code of Conduct Collection Development Computer, Wireless Network and Internet Use Customer Privileges and Responsibilities Intellectual Freedom		
Purpose	Defines the responsibilities of parents, guardians, and caregivers whose children use Spokane County Library District (District) facilities and resources. Describes how the District responds to situations involving at-risk children.		

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are used:

Facility or Facilities: All buildings, properties, and vehicles owned and/or managed by the District.

Parents: The legal guardian(s) of any minor child, and/or any adult standing *in loco parentis*.

In loco parentis: An individual stands *in loco parentis* when the individual acts in place of a parent and/or assumes the responsibilities of a parent.

Resources: Library materials, services, programs, and events provided by the District.

Policy

Spokane County Library District strives to create places, programs, and services that encourage children and adults to explore, learn, and create. The District respects the privacy of the customers who use its facilities. No employee, officer, or agent of the District stands *in loco parentis*. The District recognizes that it is the responsibility of parents to monitor and guide their children’s use of District facilities and resources, reading and viewing of library materials, and use of District computers and network resources to access the Internet.

Children’s Use of District Facilities

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children are cared for, safe, and feel secure when visiting a District facility or attending a District event. District facilities, programs and staff do not act as childcare or as replacements for parents, guardians, or caregivers.

District personnel will take appropriate action if a child visiting a District facility appears to be “at-risk.” Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Children who appear to be under the age of six (6) left alone at a District facility.
- Children of any age who become disruptive or appear to be distressed when left alone or in the care of other children at a District facility.

- Children who appear to be subjected to physical or emotional abuse while using District facilities.
- Children who appear to be subjected to uninvited interactions.
- Children left alone at closing time who appear to be under the age of 12 or appear distressed.

If a situation such as one of the above occurs, District staff shall follow established District procedures, which may include notification of a parent, law enforcement, and/or child protective services agency.

Children's Use of Library Materials

Children's use of library materials is addressed in the District's Collection Development Policy.

Children's Use of District-Provided Computers and Internet Access

Children's use of District-provided computers and internet access is addressed in the District's Computer, Wireless Network and Internet Use Policy.

The Executive Director will establish administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy. Any appeal of an administrative action under this policy will first be made in writing to the Executive Director and then to the Board of Trustees.

The District will make a good faith effort to implement this policy in a fair and consistent manner.