

**CHILD SAFETY POLICY**  
*Prairie-River Library District*

**Preface**

The Prairie-River Library District is comprised of small-town libraries in Nez Perce, Idaho and Lewis counties and is a partner in the Valnet consortium, sharing resources and technology with libraries in north-central Idaho and south-east Washington. The mission of the Prairie-River Library District is to provide appropriate materials, resources, and staff to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the patron. Toward that end, the staff of the Prairie-River Library District will endeavor to provide prompt, friendly service with courtesy and respect to all.

**Introduction**

The Prairie-River Library District is governed by an elected Board of Trustees. Idaho Code 33-2720 authorizes the Board of Trustees to establish policies for the administration, operation and use of the library or libraries under its control. The Board of Trustees have established this Child Safety Policy to provide guidelines for patrons and staff regarding children's use of the library.

**Access to Children's Areas**

The children's area of the library is specifically designed to serve the needs of young customers. It contains materials and activities intended to be used by children and their parents, guardians or caregivers. Adults not using the children's area for the purpose intended will be asked to use other areas of the library. Staff will place the safety of children first.

**Parent, Guardian, and Caregiver Expectations and Responsibilities**

Because the library is a public place, children's safety cannot be guaranteed. Children may encounter hazards such as stairs, elevators, doors, furniture, electrical equipment, or other library customers. The conduct, safety, and supervision of children while on library premises are the responsibility of parents, guardians, and caregivers. While our staff values the safety of children, only parents, guardians, and caregivers can provide appropriate supervision of children. Appropriate supervision provided by parents, guardians, and caregivers will assist library staff in creating a pleasant and safe environment for library customers of all ages.

During Normal Hours of Operation:

- a) Children ages 0 through 5 must be directly supervised and in view of a parent, guardian, or a caregiver (at least 10 years old) at all times while in the library.
- b) For children ages 6 through 9 a parent, guardian, or a caregiver (at least 10 years old) must be present in the library and readily available to address the child's needs at all times.

At Closing:

- c) Parents and guardians are reminded that the library is not responsible for children left unattended at the library's normal closing time. Failure to pick up children by closing time may result in the Police Department or Sheriff's Office being notified.

### **Staff Role**

Library staff have many duties to fulfill and cannot supervise children in the library or when the child leaves the building. However, if staff are concerned that a child may not be sufficiently capable and mature to be on library premises without supervision, they may take action to correct the situation.

In order to ensure a positive library experience for everyone, if staff becomes aware that a child appears not to be not sufficiently capable or mature to be on library premises without supervision:

- a) Staff will try to comfort the child if the child is ill, hungry or upset. Staff will make a concerted effort to locate the child's parent, guardian, or caregiver in the library and express the library's concern for the child's safety, and explain the library's Child Safety Policy. If staff are unable to locate the parent, guardian, or caregiver in the library, they will make a concerted effort to contact the parent, guardian or caregiver to pick up the child. Staff will express the library's concern for the child's safety and explain the library's Child Safety Policy. If the parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be located within a reasonable time, staff will call the Police Department or Sheriff's Office.
- b) Staff will not transport any child from the library to another location.
- c) Misconduct or misuse of library property on the part of children will be reported to their parents.

### **Internet Use**

Refer to the Prairie River Library District's Internet Use Policy for guidelines on internet use by minors.

### **Enforcement**

Through the authority of the Board of Trustees, library staff will enforce the Child Safety Policy in a fair and reasonable manner.

Adoption date: July 30, 2019