

Stanly County Public Library

Safe Child Policy

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Stanly County Public Library welcomes children of all ages to utilize our materials and services. It is a doorway through which life long learning takes place. We encourage the use of the library by children and parents together, especially as children are introduced to the services the library can provide. We believe that parents are best able to make decisions about the books and materials their children would enjoy, as well as to decide when children are prepared to use the library alone.

The role of the staff at Stanly County Public Library is to assist children and parents in selecting materials, answering questions about library services and to encourage the use of additional programs and services as they are developed. In addition, our goal is to provide an atmosphere where children and adults alike feel welcome in the library. To accomplish this, we have established a Code of Conduct that applies to library users of all ages.

As parents prepare children for coming to the library alone, we highly recommend they review this Code of Conduct and the library hours of operation together. We encourage parents to discuss with children the pitfalls of being in a public building alone, and to equip children with knowledge about how to deal with strangers and how to use the telephone to contact a responsible adult at all times.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The library staff is concerned about the safety of young people who may remain at the library at closing time. Children will be encouraged to begin calling for a ride at least 20 minutes prior to closing time. If a minor child is alone at the time of library closing, a library staff person will wait with the child for fifteen minutes. Staff will call the local police to pick up the child if the child's ride does not come within that time. Staff are instructed not to offer transportation to those left at closing.

When children exhibit difficulty in managing their own behavior in the library, library staff will determine whether the child is accompanied by a responsible adult and request their assistance in applying the library's Code of Conduct. If it is determined that a child is alone, or without adult supervision, staff will ask if a child is waiting for a ride or has the ability to leave the library on their own. Those waiting for a ride will have the opportunity to wait in the administrative offices until a responsible adult can pick them up. Those who have walked or arrived on their own will be asked to leave.

Parents will be contacted when library staff observe that a child is having difficulty being alone at the library. The library director and parents will work together to decide what action should be taken to ensure positive library experiences for children.