

<u>Policy</u> Unattended Minors	<u>Date Approved by WGRLS Board</u> July 8, 2020; May 21, 2025
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Purpose:

West Georgia Regional Library System ("WGRLS") and the Regional Board welcome and encourage children and guardians to visit the library, attend library programming, and use library resources. This policy is established for the safety and comfort of WGRLS patrons.

Policy:

Parents, caregivers, and/or guardians of minor children should be aware that the library is a public, open building. They are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of children at all times in the library and on library property. Library staff cannot care for unattended children or assume responsibility for any child for any period of time. All children and teens are subject to the Patron [Code of Conduct](#) policy.

All children 12 and under must be accompanied by and within the immediate vicinity of a responsible adult or qualified caregiver 16 years of age or older at all times. Minors under the age of 16 may not be left as the caregivers of other children. The adult or caregiver must actively supervise the child and be in visual contact with them. If the child is attending a library program, the adult or caregiver must remain engaged with the child throughout the program.

Minors ages 13 to 15 may use the library without caregiver supervision, but they must be able to communicate parent/caregiver contact information, including an address and phone number, upon request.

WGRLS is not responsible for minors without a ride home at closing. Library patrons of all ages must arrange for their ride home **prior** to the library's closing. Library staff will make no determination as to the suitability or authority of anyone arriving or being contacted to transport a minor from library grounds or for minors leaving library grounds, and cannot legally detain a child who wishes to leave the property.

If more than one library staff member is present at closing, staff will wait up to 15 minutes after the library closes with minors aged 15 and under who lack transportation. After 15 minutes, the minor may be considered abandoned, and the police will be contacted to address the situation. Staff will leave a note on the library door with the contact information of the law enforcement personnel who have the child. If only one staff member is available at closing, the police will be contacted to address the situation.

Library staff members are not permitted to transport any child or adult to another location or to stay alone with a child.