Child Safety Policy

Brandywine Community Library
Policy Updated: 2/27/25

The Brandywine Community Library welcomes patrons of all ages, including those under the age of 18 years old. We are happy to provide materials, programs and services to encourage and promote literacy to the youth of our community. The responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the Brandywine Community Library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver. The staff and/or volunteers of the library cannot accept responsibility for the safety or supervision of minors.

When using Internet access computers in the main section of the library, children 10 years old and under must be accompanied by an adult. Children under 10 years old are welcome to use the children's computer in the children's room.

Children 7 years old and under must have a parent/guardian/caregiver age 18 years old or older in attendance to supervise them at all times during their visit to the library. Children 8-11 years old do not need to be in the immediate presence of a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, but the person responsible for those children must be in the library the entire time they are present. Children ages 10-11 years old can be unsupervised in the library during organized, age appropriate programs like TnT (tween and teen) events with librarian approval.

Children 12 years old and over may use the Library on their own provided they maintain proper library user behavior (see Code of Conduct).

If a child under the age of 7 years old is found without a parent or caregiver, the staff will attempt to:

- Locate the parent or caregiver in the Library and explain the Child Safety Policy.
- Make every effort to contact the parent or caregiver who is not in the library to come and pick up the child. Staff will express the library's concern for the child's safety and explain the Child Safety Policy.
- Encourage an unattended child to contact the parent or guardian if it is within 15 minutes of closing time. If a parent or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within 15 minutes of closing, the library staff will call the PA State Police to pick up the child. Staff will notify the Library Director that the police have been called.
- Remain with the child until the parent/guardian/caregiver or police arrive.
- Staff members will not, under any circumstances, transport any child from the Brandywine Community Library to another location.

Persons of any age with mental, physical or emotional disabilities which affect their ability to use the Library or render supervision otherwise necessary must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or adult caregiver at all times.

Children and teens are expected to adhere to the same standards of Library user behavior expected of adults (see Code of Conduct). Parents, legal guardians, or assigned chaperones are responsible for the actions of their children, whether or not they are present. This includes any child under the age of 18 years old. Behavior deemed inappropriate by Library staff may result in a child being asked to leave the library with the caregiver responsible for them.

Parents, guardians, and other individuals responsible for a child 16 years old and under shall pick up their unattended children at closing times. In addition to scheduled closing hours, the Library may also close for unexpected reasons. The Library staff will exercise appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of unattended children when the Library is closing. If no parent, legal guardian or other individual responsible for a child 16 and under is located upon Library closing, PA State Police will be contacted.

Children should be supervised when reading to and visiting Sheldon. They may gently touch Sheldon's shell but for their own protection, children should keep their fingers away from his mouth.