



MANISTEE COUNTY LIBRARY
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Parent's Guide: Your Child's Use of the Library Policy

Congratulations on encouraging your child to explore all that your local library offers. Children of all ages are welcome to enjoy our collections, services and events. Here is some helpful information for parents with minor children.

Our six libraries offer warm, welcoming spaces for kids to enjoy, along with many educational and entertaining programs. However, staff cannot provide supervision or be responsible for children in the library. We ask that you maintain direct supervision over young children you bring to the library. Please help them learn behavior that is appropriate when using the library. This includes keeping voices to a reasonable level and respecting library materials, furnishings, and equipment by using them appropriately. Our goal is for everyone who visits the library to have an enjoyable and successful visit.

The following is from our Patron Code of Conduct Policy:

5. Children in the Library

A. Children are welcome and encouraged to use the Library at all times. The Library desires to make each visit an important one for the child. A "Child" means a minor -- under the age of 18.

B. Rules and Regulations Regarding Children.

1. All patrons, including children, are expected to comply with the Library's policies. Parents, guardians or responsible caregivers shall review and be fully aware of all Library policies governing children, particularly the Internet Use Policy.
2. Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children regardless of age while in the Library or on Library property.
3. Library staff will not be expected to supervise or monitor children's behavior.
4. Children under the age of 8 must be attended by a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver. The parent, guardian or responsible caregiver shall remain in the Library at all times. If a child under the age of 8 is attending a Library-sponsored program on the premises, the parent, a guardian, or responsible caregiver is to remain on the premises for the duration of the program.

5. Children ages 3 and under must be within the visual contact of a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver at all times, including during programs and visits to the restroom. Children ages 3 and under may not be left in the Youth Services Department alone.

C. Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, legal guardian, custodian or caregiver when:

1. The health or safety of an unattended child is in doubt.
2. A child is frightened while alone at the Library.
3. The behavior of an unattended child violates Library policy.
4. The unattended child under the age of 8 or in need of assistance procuring transportation is not attended has not been met by a parent, legal guardian, custodian or responsible caregiver at closing time. A child is considered unattended at closing time if the child is under the age of 8 or the child needs assistance procuring transportation.

D. If a parent, legal guardian, custodian or caregiver cannot be reached by closing time or fails to arrive within fifteen minutes after being contacted, Library staff will contact law enforcement officials to take charge of the situation involving the unattended child. Library employees are not permitted to transport an unattended child or vulnerable adult under any circumstances.

E. Use of Children's Room. The Children's Room is for children under 12 and their caregivers. All patrons may actively browse the collection or retrieve a book, but only children and the accompanying caregiver may remain in the Children's Room after completing such activity. Further, seating in the Children's Room is limited to children and their accompanying caregivers.

F. Adults in the Children's Room. The Children's Room is for children and their caregivers. Library patrons without a child should not use the Children's Room for reading or study. Patrons who are not actively seeking children's materials and who linger in the Children's Room will be asked to leave. This is for the safety of all children.

Youth Cards

Children of any age may have their own library cards for checking out items or using our digital collections.

Collections

Manistee County Library has everything kids love to read, watch, and listen to, in a wide variety of formats. Many reference and education resources—both physical and digital—are available through our catalog. Find additional online resources at www.manisteelibrary.org. Please note that items in our collections represent many experiences, lifestyles, and points of view. Staff does not monitor the types of information children may find in the library, or restrict checkout of items

based on age. It is your responsibility as a parent to be aware of what your child is checking out. Accompany your child to the library and assist them in their selections.

Internet Access

The internet allows people of all ages to access ideas, information and commentary. Some of this content may be inaccurate, offensive or inappropriate for children. Although we cannot ensure that a child visiting the library will not access content a parent disapproves of, Manistee County Library offers public computers with filtered Internet access meant to protect them from obscene or explicit material. In compliance with Michigan law, anyone under age 18 is assigned this type of computer. It's important that parents never allow someone else to use their child's card for computer access, or to let their child use someone else's card.

The following is from our Internet/Computer Use Policy:

Parents/Guardians must assume responsibility for Internet use by their children as Library staff cannot act in loco parentis. Only parents can restrict services and materials to their child(ren) and only for their child(ren).

Students, under the age of 18, must have a valid library card along with a parent/guardian signature card on file to be allowed to use Internet public access computers. Students must sign an "Internet Access Agreement for Students" card which will be kept on file at the Library. A "Computer" sticker will be placed on the student/child's Library card and must be presented each time the student/child wishes to use a Library computer.

Children under the age of nine (9) may use the Internet only under the direct supervision of a parent/guardian. Children (under the age of 9) unaccompanied by an adult will be allowed use of computers designated child or youth that will not allow access to the Internet. Student's ages nine (9) through seventeen (17) must present a valid Library card with a "Computer" sticker on the back to sign up for computer time.