

## Youth Spaces Usage & Safety Policy

Finkelstein Memorial Library is open to all members of our community. The library requires all visitors, including children and teens, to comply with our Patron Behavior Rules. The safety of young people inside and outside the library is a major concern. We appreciate your cooperation in providing a safe and welcoming environment for the youth patrons in our community.

I. DEFINITIONS- For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall stand:

A. "Child" shall be defined as ages 0-12.

B. "Teen" shall be defined as ages 13- 18 or age 13 through graduation from their currently enrolled high school (whichever is last).

C. "Youth" shall be defined as a child and/or teen.

D. "Unaccompanied adult" shall be defined as a patron who is 18 (or older)/no longer defined as a teen and is not currently accompanying a child or a teen in the Children's and/or Teen Rooms.

II. LIBRARY PATRONS IN YOUTH SPACES- For the health and safety of all library Youth, we ask your cooperation with the following Library rules:

A. UNACCOMPANIED ADULTS: Unaccompanied adults are only permitted to enter the Children's Room and/or Teen Room to retrieve materials. The use of computers, toys, and the Children's Room is reserved for children and their caregivers to maintain a safe environment for all. This rule applies to all unaccompanied adults, without exception, regardless of age, gender, or ability. Unaccompanied adults will be asked by Library staff to use the facilities, services, and/or equipment in the adult section of the library. Children's materials may be brought to other areas of the library if the adult plans to remain in the building.

B. UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN: When in the library, children under age 10 must be accompanied by an individual over age 13 (see caregiver requirements below). Children ages 10-12 may be unaccompanied in the Children's Room, but may not supervise other children. Staff cannot be responsible for looking after unattended children. If a under age 10 is left unattended and/or is not picked up when the library closes, we will have no other choice but to call Spring Valley Police. Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are responsible for noting scheduled Library closing times and should have a communication plan in place (see IV section C).

C. **YOUTH PROGRAMS:** Participation in Youth Services programs at the Library is restricted to patrons in the age range listed for the program on the library's website calendar and to acceptable caregivers who are accompanying youth.

### III. COMPUTER USAGE IN YOUTH SPACES:

A. Children under 5 cannot have their own library card and therefore cannot use the internet computers. They may use the AWE computers instead: The younger

Early Literacy computers are for children ages 3-7 years old; the older Edge computers are for children ages 8-12.

B. Children need permission from their caregivers to use the children's internet computers. Caregivers must be aware that computers have access to the internet, and it is the caregiver's responsibility to monitor the child. To use an internet accessible computer, children must scan their library card. If their parents have selected to allow internet access on the application for their child's library card, children will be able to use the computer. If they haven't granted this permission, scanning the library card will not unlock the computer. To temporarily allow their children to access an internet computer, caregivers can give temporary permission to the youth services staff who can unlock the computer while the caregiver remains with the child.

C. Teens, with their own card, may use the teen computers. If they do not have their own card, they may ask for a guest pass at the Teen Services Desk.

D. Children/teens may print the first 10 pages for free, then print additional pages for \$0.10 per page.

E. Content must be appropriate for the room youth are in, at the librarian's discretion. All users must wear headphones when listening to content. All library policies regarding behavior must be observed, including noise level and language. If behavior does not improve after two warnings, the patron may be removed from the computers for the rest of the day.

F. Chromebooks are for use by adults and teens who are in the Children's Room with a child. Patrons may only borrow one Chromebook per library card/ID.

IV. **CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE LIBRARY-** Parents, guardians, and/or the responsible caregiver (not the library) are responsible for youth in their care:

A. The library is not responsible for a youth's selections of library materials.

B. The entrance to Youth services is equipped with a button-push door to prevent young children from leaving without their accompanying teen or adult. However, it is the parents' responsibility to monitor when and with whom their children leave.

C. Caregivers and youth must have a communication plan. For example: know what to do in the event the library closes, and a caregiver is not there to pick them up, such as in an emergency or inclement weather. It is the responsibility of parents, guardians, and/or caregivers to let their youth know what they should do if they must leave the library. If caregivers need to contact their unaccompanied children, they should have a way to directly communicate with them, as library staff can also not pass along messages to your child.

Caregivers (including teens) are only permitted to bring children into the Teen Room to retrieve materials. The seating, computers, games, etc. are reserved for teen usage only.