

Rusk County Community Library -- Board Policies

Standards and Guidelines for Library Use

Patron Behavior, Patron Safety; Staff Responses

All staff are responsible for enforcing policies equally. All staff have the authority to enforce library policies. Patrons shall cooperate with library staff who must interpret and apply rules and policies. Upon request, patrons shall be required to provide their correct name or show valid identification to library staff, and leave the premises if so directed. Entering this public library indicates that you are willing and able to act courteously toward all other persons here, act respectfully with regard to public property, and follow all library rules.

The Rusk County Community Library strives to serve all ages of patrons well, in a friendly and helpful manner. Library staff assists patrons of all ages, but they cannot take responsibility for personal items, possessions, or actions of persons who come to the library. Given this reality, the library strongly suggests the following to all who visit us in this very busy place:

--Do not leave personal items of any value unsupervised at any time. The building is open to all, which means that people unknown to both patrons and the staff use the library. The library will not be responsible for any stolen or lost items.

--Use reasonable caution when accessing the internet on the library computers. While the library has very strong protections against web-based intrusions, we cannot protect users from in-person theft of information. Leaving any information up on a computer screen for a period of time can compromise that information. Please minimize the screen and lock access to your account if you must step away from the computer.

--If you are suspicious of someone's behavior, do report this to the staff. The staff can address issues when they are aware of them; we cannot address behaviors or problems which we cannot see from the circulation desk. Please help us to keep the library a safe place for adults and children.

Everyone has the right to use library resources provided his or her behavior does not unreasonably interfere with the rights of others to do the same. An individual has the right to use the library without being unreasonably disturbed by others. Should the staff be required to have a person leave the premises, the police will be contacted regarding this action.

--No person shall, while on library property, physically, verbally or with gestures, threaten, abuse, or assault another person including boisterous, unreasonably loud, violent, indecent, profane, or disruptive behavior or otherwise disorderly conduct under circumstances in which the conduct tends to cause or provoke a disturbance. Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to, abusive language, threatening behaviors, fighting, loud talking, shouting, whistling and/or staring at another person, following another person, operating any audio equipment so that any other person can hear it or using a cell phone in a loud and/or disruptive manner.

-Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly, whistling, singing, using profanity, running or engaging in other disruptive conduct is prohibited. This includes stalking, prolonged staring at or following another so as to annoy, or behaving in a manner that could reasonably be expected to annoy or disturb other patrons or staff.

--When such behavior is evident, the staff will require the person to leave the property, and law enforcement may be called to ensure this occurs. Staff judgment will be the determining factor in deciding if behavior falls into this category.

--Using the library premises with a bodily hygiene so offensive that it constitutes a nuisance to others will result in the patron being asked to leave the library.

--We strongly discourage eating and drinking in the library due to the risk of damage to materials being used.

The Rusk County Community Library encourages families and children to use its facilities. However, when children are left unattended, problems can arise. We expect parents and guardians to follow these rules.

--Young children may become frightened or confused and wander away. Older children cannot be expected to supervise small children for extended periods of time. Since the library is a public building, children might be approached by strangers. If an unattended child has a medical emergency, the library staff cannot take legal responsibility, except to contact the proper authorities. To protect children and others while using the library, the library adopts the guidelines listed below.

--It is the responsibility of a child's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver to supervise the activities and behavior of the child while the child is in the library building or on the library premises. Caregivers must be able to effectively supervise children, must not leave children unattended, and must be able to provide contact information for the child's parent or guardian. The library staff reserves the right to determine whether or not a caregiver is able to supervise children in the library.

--Parents or caregivers of preschool children must stay in the library building while the child is in the library.

--Older children may use the library unattended provided they are able to maintain proper library behavior. Some behaviors and instances that may be cause for staff to contact the parent/guardian or other proper authorities include, but are not limited to, fighting, vandalism, rough play, excessive noise, running, or misuse and/or disordering of library materials.

--Library staff may use their best judgment if they witness a child being improperly supervised and putting themselves or anyone else in an unsafe situation.

--The library reserves the right to contact parents, guardians, or the proper authorities if minors require supervision, are left unattended during the day, or are unchaperoned at library closing time.

--At closing, if a child who is fifteen-years-old or younger is left unattended in the library and a guardian cannot be contacted or does not arrive within fifteen minutes, law enforcement officials will be contacted and a note will be left on the door of the library for the guardian. A staff member will wait with the child until proper authorities arrive.

--If a child becomes ill or injured and a guardian cannot be contacted, proper authorities will be contacted.

--This information is posted in the library building: "At library closing time, a parent or guardian whose minor children have not been picked up will be telephoned. If there is no response to the call, the police will be contacted."

Use of the Children's Area: Because young children are provided a separate area of the library to use, we prefer that this section be for children and their caregivers.

--There are valid reasons for adults to use the children's area of the library, including selection of books, movies, and other materials. Whether the adult has a child with them or not, appropriate use of the children's section is expected. The use of tables for discussion, reading, or Wi-Fi access is also acceptable.

--Behavior that constitutes, or appears to constitute, lurking, stalking, staring, harassing, or intimidating of youth will not be tolerated. The staff will request the individual leave the children's area, or the library property. Behavior that demonstrates, or appears to demonstrate, enticement, luring, or other predatory acts will not be tolerated in any way.

--The staff will require the person to leave the property, and law enforcement may be called to ensure this occurs. Staff judgment will be the determining factor in this matter.