

Implementation of “Reserved Access for Minors Policy”

“PCCLD reserves the right to limit access to library spaces and programs that are designed to meet the unique needs of minors.”

Research on Similar Library Policies

88 % of our peer libraries - 21 of 24 nationwide - who have a similar policy or procedure in place.

Arapahoe

“ALD libraries may restrict use of computers based on age in areas designated for teens and children, dependant on size and layout of the library facility. Restrictions may be posted on these computers and be in effect during all hours of library operation, or may be imposed on occasional bases.”

<https://arapahoelibraries.org/library-policies/acceptable-use-of-library-technology-and-services/>

Boulder

Teen spaces are reserved for teens during specific hours.

<https://boulderlibrary.org/youth/teen-spaces/>

Denver

"The Children's area of the Library is specifically designed to serve the needs of young customers. Adults in that area not using Children's materials or not using the area for the purpose intended will be asked to use other areas of the Library. Staff members will place the safety of children first. Adults with children in their charge are the only adults allowed to use the restrooms located in Children's areas." <https://www.denverlibrary.org/content/child-safety-policy>

Jefferson County

"Staff may restrict adult use of children's areas."

<https://jeffcolibrary.org/policies/code-of-conduct/>

Pikes Peak

"The children's areas of PPLD facilities are designed for the use of children, their families and caregivers. Use of the children's areas by adults who are not parents, guardians, teachers, caregivers or people researching children's literature may be restricted to ensure that children and their families have adequate access to the resources provided specifically for them."

<https://ppld.org/safe-child-guidelines>

Pikes Peak - Teen

"Teen spaces are intended exclusively for teen patrons between 12 and 18 years old. Adults and children are welcome to browse and check out materials from the teen collection. The use of other resources, such as, games, computers, televisions and other electronic equipment within the spaces, are exclusively for the use of teen patrons. Once materials are selected, patrons younger than 12 and older than 18 should use the main areas of the libraries. Parents or caregivers may be in teen spaces with their teens if they are actively assisting with material selection, homework or other one-on-one help."

<https://ppld.org/teen-spaces-policy>

Poudre River

“Library staff and security personnel may ask adults using spaces intended for youth to vacate as needed.”

<https://www.poudrelibraries.org/policy/pdf/3.6.pdf>

A perspective from Library Security Managers

Security managers from Colorado libraries who have policies in place to reserve space for youth have reported an overall acceptance of the policies by patrons. None have reported complaints filed against them.

Examples of Preventable Incidents

- 2/21 - A parent and his two-year-old son saw a man watching pornography on a computer in full public view.
- 4/25 - An adult patron complained that the young teen sitting next to him was “pissing him off” and asked the boy if he wanted to “go outside and fight him.”
- 8/6 - An adult man asked a young patron his age, told the boy his “balls hadn’t dropped yet,” said “you’re lucky I can’t beat your ass” and mentioned “snatching” him.

Incident - 10/27

An adult male patron who had been observed by staff on two earlier occasions using the computers in Youth Services lured a young boy away from his father and attempted to touch him inappropriately. This man was arrested on Library premises for second-degree kidnapping.

Are we limiting adult access to the Library?

No, we uphold free and open access to information.

All patrons can access the full library collection at any time during open hours. This will not change.

What will change in YS at Rawlings and PW Libraries is that adults who are not using the YS space as intended will be directed to other spaces and/or resources. We also reserve the right to reserve access at other PCCLD libraries or off-site locations for programs intended for minors.

Examples of Occurrences:

- Adults unaccompanied by children using YS computers would be asked to use the public access computers in RRA (exceptions made for mentally delayed adults). Adults have access to 47 computers on the second floor alone, while the Youth Services area has only 16 computers

Examples of Occurrences:

- Adults unaccompanied by children who are hanging out in YS - NOT searching for or reading youth materials - would be directed to other available seating. There are 67 seating areas available to adults in the Rawlings Library.

Examples of Occurrences:

- Adults unaccompanied by children attending Storytime would be redirected to other activities - with reasonable exceptions made for library students, educators, volunteer storytellers seeking training, and developmentally delayed adults.

What is acceptable use of Youth Services areas?

All adults are welcome to:

- Browse for youth materials.
- Read or study youth materials.
- Make copies of youth materials using the YS copier.

We welcome teachers, home-schoolers, artists and all other adults in the community to use YS.

Implementation is based on an objective standard - use of the space - not staff's subjective impression of the patron.

In Practice- The Five-Step Approach

1. Observe

Staff will be aware, to the best of their ability, of everyone entering the space.

2. Greet

Staff will approach with a cheerful greeting and an offer to help the patron.

3. Encourage

Staff will politely direct adults who aren't using the space for the purpose intended to other areas of the library better suited to their use. Staff will phrase this positively:

"Could I suggest you check out some of our lovely reading areas upstairs?"

"Can I help you get setup with a laptop and study room?"

4. Explain

Staff will explain the rationale behind their request.

"We're making an effort to keep this area a kid-friendly, safe-zone. This means the space is reserved for children, adult caregivers and anyone seeking access to children's materials. Thank you for your help."

5. Monitor/Redirect

If the patron becomes hostile or displays unwanted behavior, staff will attempt to de-escalate the situation and handle it in accordance with Level One of the Offense Consequences Chart of the Customer Service policies.

Implementation Process

- Gain Board Approval & Update the policy
 - Public Service Managers and Staff Support
 - Legal Review by Nick Gradisar
- Announce the Change to Staff
 - Standard Process for Updated Policies
 - Present at Department Meetings
- Provide Staff Training
 - Staff Development Day or at Department Meetings, PSM Meeting
- Create Friendly Signage for YS at Rawlings and PW
- Implement the change