

Staff Children in the Workplace: Library Policies

These study results were collected by Nancy K. Buchanan, Administrator, Adams County Library System who wrote to the Libnet listserv in August 2003 with the question:

“Anyone have a policy - written or unwritten - re: staff children at work? If so, I would appreciate a copy or a brief summary.”

Library	Policy
Otero Junior College	Our unwritten policy is: if the staff person's child is able to entertain himself w/minimal interruption to the employee, it is fine. Otherwise, there is a drop-in daycare available for a daily/hourly fee.
Estes Park Public Library	We have one employee who brings in her 7 year-old daughter a few times a year for part of a day. Because this is such a rare occurrence, we actually welcome it. I would feel different if it happened regularly.
Jefferson County Public Library	<p>This was written in 1995 and has not been updated since but we still use it.</p> <p>LIB 10.16 Friends and Family in the Work Place</p> <p>It is not appropriate to bring children to work as an alternative to child care. Reasonable visits from family and friends are acceptable as long as they do not interfere with the work of the employee or co-workers</p>
Elbert County Library District	"Children of library staff are encouraged to use the library as patrons. It is inappropriate for any staff member to use library facilities as an alternative to regular childcare. Infrequent emergency situations, such as the sickness of a babysitter, or for short periods when a child may stop to visit or wait for transportation, are acceptable. During these periods, it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the child's behavior is appropriate when in the library and that the child is not disruptive to patrons and other staff members."
Georgetown Public Library	<p>We have an unwritten policy allowing staff to have their kids at the library.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -kids have an area to put their stuff & must confine their mess to that area -kids must be mature enough to not cry or throw fits (While this isn't entirely possible with the younger ones, an option must be available, such as a return to daycare or a babysitter coming) -If child gets sick, employee must take sick leave to take the child home -- sick child cannot stay in the library -kids have to stay out of staff only areas, except for the kitchen area -no using the library phones <p>We figure that at least the kids whose parents are on staff have more supervision than do those whose parents just drop them off unsupervised. We had a few rocky weeks at first, but once the kids and staff were trained there have been relatively few problems.</p> <p>Course, we have a staff of three, so it is easier to manage than if we had 20!</p>

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Unidentified Library	<p>Unwritten (and understood by those it affected): independent and self-directed, just like other children in the library. Of course they can talk with their parents, in the way that they can call them at work. It's only mattered to a couple of staff over the years, and they have understood perfectly well and took care that their children understood, too.</p> <p>Because the staff affected made it work, it was easy, and it was a benefit to the library, I think, to prove the family-friendliness of the place.</p>
Security Public Library	<p>STAFF CHILDREN IN LIBRARY WORK AREAS</p> <p>Employees are not to bring children with them to work or leave them unsupervised on library premises while they work.</p> <p>An employee who brings a child to work will be asked to leave the premises, and will be required to take vacation leave.</p> <p>Managers are encouraged to explore flexible scheduling arrangements with employees to help them manage their childcare responsibilities. It might be possible for an employee to work a reduced schedule for a period of time if that makes their childcare situation more workable and the department can still manage its workload. Most employees, if given sufficient scheduling flexibility, will be able to manage both work and childcare responsibilities.</p>
Grand County Library District	<p>This is in our Personnel Policy, under Working Conditions, and was developed after several difficult and complicated situations involving children being brought to work by staff.</p> <p>Parenting Staff members may request permission from the Director to have their child(ren) in the library with them on an emergency basis only. It is assumed that these situations will be relatively rare, and that they will impede work as little as possible.</p>