

Policies Regarding Children

Note: In compliance with [Mercer University's COVID-19 Policies](#): "In order to ensure the safety of those employees who are working on campus on a part-time or full-time basis, employees and students must not bring guests or children to campus during this time."

Mercer University Libraries offers an adult, unsupervised environment for the purpose of academic research and support of the University's curriculum. **The Libraries' collections and services are not designed to meet the needs of younger students or children.** Within the libraries, there are areas that are potentially hazardous. With particular regard to the safety of children in the library and potential impact of their presence on other library users, the following policy applies:

Children Under 16 Years of Age

A child under 16 years of age must be accompanied and supervised by a parent or guardian. Unaccompanied children will be reported to the Mercer Police. Exceptions will be made for children participating in school or university-sponsored programs and activities, provided their behavior and conduct is appropriate and non-disruptive.

The Libraries do not assume responsibility for the safety of children left unattended. Parents or guardians are ultimately responsible for the safety and activities of children. Parents or guardians may not bring children to the libraries and then leave them unattended in the building. Parents or guardians must be in the same immediate area as their children and monitor their behavior at all times. The Library provides unfiltered access to computer resources. As with other library materials, children's access to the Internet and other electronic networks is the responsibility of parents or guardians.

Parents or guardians are responsible for any act of vandalism (cutting, tearing, defacing, or destroying books, periodicals, equipment, furniture, or facility) committed by their child. If a child is disturbing other library patrons, the parent or guardian should remove the child from the library until the child can re-enter without causing a disturbance.

Library staff members cannot assist in supervising the actions of children in Mercer University Libraries. If a child is observed unaccompanied or is in violation of any library policy, staff will make a reasonable attempt to inform the parent or guardian. **If a child under 16 is left unaccompanied in the libraries, staff will immediately notify Mercer University Police.**

Non-Student Ages 16 and Older

Teenagers 16 and older may use Tarver Library or Swilley Library unattended. Parents or guardians, however, are still responsible for the actions and safety of their teenagers. Library staff members are not responsible for supervising teenagers in the library. As with other library users, teenagers must adhere to library policies as stated. Infractions may result in a request to leave the library. **If a teenager is left in the library at closing time or in the event of an emergency situation, library staff members will immediately notify Mercer University Police.**