On Their Own at York Public Library

York Public Library knows how exciting it is to walk to the library after school. *When your child has your permission to be out and about on their own in public spaces, that freedom comes with new responsibilities as a step in their journey towards adulthood. The Library is a safe and welcoming place to socialize, access resources and practice independence skills. Youth* ***ages 10 - 17*** *may visit York Public Library without an adult present.*

Children develop at different rates, and not everyone will have the maturity to be on their own at the same time. You know your child best! Only you can decide if your child is ready.

What is at the Library for Preteens and Teens?

Preteen and Teen Spaces

To better meet the needs of preteens and teens in the library, we have established a new designated preteen space for students in grades 4-6, while adjusting the YA Room for grades 7-12. This means that 5th and 6th graders will be directed to the preteen section, allowing the YA spaces to be utilized by their older peers.

These spaces have been designated exclusively for our preteen and teen audiences to provide them with an environment that supports their unique developmental requirements, while also minimizing any disruptions from adults or younger children. Similarly, we expect preteens and teens to be considerate of the needs of others while utilizing the library spaces.

Internet Access

WiFi is accessible at all times at the library, and students may request a public computer at the main circulation desk on the top floor of the library. The Library complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which provides limited, but not comprehensive filtering. The Library encourages parents to work with and supervise their children's online activity. Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing supervision of children as they explore the internet.

Activities

Our after-school schedule includes a variety of structured and unstructured activities for all ages. Individuals within the library are expected to either participate in these activities or utilize the library in accordance with the Library Patron Conduct Policy.

Study Rooms

Students may request to use a study room, when they are available, at the main circulation desk upstairs. Up to 4 people may use a study room at a time.

Preteen Space





Young Adult Space





FAQs for Library Success!

How old does my child need to be to visit York Public Library without an adult?
Youth ages **10 - 17** may visit York Public Library without an adult present. Please familiarize yourself with our Unattended Child Policy for more information.

Who supervises my child when they are at the Library?
The Library is a public building and should not be considered an afterschool care program. While there is no direct supervision, there are librarians staffing both floors of the Library to keep an eye on things. Librarians enforce the Library Patron Conduct Policy to keep the environment safe. With that said, librarians can't control the behavior of the general public, we can only respond to any inappropriate behaviors that might occur. If something happens at the Library that is against our policies, the librarians will follow the appropriate protocols to enforce the Conduct Policy.

Do librarians monitor if my child leaves the Library?
No. The Library is a public space. Patrons are free to come and go as they choose. Expectations for where in town your child is or is not allowed to go is between you and your child. Furthermore, parents must understand that librarians do not staff areas outside of the Library. We are best able to serve patrons within the walls of the Library.

What if my child needs help or has an issue with another person at the Library?
If your child needs assistance, is uncomfortable, or observes behavior from a patron of ANY age that is not Library appropriate, they should immediately speak with a librarian for help.

What are the Library rules?
In a nutshell, be respectful of the space, staff, and other library users. Before your child visits on their own you should familiarize yourselves with the Library Patron Conduct Policy.

What happens if my child breaks the Library rules?
Patrons of any age who refuse or are unable to abide by the expectations outlined in the Library Patron Conduct Policy are subject to disciplinary action by Library staff. If your child refuses or is unable to correct their behavior, they may be asked to leave the Library for a period of time. Patrons who are asked to leave must also leave the Library property. Your child is learning how to be responsible for themselves and how to appropriately behave in a shared space. Everyone makes mistakes! We strongly encourage you to develop a backup plan with your child in the event they are asked to leave the Library before you plan to pick them up. Engaging in this conversation with your child both enforces the importance of following Library rules and creates a safety net for your child if necessary.

What happens if the Library closes early due to unforeseen circumstances?
Snow happens! This is another reason to have a backup plan in place with your child in the event their plan to go to the Library changes before you can pick them up. We encourage you to ensure your child has some way to get in touch with someone who can help them.