

SAFE CHILD POLICY

Policy Statement: The Library Board and Staff are concerned for the safety and welfare of children who use the library unattended by a parent or guardian. Parents and/or guardians are responsible for their children's behavior while in the library.

Children under the age of nine attending a library program must be brought into the building by a parent or responsible child care provider who must remain in the building until the conclusion of the program when they again resume supervision of their charge. Children under the age of four must be attended at all times unless attending a library program.

It is not the library's intent to seek out unattended children but rather to have a reasoned response prepared as situations occur.

Children Under Age Nine Left Unattended:

1. Children left unattended are often frightened and crying and should be comforted by the staff.
2. If it is determined that a child is lost or left unattended, a staff member should bring the child to the person on duty at the public services desk/or to the Youth Services Librarian.
3. The public service desk staff person or the Youth Services Librarian should try to identify and locate the parents or responsible adults:
 - a. Walk around the library with the child looking for the parent.
 - b. When the parent is located explain the library policy on unattended children. If the parent or childcare provider will not comply, they and their child will be asked to leave the building.
 - c. If the parent is not found in the building, a staff member should stay with the child until the parent can be located, through searching the library's records, phone book, city directory, etc. They will be informed of the library's policy and asked to either join the child at the library or to pick up the child immediately. If they are unable to come immediately, they will be told the child may stay until they arrive this time but that the police will be called upon to take responsibility for the child at the next occurrence.
 - d. If the parents have not been located within an hour, or if the library is closing, the public service desk staff or the Youth Services Librarian shall call the police who will take charge of the child.
 - e. Under no circumstances shall a staff member take the child out of the building.

Children Any Age Left Unattended At Closing:

1. If the parent is not found in the building, a staff member should stay with the child attempting to locate the parent through searching the library's records, phone book, city directory, etc. If the parent arrives within 15 minutes of closing, they will be informed of the library's policy and asked that the child be picked up in a more timely manner in the future.
2. If the parent cannot be located within 15 minutes after the library closes the police will be contacted to take charge of the child until the parents are found. Under no circumstances shall a library staff member take the child out of the building.

Reviewed & Approved 3/2008