

## **Unattended Children**

The purpose of this policy is to enable library staff to handle unattended children whose parent or adult guardian is not in the building with them. This policy also focuses on the library's concern with the safety and protection of young patrons.

Parents may not leave children under age ten alone in the library as the library is a public place and staff cannot be responsible for those unattended children. In addition, unless participating in a program for children only, any child that is age seven and under must be within visual and physical contact of a parent or adult guardian age 16 or above at all times while using the library.

For those children ten and older, parents or care givers are still responsible and liable for their children's behavior in the library including any disruptive or unruly behavior; damage to materials, equipment, and furnishings; or injury to themselves or others. If an unattended child acts in a manner not in compliance with the library's code of conduct, staff members will take appropriate actions that may include contacting the police.

### Unattended Children, Under Ten Years

Official library hours are widely publicized in the City's quarterly magazine, city calendar, and postings in the building. Parents, not library staff, are ultimately responsible for the supervision and transportation of their children.

Fifteen minutes before closing, staff members will remind young patrons of closing time, and allow children to call for transportation or to locate family members using the library telephone. At closing, if a child (or children) remains, two staff members, including the librarian in charge of the building, must remain after closing time to assist the young patron. The two staff members should secure the library building front entrance and accompany the child to the police building while maintaining a calm attitude, so as not to alarm the child. The Operations Officer will handle the situation from that time on.

### Unattended Children during Regular Library Hours

Any children under ten left at the library on a weekly basis for two hours or more should be considered abandoned, intentionally and purposely left for supervision by library staff. Care should be taken to document dates and times. This record should be submitted to Administration in a timely manner, in order for further action to be taken.

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