Unattended Children

Reference: Adopted by the Library Board: January 29, 2019
Reviewed: July 28, 2026

Children age 8 or under must be accompanied in the library. (Accompanied is defined as "within sight".) It is strongly recommended that all children are accompanied by someone who can take responsibility should an emergency occur.

If a child in this age group violates the Library Code of Conduct, the child and the parent/caregiver will be informed of the rules. If inappropriate behavior continues, the family may be asked to leave the library.

If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library and inform him/her of the rules. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, the police will be called for assistance to locate the child's parent/caregiver.

Children age 9 and older may use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions and the well-being of their child or children. Children using inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library. Responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned chaperone. Though staff will always respond with care and concern, they cannot assume responsibility for children's safety and comfort when they are unattended. Staff may need to contact authorities such as the police either to assist with the enforcement of discipline in the library or to ensure the safety of an unattended child.

Parents should not use the Library as an alternative to daycare. For safety's sake, parents should make sure that their children are sufficiently mature before allowing them to visit the Library by themselves. Parents should also realize that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their children's behavior.

The Library is not responsible for the care and supervision of unaccompanied children prior to opening or after closing. The Library is also not responsible for children outside the building who await transportation or who are socializing. Adults responsible for unattended school-age children using the Library should be aware of the Library's hours and make arrangements to meet the children on time.

This is a particular concern in inclement weather and after dark. All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency. When the safety of an unattended child is in doubt, or the parent or responsible caregiver cannot be located, or if the Library is closing, library staff is authorized to call the police.

Two adult staff members must stay with the child until the police or caregivers arrive.

Teenagers are treated as adult users. However, they are still legally the responsibility of their parents and should have an emergency contact available.