

	UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICIES	Approved Motion: 2018-74
		Review Date: Nov. 15, 2018

Unattended Children in the Library

Library staff members **are not** responsible for the welfare, behaviour and safety of patrons, including children. If an accident occurs and a child is hurt while at the library, parents will not hold the library or its staff responsible.

Children 9 years and under **must** have a parent or caregiver (*at least 12 years of age*) with them when they visit the library.

Infants and toddlers (*children 2 years of age and under*) must always have a parent or caregiver with them in close proximity, when visiting the library. This includes participation in library story times for infants.

Preschool children (*children 3 - 6 years of age*) must have a parent or caregiver with them at all times when visiting the library. If they are attending library story time, then the parent or caregiver must remain in the building.

Children ages 7 – 9 must have a parent or caregiver who remains in the building while they are visiting the library. Children who are attending library programs may attend without a parent at the parent or caregiver's discretion; however, if the library staff feel that the child(ren) cannot be left alone, the parent or caregiver will be asked to remain in the building. When children are attending a library program, parents must leave emergency information with the staff member in charge and pick up their child(ren) at the designated time.

If a staff member observes a child unattended in the library they will:

1. Approach the child and ask their name, age, phone number, and whether or not a parent or caregiver has accompanied them to the library.
2. If they are unsupervised, the staff member will try to contact the parent or caregiver, using all phone numbers provided at the time of membership registration.
 - a. If the parent is located, the policy will be explained.
 - b. If the parent is not located, the staff member will make reasonable attempts, and document same, to contact the child's parents or caregiver.
 - c. If the parent or caregiver is contacted within 1 hour, the staff member will explain the policy and ask them to pick up their child(ren).
 - d. If the parent or caregiver is not located within 1 hour, the police or the Children's Aid Society will be called during office hours, at staff discretion. A staff member will remain with the child until the proper authorities arrive.
 - e. In the event that staff must take any steps from under section 2b. – 2d., staff will complete an Incident Report and give to CEO.

Consequences

1. In the event that staff must take any steps from under section 2b. – 2d., the following procedures will apply:
 - a. Upon the occurrence of the first incident, the parent or caregiver will be provided with a copy of this policy.
 - b. Following the second incident, the child's library privileges will be revoked for 30 days.
 - c. Following the third incident, the child's library privileges will be revoked for 180 days.