

SUBJECT: UNATTENDED CHILDREN**I. PURPOSE**

- A. To insure the safety and well being of children using the Library.

II. SCOPE

- A. Children under the age of 14 using the Library.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT

- A. The Naperville Public Library welcomes and encourages the use of its services and facilities by children. Staff members are committed to helping children find materials which meet their needs, providing a welcoming environment and planning and presenting programs that enrich, inform and entertain. However, library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide childcare.
- B. Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is left unattended even for brief periods of time. Staff members cannot know or be responsible if children are leaving the building with responsible caregivers or with strangers. When a child is left at the library without a parent or caregiver, the child's boredom, fatigue or fear may lead to behavior that disrupts the services the library staff provides for them and for others. The Library encourages parents and caregivers to consider the safety and well being of their children, as in any other public place, and the needs of other library users of all ages.

IV. PROVISIONS

- A. Parents are responsible for their children in the library, whether or not the parent is present.
- B. Children under age 8 must be under the direct supervision of a parent, another responsible adult, or caregiver (age 14 or older) at all times in the library.
- C. Disruptive children under age 8 who are unattended will be handled according to the unattended children procedures. Disruptive children 8 years old and older who are unattended will be handled according to Policy No. 310 – General Rules of Conduct, and may be asked to leave the building or police may be called and asked to take responsibility for the unattended child.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Children Found Unattended during the Library's Regular Hours of Service.
1. An unattended child found frightened or crying or any unattended child under age 8 in the building should be approached and reassured by a staff member.
 2. If the child's caregiver cannot be found in the immediate area, the child should be taken to the nearest public service or information desk. At least one other staff member should be informed that an unattended child is being assisted. The Person-In-Charge may be called to assist.

3. Staff at the appropriate location should ask the child her/his name and that of her/his parent or caregiver. Page the parent or caregiver.
 - a. If the parent or caregiver is in the building staff will:
 - Upon reuniting the child with the parent or caregiver, express the library's concern for the welfare of children and explain the library's policy. Written information regarding the policy may also be given to the parent or caregiver.
 - b. If the parent/caregiver is not in the building staff will:
 - Contact the person-in-charge of the building.
 - With the child's help, obtain the parent's name and telephone number.
 - Stay with the child until the parent can be located.
 - Call the parent to inform her/him of the Library's policy and request that the parent pick up the child.
 - Call the police and ask that they assume responsibility for the child if the parent cannot be located or does not respond to the phone request within 30 minutes.
 - c. If staff cannot determine whether or not the parent or caregiver is in the building, and the parent or caregiver cannot be contacted by phone, staff will call the police after 15 minutes and ask that they assume responsibility for the child.
- B. Children Under the Age of 14 Found Unattended at Closing
1. If the parent cannot be located within the building staff will:
 - Contact the person-in-charge of the building.
 - With the child's help, obtain the parent's name and telephone number.
 - Call the parent to inform her/him of the Library's policy and request that the parent pick up the child.
 - Call the police 15 minutes after closing and ask that they assume responsibility for any child who has not been picked up by a parent.
 - Wait with the child inside the library building until the parent or police arrive. The person-in-charge and the building monitor shall be responsible for waiting with the child.
 - Explain the Library's policy and give a copy of the "Rules of Conduct" brochure to the parent when the child is picked up.
 - Under no circumstances take a child out of the library building, take a child home, or stay alone with a child.