

**Effective Date:** April 2004

### **Unattended Child Policy**

The Seymour Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment that encourages all persons to visit the Library, use its collections and services, and attend programs. Library staff are available to assist and support children with their use of resources.

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children while they are in the Library. The Library staff cannot, nor is it their responsibility, to serve as baby-sitters, teachers, or disciplinarians.

Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied and directly supervised at all times by a parent or other responsible caregiver.

Children from the age of 10 to 18 may use the Library without being accompanied by an adult, subject to other Library rules and policies concerning behavior, conduct, and demeanor.

Should the Library provide a children's program, the program outline shall designate whether the child may attend without parental supervision. When supervision for such program is not required and the parent or caregiver intends to be absent, they must inform the Library as to his or her whereabouts and, if possible, a phone number where they may be contacted.

When the safety of an unattended child is in doubt, or if the Library is closing, Library staff is authorized to call the authorities and stay with the child until the authorities arrive.

Violations of this policy are grounds for suspension of Library privileges. Whenever advisable, the Library will notify the parent of incidents involving an unattended child. [Form follows.]

### Unattended Child Procedure

The procedures outlined below serve as guidelines. Each situation is unique, so use your best judgment.

- **During Library hours, unattended child under 10:**
  - Attempt to locate child's parent or caretaker in the Library.
  - If unable to locate the parent or caretaker in Library, ask the child to call their parents or caretaker.
  - When a parent or caretaker has been contacted or arrives, notify them of the Library's policy.
  - If a parent or caretaker cannot be contacted, **call the police at 911.**
  - If the police have been called, fill out an Incident Report form and briefly inform other staff about the situation.
  
- **At closing, unattended child under 18 at closing:**
  - 15 minutes before closing, look for unattended children.
  - Inform any unattended children of the Library's closing time and ask if they need to use the phone to call for a ride. If necessary, they will be allowed to use the public desk phone.
  - Before telephoning the police, get as much information as possible from the child, including their name, age, phone number and parent's name.
  - Two (2) staff members shall remain at the Library until the authorities, a parent, or caretaker has arrived.
  - If a child is visibly upset or due to cold weather, two (2) staff members shall remain with the child in the foyer until the authorities, a parent, or caretaker has arrived.
  - Under no circumstances will a staff member stay alone with a child or take a child from the premises.
  - If the parent(s) or guardian(s) are not available or there is an unreasonable wait time (more than 15 minutes after closing), **call the police at 911.**
  - If the police have been called, fill out an Incident Report form and briefly inform other staff about the situation.

**Adopted:** April 2004

**Revised:** January 2017

**Reviewed:**