

Unattended school age children are free to utilize the library's resources, as long as needed, provided that they demonstrate purposeful intent to use library resources, and their behavior is not disruptive to other patrons or staff members. If students are in the library while school is in session, unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, they will be asked to return to school or the school will be called. An unattended child, is any young person ten (10) years of age or younger using the library unaccompanied by a responsible adult. A vulnerable child is any unattended child over the age of ten (10) whose safety or well-being would be endangered if he or she were sent out of the building.

A parent/caregiver who, in the opinion of library staff, does not adequately or effectively supervise the behavior of children in his or her charge, will be made aware of the problem as quickly and as discreetly as possible. If a problem persists after the caregiver has been made aware of it and given a reasonable opportunity to correct it, the caregiver and child will be asked to leave the library.

Additionally, while a parent/caregiver is required to provide supervision for the children in his or her charge, such supervision is expected to be reasonable and non-abusive. If the parent/caregiver does not stop abusive behavior, the caregiver and child may be asked to leave the library. In cases of serious or chronic violations, library staff will notify local law enforcement personnel or the Illinois Department of Human Services or the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, as appropriate.

If a child is found unattended or engages in inappropriate behavior, library staff will locate the parent/caregiver in the library and inform him or her of the rules. If the child again is found unattended or if inappropriate behavior continues, the family may be asked to leave the library.

If a child is alone in the library building at closing time and appears to be vulnerable:

1. Library staff will attempt to call a parent/caregiver. If staff cannot reach a parent or guardian in the first attempt, the Library staff will call local law enforcement personnel and DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services).
2. Library staff will contact local law enforcement personnel and DCFS if staff is able to reach a parent/caregiver but the parent/caregiver is unable to pick up the child within 30 minutes.
3. Library staff will contact local law enforcement personnel and DCFS if the parent/caregiver first states that he or she can pick up the child within 30 minutes but does not arrive at the library by that time.
4. The Librarian on duty and one other staff member will remain with the child inside the library until a parent, guardian or local law enforcement personnel arrives.

When local law enforcement has been called to pick up a child, library staff will leave a note on the door notifying the parent/caregiver.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES will library staff transport or take the child away from the library building.

In any situation involving youth safety and specifically whenever parent/caregivers or law enforcement personnel are contacted, staff will complete an Incident Report.²²

²² December 15, 2011