

## Unattended Children

The North Webster Community Public Library is a public place and it cannot be responsible for any consequences of caregivers forfeiting their responsibilities. Children and their safety are of great concern to us. We encourage families and youth to use the library, and while doing so, affirm the parents' and /or caregiver's responsibility for their child's safety. The following policy was developed to maintain a safe environment for our children.

### DEFINITION

An unattended child is a child of any age who is apparently unaccompanied by a parent or caregiver. Children who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves may not be left alone in the library at any time and must have adequate supervision from a caregiver.

The library acknowledges that the maturity of children at different ages varies. These rules are subject to the discretion of library staff who may apply them to children other than the ages stated below, if they deem it necessary.

- Children through the age of six (6) years must have a parent or responsible caregiver in the immediate vicinity (within sight or conversation distance) unless the children are participating in a drop-off library program.
- Children ages seven to nine (7-9) years must have a parent or responsible caregiver in the building unless the children are participating in a drop-off library program.
- Minors ten (10) and over may use the library unattended for a period of time appropriate to their age and maturity.
- When a child participates in a drop-off program, the parent or caregiver must leave a phone number where they can be reached for the duration of the program. Children must be picked up promptly at the end of the program.
- All children should carry with them the phone number of a parent or responsible caregiver who is to be contacted in case of emergency.

When a child participates in a drop-off program, the parent or caregiver must sign the child in and out of the program. If arrangements have been made for another person to pick up the child, it should be stated on the sign-in sheet. Children must be picked up promptly at the end of the program.

In all situations, the parent or caregiver who have transported minor children onto the library premises or who have otherwise directed or allowed minor children onto the library premises shall be responsible for the care and safety of those children at all times that the children are in the library.

If children are not picked up by the time the library closes, parents or caregivers will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. Library staff persons will wait with a child for 15 minutes, at which point, the North Webster police department will be contacted.

Those responsible for children should know:

If a child is disruptive, ill, or injured:

- Staff will ask the parent or caregiver, if in the building, to properly supervise their child.
- Staff will phone the parent or caregiver, if absent from the building, to pick up their child from the library.

- If the parent or caregiver is not located, a staff member may contact the North Webster Police Department to report cases of unattended children.

The Board's policy affirms that the library staff does not take the place of the parent, act as caregiver or baby-sitter, nor assume responsibility for the unattended children. In the event that this policy is violated, we regret that we may have to notify the North Webster Police Department.

Come in and share the library with your child. Your consideration for other library users and thought for your child's safety will help us do our job better for you and the community.

Adopted on 12/16/2009