

Unattended Children Policy

Parents are responsible for the conduct of their minor children (under 18) in the library or on library grounds, regardless of whether or not they accompany the children.

Children are subject to the same rules of behavior as adults who come in the library building.

The Vermillion County Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use our materials and services. The library is a doorway through which lifelong learning takes place. The library is, however, a public building. As such, anyone can enter and leave without being noticed by library staff. A young child left alone in the building could possibly be persuaded to leave with a stranger. He or she could also become ill or disoriented while left unattended. The library staff cannot monitor the behavior, safety or whereabouts of people using the library and cannot provide daycare for unattended children. The library staff cannot assume responsibility for minors under 18, nor can the staff assume responsibility for children left at the library at closing time. If a child under 18 is not able to leave the library without an adult, then he/she should not be in the library without an adult. This is particularly true of inclement weather and after dark. All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.

POLICY

1. Parents/caregivers may not leave children six (6) and under unattended in the library at any time.
2. Children six (6) and under must be accompanied by someone over 15 years old at all times.
3. The library in no way assumes responsibility for children of any age left unattended in the building.
4. Parents/caregivers are responsible for their child's behavior while in the library and for ensuring that their children obey library rule and regulations.
5. Children are expected to remain the programming area during children's programs. If parents believe their child is unable to be attentive for the entire time, they must monitor their child personally. The library staff is not responsible for children who leave the area.
6. Parents/caregivers are responsible for making specific arrangements for the child to get home, and make the child aware of those arrangements.
7. Under no circumstances will a staff member give a child a ride home or take the child outside the building.
8. Parents who continue to disregard library policies may be reported to the appropriate social service agency and/or lose all library privileges.
9. Under the following circumstances, the child will be placed in the care of law enforcement. The library staff respects the privacy of all library patrons and will intervene only when the safety and well-being of the child are threatened.
 - a. If a child six (6) or under is found unattended, the parent or caregiver cannot be located, and the parent/caregiver does not return within ½ hour.
 - b. If a child becomes extremely ill or distraught, and the parent/caregiver cannot be located.
 - c. If a child becomes extremely disruptive, endangers other children, and does not respond to verbal warnings issued by the library staff, and the parent/caregiver cannot be located.
 - d. If a child is vulnerable because of circumstances such as weather conditions, inadequate meal arrangements, or long hours out of contact with their parent/caregiver.

**Once the child has been placed in the care of law enforcement personnel, the library staff will inform all other library employees working that day, and continue their attempts to locate the parent/caregiver.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

- *Loud, abusive, aggressive, harassing or obscene language or behavior.*

- *Defacing or damaging library materials, furniture, or other property.*
- *Using or distributing illegal drugs.*
- *Circumventing or attempting to circumvent the library security system.*
- *Tampering with, altering, editing, or damaging computer hardware or software.*
- *Using roller blades, roller skates, skate boards, or other sports equipment in the library or on library property.*
- *Entering unauthorized workspaces or office areas.*
- *Playing audio equipment so that others can hear it.*
- *Running through the aisles or blocking the aisles so that access to the library materials and services are prevented.*
- *Eating, drinking, or smoking in the building.*