

Deborah Rawson Memorial Library
Unattended Child and Conduct Policy & Procedure

The Deborah Rawson Memorial Library welcomes children and youth of all ages to enjoy and utilize the many resources available at the library. Books for all reading levels and interests, Internet access, pre-school storytimes, and after school programs are available to children and youth.

While the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library strives to be a safe and pleasant environment for all patrons, it is not a child care facility. The library staff cannot assume responsibility for the safety, well-being, and supervision of unattended children. **Parents and caregivers are responsible for the safety, well-being, and supervision of their children at all times.**

For the protection and well-being of all library patrons, staff will adhere to the following regulations:

1. Children under the age of **8** must be accompanied and supervised by an adult, age 18 or older.
2. Children eight and older may use the library unattended, subject to rules concerning behavior and conduct.

a. Appropriate activities/behavior include:

- **reading**
- **doing homework**
- **writing reports**
- **researching**
- **browsing for books**
- **asking library staff for assistance**
- **quiet talking and quiet games**

b. Inappropriate activities/behavior include:

- **bringing food and drink into the library**
- **behavior that affects the enjoyment & use of the library by other patrons**
- **running**
- **throwing**
- **loud talking**
- **abusive language**
- **fighting**
- **any acts of vandalism will not be tolerated**

3. The Deborah Rawson Memorial Library assumes no responsibility for children of any age left unattended at the library.
4. Parents or guardians assume all liability for damage done by their children to the library facility and/or contents of the facility.

PROCEDURE

1. Unattended Children Under the Age of 8

- a. Assign the child to a staff member while other staff attempt to locate the parent/caregiver.
- b. Make all attempts to locate the parent/caregiver by searching the premises and making telephone calls. If the parent/caregiver is located, inform them of the policy on unattended children.
- c. If the parent/caregiver cannot be located, contact the State Police and remain with the child until he/she is in the custody of the police.
- d. Inform the Director of any unattended child problems.

2. Conduct Violations

- a. For all acts of vandalism, the child will be required to leave the library for the day. The parent/caregiver will be contacted, informed of the incident and the library policy regarding vandalism.
- b. For children engaging in inappropriate library activities/behavior outside of vandalism (see above), library staff will offer one warning telling the child that their behavior is not acceptable, and that the next time they will be told to leave. The second time the child is approached, they will be told to leave for the day and escorted from the building.
- c. If conduct problems persist over a period of time, the Director will contact the parent/caregivers to inform them of the conduct policy. Patrons who are asked to leave the Library repeatedly will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- d. If a child refuses to leave the property, attempt to contact the child's parent/caregiver to come escort the child out of the library. If the parent/caregiver cannot be reached, State Police will be contacted and the child involved will be banned from the library for at least 6 months.
- e. Inform the Director of any and all conduct incidents.

3. Unattended Children After Closing

- a. (at least) Ten minutes before closing, check in with any children to see if they are aware of a pick up arrangement.
- b. If the child is not aware of a pick up arrangement, attempt to locate parent/caregiver by phone.
- c. If no pick-up occurs after closing time, 2 staff members will stay with the child/children and parents will be charged for a minimum of 2 hours/ staff member.”
After 30 minutes, staff members will contact the Constable or State Police.”
- d. Never leave a child alone in the building.
- e. Inform the Director of any *After Closing* incidents. The Director will contact and inform parents/caregiver of policy and procedure.

Date amended _____, Chair