

Unattended Child Policy

The Paul Sawyer Public Library welcomes and encourages children to use the Library's facilities and services; however, the safety of young children left alone at the Library can be a serious concern. When young children are left unattended, they can become the vulnerable target of abuse by others as well as bored and/or disruptive. Library staff cannot know if children are leaving the building with guardians, parents, or strangers. For the protection and well-being of all children who use and enjoy our Library, the following policies have been adopted.

1. While on Library property children under the age of ten (10) or adults in need of care may not be left unattended in the Library, i.e., unaccompanied by a parent, adult guardian or assigned adult chaperone.
2. Responsibility for the safety and behavior of ALL children/adults in need of care using the Library rests with the parent, guardian or assigned chaperone, not with Library staff.
3. Children and adults in need of care are required to observe Library rules and policies. Those creating disturbances who do not respond to correction will be required to leave.
4. A parent, adult guardian or adult chaperone must stay in the Library while his/her child is in the Library program.
5. If the child is under the age of 10, the parent, adult guardian or adult chaperone must stay in the Youth Services Department while the child is in a Youth Services Library program.
6. If a child needs to leave a Library program, it is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or chaperone to ensure the safety of the child.
7. Parents and guardians are responsible for picking up their children in a timely manner.
8. It is not acceptable to leave children of any age unattended for an extended period of time, as determined by Library staff.
9. If it is determined that a child/adult in need of care is lost or unattended, staff will attempt to locate a parent, guardian or chaperone in the building and explain the policy to them.
10. If a parent, guardian or chaperone is not found in the building, staff will attempt to locate them through Library records, phone book, etc. When/If they are located by phone, they will be asked to join the child/adult in need of care in the Library or pick up the child/adult in need of care immediately. The policy will be explained.
11. If a parent, guardian or chaperone cannot be located within a reasonable amount of time or if the Library is closing, staff will call the police who will take custody of the child/adult in need of care.
12. If the Library is closing, two staff members will wait with any child or adult considered to be in need of care whose parent, guardian or chaperone is en route until the child/adult is picked up or until the police arrive to take custody of the child/adult.
13. Under no circumstances will a staff member take the child/adult in need of care out of the building nor will the child/adult be left alone outside the building after closing.