



UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

To ensure a safe and welcoming environment, patrons are asked to be familiar with the library's Unattended Child Policy.

Please be reminded that:

- Children up to age 10-12 (based on child's maturity and at the discretion of library personnel on duty) must have a parent/adult caregiver in the immediate vicinity of, and in visual contact with them. **The adult caregiver must be a responsible person and must carry emergency phone contact information.** An exception would be children attending a library program without the parent or adult caregiver in the room, but the parent/caregiver is expected to remain in the library building and to immediately join the child at the end of the program.
- Library staff are often busy assisting library patrons and cannot be held responsible for children who are unattended. Disruptive children may be asked to leave.
- Children 10-12 years of age or older (based on child's maturity and at the discretion of library personnel on duty) who are able to care for themselves are allowed to be dropped off at library for library activities. If any child is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone. **No child is to be dropped off for extended periods of time.**
- The library is not a babysitting service. The safety of children rests with the parent/guardian, not with library personnel.
- There is a strong concern when it is dark outside or during bad weather when no adult becomes available for pick-up. For this situation, an unattended child in Louisiana is defined as a person under the age of 18 years. If the parent cannot be located or reached, the police will be notified. A staff member will remain with the child until the authorities arrive. Under no circumstances will a staff member drive the child home.
- Once law enforcement is called, they will treat the call as "abandonment of a minor." Child Protective Services will be contacted by the law enforcement.
- Children who consistently exhibit inappropriate behavior after being warned may be suspended from utilizing the library services and may only be allowed to visit the library with an adult or responsible person present.

(Revised September 2020)