

Benedek Memorial Library
Unattended Minors Policy

The Benedek Memorial Library welcomes the use of its facilities, collections and services by children of all ages and encourages children to visit the library and to develop a love of books, reading and libraries. The Library attempts to provide a safe and appropriate environment for children to select books and other materials, use the Library's computers and to attend Library programming. However, children visiting for several hours unattended when no Library programs are being offered often become bored and disruptive. The Library does not have facilities or staffing to provide childcare and childcare is not the Library's role. The Library staff does not serve in loco parentis (in place of the parent) and in no way assumes any responsibility for any child unattended by the adult in the Library.

Responsibility for the behavior, comfort and well-being of minor children (under 18) in the Library or on Library grounds rests with the parents and not with Library staff. Parents should realize that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their children's behavior. Children are subject to the same rules of behavior as adults who come into the Library building.

For the protection and well-being of minor children, and the enjoyment of all patrons using the Library, the following policy regarding unattended minors has been adopted:

1. Student in grades 7-12 may visit for an indefinite period as long as they are not being disruptive. (Limits may be imposed to comply with occupancy rules.)
2. Children seven and over through sixth grade may visit unattended for a maximum of two hours per day. (A parent must be able to pick-up the child if the need should arise.)
3. Children six and under must be accompanied by an adult or a mature sibling at least 11 years old (who acknowledges responsibility for the child) and may visit for a maximum of two hours per day.
4. Children attending Library programs are supervised by Library staff and volunteers therefore no additional supervision is necessary during the program.

Should a situation arise that in the judgement of the Library staff requires the attention of a child's parent, the Library staff will attempt to contact the parent of the unattended child who must then pick up the child having custody or control of a minor. Situations include but are not limited to:

1. A child is alone and frightened or crying in the library;
2. A child is alone and his/her behavior is unduly disruptive;
3. A child is alone and is engaged in a dangerous activity, or another person in the library seems to be a danger to the child;
4. A child is injured in the library or enters the library seeking first aid for an injury;
5. No caregiver comes to pick up a child under the age of ten at closing time.

In the event that a parent cannot be reached, the child will be placed in the care of the appropriate local law enforcement agency or emergency medical service as appropriate.

Parents are asked to read and sign the Policy and return it to the Library.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Adopted 12/04/08

Revised 02/01/10

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