



Rev. Date: 03-17-10

Pol. No.: CUS-5

Adopted by the Library Advisory Board 06-21-06

Public Library System

Unattended Children

Policy Statement:

The Scottsdale Public Library System welcomes children to use its facilities and services. The responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent/guardian or responsible caregiver. The Library respects the privacy of all library customers and will intervene only when it considers a child to be vulnerable or at risk.

Definitions:

Unattended Child -- Any young person using the public library unaccompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver or left alone in one part of the library while the parent or caregiver is in another.

Vulnerable Child – Any unattended child whose safety or well-being could be endangered either in the building, or if he/she were to leave. Library staff must use their judgment and discretion in determining whether or not an unattended child is vulnerable or at risk.

Regulations:

1. Parents/guardians and caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior and supervision of their children at all times in the Library and on Library property.
2. Children are required to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library.
3. Children under age 8 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver when visiting the Library. Parents or caregivers of these children must remain in the building while their children attend library programs.
4. Children ages 8 and older are welcome to use the library unattended for an amount of time appropriate to their age and maturity. Children must adhere to the Library's Rules of Conduct.
5. Parents and caregivers should make suitable arrangements to meet and/or transport their children.
6. In the event that an unattended child is vulnerable -- *during* Library open hours or *after* Library closing hours -- and no one can be contacted to provide care or transportation, staff will call 911.

Procedures:

1. Try to locate the parent/caregiver in the building, utilizing the assistance of the Library Monitor, if available. See if the child or another library user can provide any information about the situation.
2. If the parent/caregiver is located in the building, explain the Library's concern for the child's welfare and safety and provide a copy of the Unattended Children policy, along with an explanation of the policy.

3. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found in the building, report the situation to the Librarian in Charge who will try to contact the parent/caregiver to come pick up the child immediately and will explain the Library's policy regarding Unattended Children. If, after an hour, the parent or caregiver cannot be located or reached by phone, the Librarian in Charge will call 911.
4. Staff should stay with the child until a responsible caregiver can be located. Within a half-hour of closing, inquire if the child has a ride home. Staff will make a library phone available for the child to call for a ride. If a caregiver has not responded and the library has closed, staff will ask the child who is to pick him/her up and when. Staff should try to call this person and request that someone come for the child immediately. Report this situation to the Librarian in Charge.
5. If, after 15 minutes, the child has not been picked up, the Librarian in Charge will call 911. Two staff will wait with the child until a representative of the Police Department arrives.
6. The Librarian in Charge will complete and submit an Incident Report and provide a copy to the Police when appropriate.