



CUDAHY FAMILY LIBRARY

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POLICY

Category: Access & Facilities

Number: E.03

Title: **Children in the Library**

Effective Date: October 1, 2011

Authorized By: Library Board of Trustees

Last Revision or Review: July 21, 2004, June 24, 1999

References: Wisconsin State Statute 43.52 (2); Cudahy Municipal Code Chapter 9.28

The Cudahy Family Library welcomes and encourages children of all ages to use its facility, materials, programs and services. At the same time, the Library is a large public building and the well-being and safety of children left alone or unattended is a serious concern for the Library Board and Staff. Library staff cannot monitor the behavior or whereabouts of each patron in the Library, including children, and there are occasions when the Children's Department is not staffed. The responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children in the Library rests with parents, guardians, or caregivers and not with the Library personnel. The Cudahy Family Library cannot assume responsibility for childcare or children's safety when they are unattended.

In order to provide for the general welfare of children and for the benefit of all people using the Library, the following rules regarding the supervision of children are in effect:

- 1) Children four years or younger must stay in the immediate vicinity of, and in visual contact with, a parent or caregiver unless the child is participating in a Library program that does not require supervision. Children ages five through seven must be accompanied and adequately supervised by a parent or caregiver.

Caregivers must be over the age of twelve, even if the person is a sibling. During library programs, the parent or caregiver must remain in the Library and must return to the location of the program by the end of the session. If a preschool child is found unattended in the Library, staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver. If the parent or caregiver cannot be located in the building or at home the Cudahy Police Department will be contacted to pick up the child.

- 2) Children ages eight through seventeen may use the Library on their own except during regular school hours, subject to appropriate behavior.

Library staff may ask for verification from parents or caregivers when students are home schooled. The Library must not be used as an alternative to daycare. For safety's sake, parents should make sure that their children are sufficiently mature before allowing them to visit the Library by themselves. Parents should be advised that if children misbehave and do not follow the Library's Code of Conduct, they may be asked to leave the Library. Parents should also realize that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their children's behavior.

- 3) Children who depend on adults for transportation to return home must be picked up before the Library closes.

The Library is not responsible for the care and supervision of unaccompanied children prior to opening or after closing. The Library is also not responsible for children outside the building who await transportation or who are socializing. Adults responsible for unattended school-age children using the Library should be aware of the Library's hours and make arrangements to meet children on time. If a child is found unattended at closing, the Staff will attempt to call the child's home for transportation and will wait for fifteen minutes after closing for the child to be picked up. If attempts to contact the child's responsible adult fail, or if the transportation does not arrive within the fifteen minutes, the Cudahy Police Department will be called to pick up the child.

- 4) Children of all ages who have special needs, disabilities, and/or problems must remain with an adult or responsible person at all times.
- 5) If a child or young adult becomes ill or injured and the parent or caregiver cannot be located or contacted, the Cudahy Police Department or, if appropriate, 911 will be called.
- 6) If a child or young adult is discovered to be truant from school, the Cudahy Police Department will be called to deal with the truancy.

It is not the intention or practice of the Cudahy Family Library to seek out unattended children, but rather to have a reasoned response prepared if necessary. The Library respects the privacy of all patrons and will intervene only when, in the opinion of our Staff, the safety and well-being of a child or other patron is threatened.