

POLICY

Category: Access & Facilities

Number: E.4

Title: Unattended Children in the Library

Effective Date: July 21, 2004

Authorized By: Library Board of Trustees

Last Revision or Review: June 24, 1999

References: Wisconsin State Statute 43.52 (2); Cudahy Municipal Code Chapter 9;
ALA Guidelines for the Development of Policies Regarding Behavior & Library Usage

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 an open, public building and the well-being and safety of young children left alone or unattended is a serious concern for the Library Board and Staff. 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) Pre-school children must be accompanied and adequately supervised by an adult or responsible person.

The Library assumes no responsibility for unattended children. The person in charge of the child must stay with the child, unless the child is participating in a story time or program. During story times or programs, the adult or responsible person, must remain in the Library and must return to the location of the story time or program by the end of the session. If a pre-school child is found unattended, the Staff will attempt to locate the adult or responsible person. If they cannot be located in the building or at home within 30 minutes, the Cudahy Police Department will be contacted to pick up the child.

2) School-age children may use the Library unattended, subject to appropriate behavior.

Parents should not use the Library 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, 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 of all ages who have special needs (mental, physical or emotional) must remain with an adult or responsible person at all times.
- 4) School-age 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.

It is not the intention 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 is threatened.