

LINCOLN PARISH LIBRARY

Unattended Children Policy

It is the policy of the library to provide a safe and appropriate environment for library users of all ages. The library is, however, a public building and staff cannot know if the children are leaving the building with parents or with strangers, or even by themselves. The library is not equipped, nor is it the library's role, to provide long term or short term care for children of any age.

In order to better assure the safety of minor children, the following policies have been established:

- For children under the age of six, a parent, guardian or responsible childcare provider who has attained the age of 17 must be in the same area of the library as the child at all times.
- Children six through nine years old must have a parent, guardian or responsible childcare provider who has attained the age of 17 in the building at all times. No minor child should be left at the library for long periods of time without a parent in the building. 'Minor Child' is defined as an individual who has not attained the age of 17.
- All minor children must be picked up before the library closes. The staff cannot leave the library open beyond the announced closing time.
- Library patrons of all ages who disrupt library services, disturb other library patrons or the staff, or who damage library property will be asked to leave the building. When the patron is a minor child they will be asked to leave with the parent.

Approved by Lincoln Parish Library Board of Control 10/21/03

Unattended Children Procedures

These procedures should be followed when:

- A child under 6 years old is found to be in the library without a parent or responsible caregiver who has attained the age of 17 in the same area of the library as the child
- A child 6 through 9 years old is found to be in the building without a parent or responsible care giver who has attained the age of 17
- A child of any age is disruptive to library services to others, disturbs other library patrons or the staff, or damages library property
- A minor child is left at the library at the time the library closes

1. Obtain the name, address, and telephone number of the child and his parents or guardian. Record this in a log kept at the Children's desk.
2. If the parent, guardian or childcare giver is in the library, immediately page them.
3. If the parent guardian or childcare giver is not in the library, immediately attempt to contact them and tell them that they must come to get the child right away.
4. When a minor child is left at the library after closing time:
 - a) Two staff members must wait with the child
 - b) The child should wait in the vestibule, in sight of both employees, while the parents are being located.
 - c) The library should be locked, but the alarm not set.
 - d) Do not leave the building with the child.
5. Call the parent, guardian or caregiver immediately upon closing.
6. When a parent, guardian or caregiver is contacted, agree to wait a maximum of 20 minutes for them to arrive.
7. If the parent, guardian or caretaker has not arrived in 20 minutes from the time you reach them, call the City Police and explain who you are and the situation. Ask them to send someone to stay with the child.
8. If the parent, guardian or caregiver arrives before the police officer, call the police and cancel the need for an officer.
9. If a parent, guardian or caregiver cannot be reached within 15 minutes, call the City Police and explain who you are and the situation. Ask them to send someone to stay with the child.
- ~~7.~~10. You must stay with the child until he/she is picked up by a parent guardian, caregiver, or the police.
- ~~8.~~11. Identification of the person picking up the child must be verified and then recorded in the log at the Children's desk.
- ~~9.~~12. If a child chooses to leave the library premises, the library cannot make him/her stay nor be responsible for him/her in any way. When a child chooses to leave the premises, call the City Police and notify them of the situation and if possible which direction the child took.
- ~~10.~~13. Continue to attempt to reach the parent, the police, or the library administrators until the situation is resolved.
- ~~11.~~14. A brief written explanation of the situation and its resolution must be provided to the Library Director within 24 hours.

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