



A. PURPOSE

This policy is established to address the Elkhart Public Library concern about the welfare and safety of children when they are left unattended in the Library.

B. POLICY

1. Patron Responsibility

- a. Responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children using the library rests with the parent, guardian, or caregiver. Though staff will respond to a child in need, they cannot assume responsibility for the safety and welfare of unattended children.
- b. Children seven (7) years old or younger must be accompanied, and actively supervised by, a caregiver who is at least fourteen (14) years of age.
- c. Children eight (8) to ten (10) years of age must have a caregiver who is at least fourteen (14) years of age in the building at all times.
- d. Caregivers accompanying preschool children are expected to remain in the library while children are attending library programs.
- e. Violations of these rules during library hours of operation are subject to the same actions taken for unattended children at closing time.

2. Closing Time

- a. The Elkhart Public Library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended at the Library after hours.
- b. Unattended children under 16 years of age present at the Library 10 minutes before the Library closes will be asked to phone a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver to pick them up.
- c. If the child remains at closing time, staff will call the local law enforcement authorities who will be given custody of the child.
- d. If a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver cannot be reached, or, if reached, has not picked up the child at the time of Library closing, the library staff will call the appropriate police department.

3. Waiting for Pickup by Parents or Police

- a. The police should be notified that they no longer need to come if the caregiver arrives before the police arrive.
- b. Under no circumstances will staff transport a minor in their own vehicle.
- c. At least two staff members will remain in the library if a minor child is in the building after closing. Upon determining an unattended child situation exists, staff will immediately inform the Professional-In-Charge at the Main Library, who will provide any assistance

needed. If the Professional-In-Charge is not available, staff may contact the Director or Assistant Director for assistance.

- d. Staff members who remain in the building past closing due to unattended children will be compensated in 15 minute increments. The remaining week's scheduled hours will be reduced by these minutes. If this is not possible, staff will be compensated in overtime pay.

C. ADOPTED

1. Adopted by Elkhart Public Library Board of Trustees: June 16, 2014
2. Supersedes Unattended Children Policy adopted July 16, 2008