

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS DISTRICT LIBRARY UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

The Saugatuck/Douglas District Library (“The Library”) strives to offer a welcoming, educational, and safe place for children. However, the Library is a public place. Anyone may enter and use the facilities. Young children left alone in the building can be vulnerable and at risk. Therefore, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following policies.

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. Children, like all library users, are required to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library. Children (8 and under) may not be left unattended in the Library as a substitute for appropriate child care unless participating in a planned Children’s Activity.
2. Children age 8 and under must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or assigned chaperone, age 13 or older, at all times and in all areas of the Library and its property.
3. If a child acts in a manner not in compliance with Library Rules, staff should:
 - A. First speak to the child and suggest alternate behavior.
 - B. Ask the child for the first and last name of adult who brought the child to the Library.
 - C. Walk the child through the Library to find the responsible adult.
 - D. Explain to the parent or caregiver the Library’s policy concerning unattended children.
 - E. If the parent or caregiver is not located in the Library, the staff member should attempt to reach him or her by phone and ask that person to take charge of the child as quickly as possible. When the parent arrives, explain the Library policy concerning unattended children.
 - F. If the parent or caregiver cannot be contacted, staff should contact the local law enforcement by calling 911.
4. If an unattended child, age 15 or under, is in the Library at closing, staff should:
 - A. Allow the child to call a responsible person for a ride home and have staff explain to the parent or caregiver the Library’s policy concerning unattended children.
 - B. At least two staff members must remain with the child after the Library closes and until the situation is resolved.
 - C. If the parent or caregiver cannot be reached and has not come after 5 minutes, staff should contact local law enforcement by calling 911. Staff shall also complete an unattended child notice, stating that the child is in police custody, and post on all outside doors. Only the first name of the child shall be included in the notice.
 - D. If contact with the parent or caregiver is made at closing, and the parent/caregiver fails to pick up the unattended child within an agreed amount of time, staff shall follow procedures outlined in 4C.
 - E. Under NO circumstances should a staff member drive a child home.
 - F. Staff members attending the child should fill out an *Incident Report*.

FIRST READING: May 20, 2015

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