

Kent County Public Library Unattended Juvenile Policy

For the safety and protection of young patrons and in order to avoid the disruption of normal Library operations and services, the Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following policy concerning children left unattended in the Library.

Children under the age of 8 may not be left unattended in the Library, subject to the rules outlined below. A child is unattended if he/she is in the Library without a care giver who is at least 13 years of age.

If a staff member finds an unattended child, under the age of 8, the following steps will be taken:

- The staff member will determine if a care giver is in the Library. If so, the staff member and child will attempt to locate that person.
- If a care giver is not in the Library, the staff member will attempt to contact the child's parent at home or work using information provided by the child, the patron database, or the telephone directory. If contacted, the parent will be informed of this policy and advised that their child must be picked up immediately.
- If the parent cannot be located, or if a contacted parent has not picked up their child within an hour of being called, the staff member must contact the appropriate social service organization.

Following policy established by the Kent County Department of Social Services, children under the age of 8 may not be left unattended for any length of time. This includes children participating in library-sponsored programs. A care giver for each child must remain in the Library during the program.

Children 8 and older are considered to be "on their own" in the Library. If disruptive, parents will be called for children ages 8 through 12. Parents will not be called for disruptive children 13 and over, as they will be asked to leave the building.

Under no circumstances will a staff member ever take a child out of the Library or give a child a ride home.

The Library in no way assumes any responsibility for any child left unattended in the Library.

All Library patrons are subject to regular Library rules concerning disruptive behavior.

*Approved Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees
September 22, 2003*