

## UNATTENDED CHILDREN

The Belleville Public Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. However, responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or assigned caregiver, not with the library staff. The library staff does not accept responsibility for the safety, care, supervision or entertainment of children on its premises. Parent/guardian or assigned responsible caregiver is responsible for the behavior of their children while in the library. Children must be 11 years old to use the library unattended by an adult, subject to other library rules and policies concerning behavior, conduct and demeanor. Children ten (10) and under must be accompanied and directly supervised at all times by a parent/guardian/assigned responsible caregiver at all times.

The library staff must use sensitivity and good judgment when young children are left unattended and/or are causing problems. It is not expected that the staff can always be aware of which adults and children are together. However, when problems arise with a child who appears to be unattended, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Try to locate the parent/guardian/assigned caregiver responsible for the child in the library and turn the child over to him/her.
2. If the parent/guardian/assigned caregiver is not in the library, the child should be taken to the Youth Department or other public service point for further action. At West Branch, the child should be given into the hands of the person in charge. Try finding the caregiver by phone.
3. When the parent/guardian/assigned caregiver is located, explain to him/her that he/she is responsible for the child while the child is in the library and no child under age 11 is allowed to be left unattended. Instruct the parent/guardian/assigned caregiver to come and pick up the child as soon as possible.
4. Call the police whether or not the parent/guardian/assigned caregiver is located but has not taken the child into his/her care within thirty (30) minutes, or if the library is closing. Under no circumstances shall a staff member take the child out of the building or transport the child in any manner.

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