

UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

□ GENERAL STATEMENT

Service and the safety of children is a high priority of the Bloomington Public Library. Children of all ages are welcomed and encouraged to use the Library's materials, programs and services. Great effort is taken to make the Library a warm, and inviting building. However, the Library is an open, public building and, one should not assume it is a safe place to leave a child unattended (not under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian or other authorized and responsible caregiver). The well-being and safety of children left unattended is a serious concern for the staff and Library Board. Parents or caregivers are responsible for the care of their children using this facility. Library staff cannot assume the responsibility for the supervision of unattended children in the Library. In order to provide for the general welfare of young patrons, this policy was developed.

□ CHILDREN, AGE 8 AND UNDER - UNATTENDED

Children, age 8 and under require direct supervision, and may not be left unattended by a parent or caregiver at any time in any part of the Library, as they are responsible for the child's safety and behavior. If left unattended, staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver. If they cannot be located in the Library or by phone, the Bloomington Police Department will be contacted to pick up the child.

□ CHILDREN, AGE 8 AND UNDER - PROGRAMS

During story time or other programs that do not require a parent or caregiver in attendance, they must remain in the building and return to the program area by the end of the session.

□ CHILDREN, AGE 9 AND UP

Children, age 9 and up, are welcome to use the Library, unsupervised, if their behavior is in accordance with the behavior policy. However, parents or caregivers should not view the Library as an alternative to daycare. For everyone's safety, parents or caregivers should make sure their children are sufficiently mature before allowing them to visit the Library without supervision.

□ **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Behavior that is disruptive to other patrons or staff is not allowed. Children must follow the library's rules of behavior. Parents and caregivers should be advised that if children misbehave, they might be asked to leave the Library. Violations of this policy are grounds for suspension of Library privileges. Whenever advisable, the Library will notify the parent of incidents involving an unattended child.

□ **CHILDREN UNATTENDED AT CLOSING**

Parents and caregivers should be aware of closing times, particularly on weekends. Announcements are made on the public address system before closing to remind children to arrange for rides. If children are left unattended in the Library at closing, the staff will attempt to locate a parent or adult caregiver. No youth under the age of 16 shall be left without transportation. Two staff members will wait 15 minutes with children. If children do not have a ride within 15 minutes, staff members will escort the children to the Bloomingdale Police Department to keep until a parent or caregiver can be reached. Staff will leave a note on the Library door notifying the parent or caregiver if this action is taken.

Staff members are not to give children, left without transportation, a ride under any circumstances.

Library Hours:

Monday - Thursday	9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Friday & Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday (Mid Sept. - Mid May)	1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Board of Library Trustees of the Bloomingdale Public Library will review the unattended children policy periodically, and reserves the right to amend it at any time.

Approved by the
Board of Library Trustees

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION LETTER

Dear _____,

Recently, your child, _____, was left unattended by you or a responsible caregiver at the Bloomingdale Public Library. A copy of the Library's policy on Unattended Children is enclosed here for your attention. We ask that you review this policy and make every effort to follow it. We do not wish to suspend Library privileges for you or your family, but the safety of children, as well as, the proper operation of the Library is our first responsibility.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or its enforcement, please contact the undersigned.

Very Truly Yours,

Library Director