

Unattended Children Policy

The Two Harbors Public Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming and safe environment for patrons of all ages. Sharing this environment with other people requires that everyone act in a respectful manner towards staff and other patrons and that everyone follow the Library's Policies.

The Two Harbors Public Library wants children to use its facilities and services; however, when children are left alone they may become frightened or anxious. If they wander through the building, they may encounter hazards such as stairs, doors, furniture or electrical equipment. They may also become bored and restless and could disturb the enjoyment and work of others.

The safety of children left alone in a library building is a serious concern of the library staff. **The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent/caregiver and not with the library personnel.** Library employees cannot be responsible for children who are unattended or demonstrating inappropriate behavior.

Children under the age of 8

- Children under the age of 8 must have a parent/caregiver in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. The assigned caregiver, if other than a parent, must be an adult or responsible teenager of the age 13 or above and must carry emergency contact information.
- If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library and inform him/her of the rules. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, if the child is found unattended on multiple occasions, or if the Library is closing, the police will be called for assistance.

Children age 8 and older

- Children age 8 and older may use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions and the well-being of their children.
- Children exhibiting inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library. **If a child in this age group is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone.** This is a particular concern in inclement weather and after dark.
- All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.
- Children who do not have transportation home at closing time will be asked for telephone numbers of people who can pick them up at the library. Again, if parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the police will be called for assistance.

Teenagers

- Teenagers are treated as adult users; however, they are still legally the responsibility of their parents and should have an emergency contact available.

Adopted December 1991; Revised July 2011; Revised January 2016