

## Unattended Children Policy

### Policy Statement

The Barrington Public Library is committed to providing a safe, welcoming environment that supports the informational, recreational, intellectual, and cultural needs of users of all ages. All patrons, including children, are expected to follow the library's Appropriate Library Behavior Policy, conduct themselves lawfully, and be considerate of others.

Parents and guardians are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of their children on library premises at all times. Library staff cannot assume the role of caregiver or provide long-term supervision for children left unattended.

### Age-Based Requirements

#### Children Under Age 6

- Must be accompanied and directly supervised by an adult at all times.
- Supervision means the child is within the adult's sight and immediate reach, including in the children's room, restrooms, stacks, and computer areas.

#### Children Ages 6–9

- May attend library-sponsored programs without an adult present only for the duration of the program.
- The parent or caregiver must remain in the building and promptly meet the child when the program ends.

#### Children Ages 10 and Up

- May use the library without an adult, at the discretion of the parent or guardian.
- Children must follow all library behavior expectations
- staff do not provide supervision for unattended children.
- Parents and guardians remain responsible for their child's conduct and safety, even when not present.
- Children who are disruptive or require excessive staff attention may have a parent or guardian contacted for immediate pickup.
- Children who are required to be picked up immediately due to behavior concerns may not return to the library unsupervised until a parent or guardian meets with the Library Director and signs the Appropriate Behavior Policy.

## Revised and Approved 04/21/26

- Children left unattended should know how to reach a parent or guardian. Parents must be aware of library closing times and arrive before closing.

### Procedures

#### Closing Time

- Children must leave the library at closing time.
- Children left waiting outside after closing are in a vulnerable position. Staff will not leave a child unattended outside.
- A parent or guardian will be called to pick up the child., a fee of \$50 per hour will be assessed to cover two staff members supervising the child.
- **If a parent cannot arrive within one hour, the Barrington Police will be contacted to take protective custody.**

#### Safety and Incident Reporting

- Staff will complete an Incident Report within 24 hours whenever a parent, caregiver, or police are contacted regarding a child's safety.
- Staff will not transport children or remove them from the building unless written parental permission has been provided for a library-sponsored trip.

#### Grievance Procedure

Parents or guardians who wish to contest this policy must submit a written statement to the Library Director within 30 days. They will be scheduled to attend the next Board of Trustees meeting to discuss their grievance.