

POLICY ON UNATTENDED CHILDREN IN THE PALMER PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Palmer Public Library welcomes and encourages the use of the library's collection, materials, and services by children. However, the library is an open and public building, and in order to provide a safe environment for all library patrons, the Board of Trustees has established the following policy:

1. All children age 9 and younger must be under the direct supervision of an accompanying adult or sitter no younger than grade 8.
2. Persons in charge of children must stay with them unless they are participating in a library-sponsored program. During library programs, the responsible caregiver must remain in the building and must return to the program area by the end of the event.
3. At the discretion of a responsible caregiver, children age 10-12 may be left unattended to select materials, attend a program, or use computers.
4. Children age 10-12 should not be left for more than two hours and must know how to reach the responsible caregiver in case the need should arise.
5. Children 9 years old and younger must be accompanied on the elevator by an adult or sitter no younger than grade 8.
6. Eating and drinking are allowed in the Town Square area only. Trash containers are provided for disposal of food and paper products.
7. If a preschool child is found unattended, the staff will attempt to locate the individual responsible for the child's care. In the event that the responsible individual cannot be located in the library, the proper authorities will be contacted to assume responsibility for the child.
8. Disruptive and misbehaving children who disturb others will be asked to leave the library, or the proper authorities may be contacted to assume responsibility for the child. Parents, even in their absence, are legally responsible for their child's behavior.
9. School-age children who depend on adults for transportation home must be picked up before the library closes. The library is not responsible for the care or supervision of unaccompanied children outside the building. If a child is found unattended at closing, staff will attempt to call the child's home. If unable to reach an adult responsible for the child, staff will notify the police. Under no circumstances will staff provide transportation for unattended children.
10. Library Staff are not responsible for unattended children in the library.

Approved by the Palmer Public Library Board of Trustees 6/16/06
Amended 6/19/08