

Northwest Regional Library  
Policy on Unattended Children  
and Disruptive Children

The Northwest Regional Library (NWRL) welcomes serving children. Responsibility for the safety and welfare of the children, however, rests with the parent, guardian or their caretaker and not with NWRL staff.

Policy for Unattended Children

Purpose

Children could be approached by or tempted to leave with a stranger. They could become frightened, anxious, or ill; could have no place to go in the event of an unexpected closing; or could encounter hazards. Additionally, they usually lack the necessary maturity to handle emergency situations such as severe weather, fire, or civil disturbance.

Under no circumstances should parents/guardians assume children are always safe in a library. Library staff must assist all customers and cannot assume responsibility for the safety, care, supervision or entertainment of children at the expense of others.

Policy

Parents and caregivers may not leave children under age 8 unattended in the library.

If visiting the library without an adult, children ages 8 to 18 should make arrangements to be picked up by closing time. If children are left unattended 15 minutes prior to closing, staff will call parent/caregiver. If they have not arrived by closing or could not be reached, staff members will notify local police.

Policy on Disruptive Children

Children age 8 and over may be left unattended in the library but must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner (see NWRL Patron Behavior Policy). Children aged 8 and over who are acting in a way which violates the Patron Behavior Policy will be asked to leave the library after one warning. If the child is unable to leave the Library without an adult, that child should not be in the Library unattended. Disruptive children who are younger than age 8 will be asked to join their parent or guardian in the library. The parents will be reminded of the Patron Behavior Policy. The Policy on Disruptive Children does not address children who are participating in supervised Library activities such as story hours or classroom visits.

Adopted, NWRL Board 11/17/1994

Revised April 28, 2011