

## Kaukauna Public Library Unattended Child Policy

The Kaukauna Public Library is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for patrons of all ages. A caregiver is defined in this policy as a person twelve years of age or older, who provides direct care for an infant or child.

Staff members will always respond with care and concern, but responsibility for the welfare of children using the Library ultimately rests with the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver. Library staff cannot legally take responsibility for the care of children of any age. The public library, unlike schools, does not legally serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). To be clear, Library staff cannot act in the place of parents, nor can they act as a substitute for daycare in providing constant care and supervision. Therefore, responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of children using the Library rests solely with the parent/guardian or caregiver. For the safety of patrons of all ages, the Library does have an Appropriate Use Policy in place.

As a busy public library, parents/guardians/caregivers are reminded that unexpected events can occur while children are left at the Library unattended. Some examples could include: the child may leave the building against parental wishes, the child could be approached by untrustworthy people, or the child could be physically injured. While the Library makes every effort to ensure the safety of all users, parents/guardians/caregivers are advised that the Library cannot legally act *in loco parentis*.

### *Children under 6*

Children under the age of 6 may not be left unattended by a parent, guardian or caregiver in any part of the Library. If children under the age of 6 are found without a caregiver, staff will attempt to locate the parent/guardian or other caregiver. If none can be found, they will call Kaukauna Police Department.

### *Children ages 6-9*

Children ages 6-9 must have a parent, guardian or caregiver present in the building at all times during the library visit. Children in this age group who cannot follow behavioral expectations as listed in the Appropriate Use Policy may not be left unattended by a parent, guardian or caregiver in any part of the Library. Children in this age group who follow behavioral expectations as listed in the Appropriate Use Policy, may be allowed unattended in areas of the library other than their caregiver's location.

### *Children ages 10 to 15*

Children ages 10-15 are considered old enough to use the library responsibly unattended. As referenced above, children must be at least 12 years old to be considered a caregiver to younger children. Children in this age group must also follow the Appropriate Use Policy. Children who do not follow these rules are subject to the same consequences as other Library users, including, but not limited to being required to leave the library.

Staff may as needed:

- Notify parents of poor behavior and the need for additional supervision while at the Library.
- Contact Kaukauna Police Department either to assist with the enforcement of Library policy or to ensure the safety of an unattended child.
- Staff will make a reasonable effort to assure that children leave the Library safely at closing time. If any children remain at the Library or at building egress fifteen minutes after closing, a staff member will contact the Kaukauna Police Department to ensure safe transport.