

## **Lockport Public Library UNATTENDED CHILDREN (ages 0-12) POLICY**

**Parents/guardians or caregivers are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, whether or not the parents/guardians or caregivers are present.**

**Library staff cannot be responsible for children who are unattended or demonstrating inappropriate behavior in the absence of the parents/guardians or caregivers, even for a short period of time.**

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The Lockport Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use its facilities and services. Services and programs are offered to make the library enticing to children, to encourage them to visit the library and to develop a love of books, reading and libraries.

We do not encourage unattended children in the library. The library is a public building and staff cannot know if children are present with or leaving the building with parents, strangers or by themselves. The responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver. Library staff members have many duties and cannot supervise children nor act as a substitute for daycare.

For the protection and well-being of children who enjoy the library and to prevent undue disruption of ongoing library services, the Lockport Public Library has adopted the following rules:

### **Children Age 8 or Younger:**

- Children age 8 and younger must have a parent/guardian or caregiver in the immediate vicinity of the child and they may not be left unattended in the library. Children must be accompanied by a responsible person – an adult or a mature adolescent (13 years of age or older).
- Children age 8 and younger may attend library programs appropriate to their age without the parent/guardian or caregiver in the program room provided the parent/guardian or caregiver remain within the library building or department for the duration of the program and immediately joins the children at the conclusion of the program.

### **Children Ages 9 to 12 Years (Unattended):**

- Children ages 9 to 12 years may use the library unattended, but must display acceptable library behavior in accordance with the Library's Code of Conduct. The library cannot act "in loco parentis" or be responsible for the safety and well-being of children ages 9 to 12 years who are unaccompanied in the library. Library staff cannot monitor the arrival or departure of any child from a program or the building.
- If children display inappropriate behavior, they may be asked to leave the library. The child must have knowledge of how to contact their parents/guardians or caregivers at all times when left unattended in the Library.

### **Unattended Children When Library is Closed/Closing:**

- Parents/guardians or caregivers must be aware of the library's hours of operation as they may not always remain the same.
- If parents/guardians or caregivers are not present at the library's time of closing and child and staff have been unable to contact the parents/guardians or caregivers, the Lockport Police Department will be contacted for their assistance in helping the child home safely.
- Under no circumstances will a member of the Library staff drive children home.

Adopted by the Lockport Public Library Board of Trustees December 13, 2006.  
Revised: 5/21/2020; 3/17/2022.