

APPENDIX B GARDEN CITY LIBRARY UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY & PROCEDURE

Children Left Unattended

Guardians are responsible for their children's behavior while the children are in the Library. Guardians are not to leave children under age ten years (10 years) unattended or persons lacking the mental capacity to be left unattended in the Library. Disruptive children eleven years or over (11 years) will be asked to leave after receiving one warning. (Unattended means not within eyesight of the caretaker.)

1. If it is determined that a child is lost or left unattended, a staff member should bring the child to the attention of Library management.
2. The staff member should try to identify and locate the parent or responsible adult:
 - a. Walk around the Library with the child, looking for the guardian.
 - b. Page the child's guardian using the guardian's name if known, or the child's name, if known. If no name is available, describe the child's physical appearance.
 - c. If the parent is not found in the building, a staff member should stay with the child until the parent can be located, through searching the database, phone book, city directory etc.
3. When the guardian is located, explain the Library policy on unattended children.
4. If the guardian has not been located within a reasonable time (15 minutes), or if the Library is closing, the staff member shall call the police, and release the child to the officer's custody upon their arrival.
5. Under no circumstances shall a staff member take the child out of the Library premises.

Disruptive Behavior

1. **Disruptive Attended Children under Age Ten (10) Years**
 - a. Children who are being disruptive will be asked by staff to behave.
 - b. If the disruptive behavior continues, a staff member should inform the guardian that the child is disturbing others.
 - c. If the guardian refuses or is unable to control the child, the family will be asked to leave.
2. **Disruptive Unattended Children under Age Ten (10) Years or persons lacking the mental capacity to be left unattended.**
 - a. The staff member will ask the child to correct the behavior. If the child persists the child will be told to sit quietly at the table closest to the Circulation desk.
 - b. Obtain the child's and guardian's names and attempt to locate the guardian within the building. If located in the building, explain that the child is being disruptive and inform

the guardian of the Library policy. If the parent refuses or is unable to control the child, the family will be asked to leave.

- c. If the parent cannot be located within the building, the staff member will attempt to contact the parent through searching the database, phone book, city directory, etc. When the parent is contacted the guardian will be told that the child is being disruptive, will be reminded of the Library policy, and will be told the guardian must pick up the child immediately.
- d. If the guardian is unable to come immediately, the guardian will be told the child may stay at a table close to the Circulation desk until picked up if the child's behavior is acceptable, If the behavior is not acceptable the police will be called. Next time the child is left the police, as well as the parent, will be called. If the guardian can not be contacted within a reasonable time (15 minutes), or if the Library is closing, the police will be called.
- e. If the guardian cannot be located and the child must leave (to catch a ride, e.g.), the staff member will give the child's name, address and an account of the disruptive behavior to Library Director, who will then write the guardian, describing the incident and informing the parent of the Library policy.

3. Disruptive Children, Age Eleven (11) Years and Over

- a. Tell the young person that they are causing a disturbance and explain this as being a warning.
- b. If the disruptive behavior continues, tell the youngster to leave. Follow through to insure that the child does leave the building.
- c. If the youngster continues to be disruptive after being warned, or refuses to leave the building when asked, the police should be called to deal with the problem. (This may be the only means of determining the youngsters name and address as well so that the guardian can be notified.)
- d. The Library Director will contact the guardian in writing, describing the incident and informing the guardian of the Library policy.

Staff Member Follow-up

Staff members involved in situations with disruptive persons shall, using an Incident Report Form, document the time and circumstances in writing and give the report to the Library Director at their earliest opportunity.

(Adopted 7/11/07, Reviewed 8/13/08. 8/5/09 Garden City Library Board of Trustees)