



Naples Library Unattended Child Policy

Purpose

The library is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all patrons. However, the library is a public facility and **is not equipped to provide childcare or supervision.**

Responsibility and Liability

Parents, guardians, and caregivers are **solely responsible** for the safety, behavior, and supervision of children in the library.

Library staff:

- **Do not assume responsibility** for unattended children
 - Will take **reasonable steps** to ensure a child's safety if concerns arise
 - Will act in **good faith** to respond to potentially unsafe situations
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Ages 0–7

- Must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or assigned caregiver (age 16+) **at all times**
 - Caregiver must remain **within sight and direct supervision**
 - During a library program, a caregiver must remain in the building
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Ages 8–13

- May use the library independently for limited periods
- Must demonstrate the ability to:
 - Follow library rules

- Care for themselves safely
 - Must have caregiver contact information available to share with the staff as needed
 - Must have a **clear plan for leaving the library with their caregiver**
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Ages 14–17

- May use the library independently
 - Remain subject to all library policies
 - May supervise younger children **only if capable**, at the discretion of staff
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Behavioral and Safety Expectations

A child is considered **effectively unattended** if they:

- Are unable to follow library rules
- Appear distressed, unsafe, or in need of supervision
- Engage in behavior that risks harm to themselves or others

In such cases, staff may contact a caregiver and the child may be asked to leave the library

Staff Response to Unattended Children

If a child under eight appears unattended, or if a child is in an unsafe situation, staff will:

1. Attempt to locate a parent or caregiver in the building
 2. If known, attempt to **contact the caregiver**
 3. Remain with the child in a **public, safe location**
 4. If the situation warrants, contact:
 - A parent/guardian
 - **Local law enforcement or child protective services**
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Closing Time Procedures

- Children must have **transportation arranged before closing**
- Staff will remind unattended children of closing time
- Staff are **not permitted to remain after hours** to supervise minors

If a child is not picked up:

1. Staff will attempt to contact a caregiver
 2. Two staff members should remain with the child, if possible
 3. If no caregiver is reached, **law enforcement may be contacted**
 4. Staff will never transport children in personal vehicles
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Prohibited Situations

- Children left at the library **as a substitute for childcare**
 - Children left without the ability to contact a responsible adult
 - Children remaining after closing without arranged pickup
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Legal Position Statement

The library does not assume custodial responsibility for minors.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as creating a **special duty of care** beyond that owed to the general public.

Approved by the Library Board of Directors on April 14, 2021. Amended on April 15, 2026.