

Policy 5-12	Unattended Children	Created: 4/2/2015 Revised: 7/25/2019 Approved: 8/9/2019
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I. Purpose

This policy explains the parameters for ensuring the safety and well-being of unattended children in the Library.

II. Introduction

Jackson County Library Services welcomes children to use its facilities and services. Responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent (or guardian or older responsible individual assigned by the parent), not with library staff. For the safety and comfort of children and Library patrons, a responsible adult or an older responsible individual (minimum age 14) must accompany children under age 10 when they are using the Library. This responsible individual must supervise, guide, and control the behavior of their charge or charges at all times. Children, either attended or unattended, are expected to abide by the same rules of conduct as other Library patrons and may be asked to leave the Library if their behavior is inappropriate.

III. Levels of Supervision

Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or older responsible individual (minimum 14 years of age) at all times in the Library and on the Library grounds. Children age 6 and younger must always be within sight of the person responsible for their safety.

IV. Unattended Child

Library staff are not responsible for unsupervised or unaccompanied children. If Library staff is aware of an unattended child, they will use their judgement and discretion to determine whether the unattended child's safety or well-being is in jeopardy, either while in the Library or if the person was to leave the building. If Library staff determine that an unattended child's safety or well-being is in jeopardy, steps will be taken to contact a parent or legal guardian. If staff are unable to locate a parent or legal guardian, staff will contact appropriate authorities.

V. After Hours of Operation Unattended Child

Library staff are not responsible for unattended children after the hours of operation. Staff will contact appropriate authorities in the event a child is unaccompanied at Library closing.

VI. Programs

During special Library programs for children, parents, guardians, or an older responsible individuals must remain on the premises (in the main Library where the parent/guardian is accessible to the child) until the program has ended, in case an emergency should arise. The responsible adult or older responsible individual must be ready to meet that child promptly when the program ends or have made arrangements clear with the child regarding leaving the Library on his/her own or with a designated caregiver. Staff does not monitor the arrival or departure of any child from a program or the building.