

Stirling-Rawdon Public Library



Policy Type:	Operational	Policy Number:	OP294/10E
Policy Title:	Unattended Children	Initial Policy Approval Date:	2010
		Last Review/Revision Date:	Feb 2020
		Year of Next Review:	2023

The Stirling-Rawdon Public Library staff recognizes that children of all ages have a right to a welcoming, respectful, supportive and safe environment when they visit the Library.

The Library is a busy place and Library staff cannot assume responsibility for children left unattended within our public facility. The following policy establishes the conditions needed to maintain the well-being of children and the responsibilities of their caregivers.

Section 1: Responsibilities of the Parent or Caregiver

1. Responsibility for the welfare and the behaviour of children using the Library ultimately rests with the parent/caregiver.
2. The Library is governed by the terms in the Ontario Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) with regards to supervision of children.
Specifically:
Section 79 (3) "No person having charge of a child less than 16 years of age shall leave the child without making provision for the supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances"
Section 79 (4) " Where a person is charged with contravening Subsection (3) and the child is less than 10 years of age, the onus of establishing that the person made provision for the child's supervision and care that was reasonable in the circumstances rests with the person"
3. The Library expects parents, caregivers and teachers to:
 - a) not leave children requiring supervision unattended in or about library premises

- b) monitor the use of services and collections by children under their care
 - c) be responsible for borrowed materials and fines incurred by children under their care
 - d) be responsible for the appropriate behaviour of children under their care
4. Children 9 years of age and under must be accompanied by an adult while in the Library
 5. Children under the age of 5 that are attending programs may be briefly supervised by the library staff that may be running the program; however the child's caregiver must remain present within the Library building.

Section2: Responsibilities of Staff

1. The Library staff members will be guided by this policy in situations where,
 - a) an unattended child is found frightened or crying in the Library
 - b) an unattended child is perceived to be endangering themselves or others
 - c) another person in the Library poses a perceived threat to the unattended child
 - d) an unattended child exhibits specific inappropriate behaviour
 - e) an unattended child is not met by their caregiver by closing time
 - f) if a child is consistently left on their own for long periods of time in the Library
2. Where a responsible adult cannot be contacted, Library staff will:
 - a) not leave a child unattended if caregiver is not present at closing time
 - b) not provide the unattended child with a drive home
 - c) contact local police or Children's Aid Society
 - d) remain with the unattended child until the proper authorities can take the child into their protection
3. When Library staff members have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in the need of protection, they will advise the CEO or if the CEO is not available, staff will promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the local police or Children's Aid Society.