

NORTH KANSAS CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Policy on Unattended Children in the Library
Approved the Library Board of Trustees October 18, 1999

Service to children is a very high priority of the North Kansas City Public Library. Children of all ages are welcomed and encouraged to use the library's materials, programs, and services. Every effort is made to have a pleasant, warm and inviting library setting. At the same time, the library is an open, public building, and the well being of children left alone is a serious concern. Also, unattended children, left alone for an extended period of time, often become bored, restless or disruptive. Some, especially younger children, can become frightened or anxious.

For these reasons, the following policy has been established:

Parents or caregivers (age 12 and older) are responsible for the care of their children who use the library's facilities. Library staff cannot assume the responsibility for the care or supervision of children in the library.

The following guidelines have been established to insure that children are safe and cared for while in the library and have been made with the understanding that individual children mature at different rates.

- The library does not provide care or supervision of children, except to the extent needed to uphold library rules of conduct and use and does not accept responsibility for such care. Parents and other caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior.
- Children under the age of eight (8) may not be left unattended in the library except during scheduled library-sponsored programs.
- Children age eight (8) and older may be left unattended providing they are mature enough to stay alone and observe proper conduct. Such children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other patrons and the same consequences, including being asked to leave the library. This possibility should be taken into account when deciding to leave a child unattended in the library.
- Children of any age with mental, physical or emotional problems which render necessary supervision, shall be accompanied by a parent or other caregiver at all times.
- Children left unattended in the library in violation of North Kansas City Public Library's UNATTENDED CHILDREN'S POLICY may be considered a child in need of care and the matter may be referred to the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services or other authorities.
- If a parent or guardian of an unattended child under the age of eight (8) cannot be contacted or located within one-half hour of the discovery that the child is unattended, the library will ask the local police department to contact the Division of Family Services.
- If the library is closing and a parent or guardian of a child under age thirteen (13) cannot be contacted or located, the library will ask the local police department to contact the Division of Family Services.