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PUBLIC SERVICE

(3.14) Unaccompanied Children

Children under seven must be closely supervised in the library by an adult over 18 years of age.

Parents of children over seven are reminded that the same caution is warranted regarding a child's unaccompanied use of the public library as would be the case in any other public place. Staff has many responsibilities and cannot give unattended children undivided attention. Children may use any area of the library; therefore, staff may not always be able to observe them and their interaction with other library users.

In order to maintain a comfortable environment for all library users, staff must enforce conduct rules for both children and adults. A problem is created for both parent and child when staff must require that a disruptive child leave the library if that child has been instructed to remain at the library until a parent returns. Parents who leave an older child unattended must provide contact information in case the child must leave the library.

The primary purpose of the children's area in the library is to provide a safe and comfortable place for children and their caregivers to enjoy the library together. Adults who are unaccompanied by children are not absolutely precluded from using juvenile areas of the library, as long as such use is seen as appropriate by staff. It is library policy that staff asks unaccompanied adults to use other areas of the library for activities such as magazine reading and computer use that are not specifically tied to the use of materials in the juvenile area.

This policy is not meant to imply that unaccompanied children are unwelcome in the library; however parents and guardians must work with library staff to assure that the library experience is safe and positive for children and all library users.