

**Aram Public Library Policy 5.5
Child Safety Policy**

Adopted June 14, 2007

The Aram Public Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. However, parents are reminded that unexpected events can occur while children are left unattended. Some examples include: the child could wander out of the building on his/her own, the child could be approached by untrustworthy people, or the child could be physically injured. Library Staff members have many duties and cannot supervise children, nor can the Library act as a substitute for daycare. Therefore, responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver. A caregiver must be at least 12 years of age.

All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency. It is important that all children have a library card. Accurate home and work telephone numbers of parents should be provided on the library card account. Library Staff cannot take responsibility for the care of children of any age.

If a child has special needs related to physical or mental ability, inconsistent behavior patterns, emotional problems, lack of adequate attention span, or incomplete social skills, that child must be supervised at all times by a parent or caregiver.

Children age 8 or younger must have a parent or caregiver accompanying them unless the child is participating in a library program. We strongly recommend that parents and caregivers attend programs with their children; however, parents or caregivers for children age 8 or younger who do not attend the program with the child must remain in the building. Parents or caregivers are still responsible for the actions of their children.

Children age 9 – 12 may use the Library unattended for an amount of time appropriate to their age and maturity. It is important for staff to take note of disruptions caused by children who apparently are unaccompanied. Parents are still responsible for the actions of their children. Children behaving inappropriately will be informed of the rules. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child shall be asked to leave the Library.

If a child age 9 – 12 is asked to leave the Library and is unaccompanied by an adult or appropriate-aged caregiver, or if the child is under age 9 and unattended by an adult or appropriate-aged caregiver, the staff will follow the directions below for children found on Library premises without a parent or caregiver.

If a child is found without a parent or caregiver, the staff will:

- A. Attempt to comfort the child, if necessary.
- B. Attempt to locate the parent or caregiver in the Library and explain the Child Safety Policy.

- C. Make every effort to contact the parent or caregiver who is not in the Library to come and pick up the child. Staff will express the Library's concern for the child's safety and explain the Child Safety Policy. Staff will ask for the name of the person who will pick up the child for verification upon arrival. Staff will explain that if the name of the person picking up the child does not match the one they are given over the telephone, the police will be called and the child will not be allowed to leave. Staff will write an Incident Report.
- D. Call the Delavan Police Department to pick up the child, if the parent or caregiver cannot be located within 30 minutes. Staff will notify the Director that police have been called and write an Incident Report.
- E. Encourage an unattended child to contact the parent or guardian if it is within 15 minutes of closing time. If a parent or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within 15 minutes of closing, Library Staff will call the Delavan Police Department to pick up the child. Staff will notify the Director that police have been called and write an Incident Report.
- F. Two Library Staff members will remain with the child until the parent, caregiver, or police arrive. This is paid time for the two staff members who remain with the child after the Library closes. Before the child is allowed to be picked up by a parent or caregiver, Library Staff need to verify the name of the person picking up the child with what was given to them on the telephone. If the name does not match the name given over the telephone, call the police for assistance.
- G. Once the child is in the care of the police, leave a note on the Library door stating "Unattended child is (or children are) in the custody of the Delavan Police Department, 123 S. 2nd St., 728-6311". Names will NOT be stated on the sign, nor will names be given to ANYONE asking, including people claiming to be parents or caregivers. They will be directed to the Delavan Police Department.
- H. Library Staff will not transport any child from the Library to another location.

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