



WHITBY PUBLIC LIBRARY

doorway to discovery

Policy Type:	Public		
Policy Title:	Unattended Child Policy		
Authority/Created:	CEO	September 15, 2004	Date Reviewed/Revised: September 16, 2009

The Whitby Public Library encourages and promotes children's use of the library. It is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver to monitor the whereabouts and behaviour of their children. Library staff cannot be held responsible for the welfare of children left unattended in library facilities.

In accordance with the *Ontario Child and Family Services Act, RSO 1990, C.11*, children under the age of 10 must remain in the company of a parent or responsible caregiver while in the library. A child 9 years or younger who is attending a library program need not be accompanied into that program by a parent/caregiver, unless otherwise indicated. Parents/caregivers must, however, be present in the building during the program in case an emergency should arise.

An unattended or lost child will be reassured by a staff member who will help them locate their parent or caregiver using procedures outlined below.

During Open Hours:

Lead the child through the public areas of the building to locate their caregiver. At the Central Library, lead the child through the public areas of the floor you are on and if the caregiver cannot be located, use the PA system to ask the caregiver to report to the appropriate information desk.

Verify with the child that this is the correct person.

If the caregiver cannot be located within the building, attempt to contact them by phone.

Remain with the child until the caregiver arrives.

In both cases, inform the caregiver of the Unattended Child Policy.

If all reasonable attempts to locate the caregiver fail, call the Durham Regional Police Service at 905 579-1520 and explain the situation. Complete an Incident Report.

After Closing Time:

Concern for a child after closing hours is not necessarily restricted to those 9 years of age and younger. Staff should use their judgment and err on the side of caution for children under 16 in this circumstance.

If a child is unattended at closing time, discern whether transportation arrangements have been made. Staff may wait with a child for up to 15 minutes after closing for a caregiver to arrive.

If no arrangements have been made, contact the parent or caregiver by phone, inform them that the library has closed and they must come and pick up their child within 15 minutes.

Two staff members should be present at all times.

When caregiver arrives, verify with the child that it is the correct person.

Inform the caregiver of the Unattended Child Policy.

If no parent or guardian arrives within 15 minutes after closing, call the police.

Under no circumstances will library staff provide transportation for unattended children.

Complete an Incident Report noting the child's name, parent/caregiver's name, phone number, and address.