

Freedom Public Library

Unattended Children Policy

Effective Date: 7-16-26

Approval Date: 7-16-26

Approved by: Freedom Public Library Trustee Board

The Freedom Public Library welcomes children to visit the library and encourages them to read, to explore various electronic formats, to attend programs, and to make full use of the library resources. Although staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children using the library, our facilities are not designed or licensed to provide childcare. Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is unattended by a responsible adult or caregiver.

The library reminds parents to consider the safety and well-being of their children and the needs of the other library users. Children should be supervised at all times and taught and reminded that the materials in the library must be respected and treated with care. With these considerations in mind, the following rules apply:

- Children 5 years old and younger must be *directly* supervised by a responsible adult or caregiver aged 16 or older in all rooms of the library, including the Children's Room.
- Children 10 years old and younger must be accompanied in the library by a responsible adult or caregiver aged 16 or older. Children aged 10 or younger may not be left unattended in the library for any amount of time. The responsible caregiver must

have contact information for an adult who is legally responsible for the child.

- Parents/guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, whether or not the parent or guardian is present.
- At the discretion of the parent/guardian, a child aged 11 or older may be left unattended in the library for a reasonable period of time needed to select materials, work on a homework assignment or attend a library program. The child must know how to reach the parent/guardian or responsible caregiver (aged 16 or older) should the need arise. Children should not be left for excessively long (more than 2 hours) periods of time.
- When children older than age 11 are visiting the library by themselves, the adult responsible for the child will be contacted if the child's behavior is inappropriate for the library and guidance from the staff has been ignored. If the adult cannot be reached and the behavior is deemed dangerous or unacceptably disruptive, the police will be notified.
- Youth younger than 18 must be picked up no later than five minutes before closing time. Youth left unattended at closing time will have the opportunity to contact an adult. If no contact can be made, or if a ride has not arrived within 5 minutes of closing, at the discretion of the library staff, the police may be called to supervise the child until the adult arrives. Library employees are not permitted to transport children to another location.