

IPL Unattended Child Policy

Iberville Parish Library (IPL) welcomes people of all ages to utilize its programs, facilities, collections and services. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young adults who use the library the following policy regarding unattended minors and its appropriate use is adopted. The Library Board of Control does not place upon any staff member the role of baby sitter, caregiver, or loco parentis. **Staff shall not be responsible for welfare of children left unsupervised in the library for any period of time.**

Use of Children's Library

The materials, services and equipment in the IPL's Children's Areas are intended for the use by children, their parents and caregivers, and others needing children's materials and services for some specific purpose. All other customers are asked to use the adult areas of the library.

No public place, including the library, can guarantee the safety of children. Therefore, parents or adult caregivers are legally responsible for the welfare and behavior of their children; the library is not responsible for unattended children. Library staff may refer children who are left unattended to the appropriate authorities including the Iberville Parish Sheriff's Office.

Children under the age of 10 must always be in close proximity and within sight of the adult/caregiver responsible for their safety. Parents or responsible caregivers must remain in the same area of the Library unless the child is attending a Library program, in which case they must remain in the Library building

Children age 10 and older may be allowed to use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions of their children. Children age 10 and older using inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library. If a child in this age group is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone. This is a particular concern in inclement weather and after dark.

It is recommended that children age 10 and older be accompanied during their library use, either by an older sibling, or by a parent/caregiver. All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.

Unattended children who appear lost or frightened should be comforted by the staff. A staff member will try to identify and locate the parents or responsible adult. If the responsible adult cannot be found within 30 minutes, law enforcement officials will be contacted.

Closing

Children under the age of 16 left unattended at closing time may be deemed at risk. Children will not be dismissed from the Library building by Library staff until transportation is secured. If a parent or caregiver cannot be contacted or located within 15 minutes of the Library's closing time, the Iberville Parish Sheriff's Office will be contacted to take custody of the child.

Under NO circumstances should a staff member give children or other patrons rides in personal or library vehicles.

Approved by IPL Board of Control 02/2018