

# Carter Lake Public Library

## Unattended Children Policy

The Carter Lake Public Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. However, responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent, guardian, or other adult individuals who are responsible for children, not with library personnel. This allows for a library environment that allows all patrons to utilize library materials and information sources in a safe, relaxed manner. Children must have a library card on file therefore staff have contact information to reach a parent or guardian if a situation arises.

Children under the age of 10 **CANNOT** be left unattended in the library. Children under the age of 10 should be accompanied by an adult or caregiver 15 and older, **UNLESS** the child is checking out a library item. Children need to be supervised by an adult/ or teen (15 or older) during their library visits if they want to hang out.

An exception is if a child is attending supervised library programs. Then any child 7 years and older can attend the program/ event until it ends. At that point, the child cannot stay in the library to “hang out”. A guardian will need to either stay in the facility while the underaged child participates in a program or give them directions on what they are to do when the program ends. Library staff is not responsible for ensuring that the child goes home after the program/ event.

Guardians can leave a child age 5 and up unattended in the library **IF** the guardian remains somewhere on the premises, etc. anywhere in the community center, and checks in with library staff. Guardians can only leave the child unattended for 45 minutes before staff will ask them to come back and supervise. Guardians **cannot** leave the premises while the child is unattended.

The following procedure will be used if it is determined that a child under the age of 10 is left unattended in the library:

1. **Library staff** will attempt to locate the parent, guardian, or individual on file responsible for the child within the library.
2. **If the parent, guardian, or adult person responsible for the child** has not been located, or if the library is closing, a staff member will notify the police.
3. **Under no circumstance** shall the staff of the Carter Lake Public Library deliver a child to the child’s home.

In any situation that requires calling a parent about a child’s behavior or that involves law enforcement, library staff will complete an Incident Report.

**Children 10 years of age and older may visit the library unattended.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child’s Name