

Unattended Children in the Public Library

The Skokie Public Library welcomes the use of its facilities and services by children. Library staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children, and are happy to help children use the library for the following purposes:

- 1 - Finding materials for school assignments and recreational reading.
- 2 - Providing an environment that encourages study and intellectual curiosity.
- 3 - Providing programs that inform and enrich.

Library facilities, however, are not licensed or designed to provide basic childcare needs such as physical exercise, nutrition, or emergency care. Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is left unattended. It is impossible for the library staff to guarantee a safe environment.

The Skokie Public Library encourages parents to consider the safety and well-being of their children and the needs of other library users of all ages. Children **under age eight must be attended by a parent or other responsible caregiver** (high school age and older) at all times while in the library.

If at any time the child under eight is unattended, the following will occur:

- 1) The parent or caregiver will be paged in order to determine if he or she is in the library. If so, he or she will be asked to stay with and supervise the child.
- 2) If it is determined that the child is in the library without an adult caregiver, a staff member will call the parents and request that they pick up the child. If the parents are not at home, we will ask the child for the name and number of another relative or caretaker. The police will be called to assume responsibility if the parents or caretaker cannot be reached in one half hour.

Unattended children eight and over are free to use the library's resources as long as needed, provided that their behavior is not disruptive to other patrons or staff members. We encourage parents to talk to their children about appropriate behavior in the library.

Library staff are required to notify the appropriate authorities if they have reason to suspect that there is evidence of abuse or neglect.

Approved 4/11/01 Skokie Public Library
Board of Trustees