

FORT SASKATCHEWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY

SUBJECT: DEALING WITH UNATTENDED &/OR DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN
IN THE LIBRARY

REFERENCE #: 89/01 DATE APPROVED: Feb. 8, 1989

REPLACES: 86/02 REVISED: Dec. 13, 1995

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Although children and libraries are important to each other, library staff cannot be responsible for children who are left unattended in the Library or who are acting in an unruly manner.

DEFINITIONS:

An unattended child is defined as one who is visibly upset, crying, or appears to be lost and appears to be without a parent/guardian.

An unruly child is defined as one who is running around, climbing on furniture, or is involved in any other activity that library staff deems unruly, or who is noisy to the extent that it is noticed by and/or is bothering others in the Library.

1. Children left unattended when enrolled in a library program:

1.1 Preschool children:

- a condensed written form of this policy is given to each parent/guardian when they register the child.
- the parent/guardian must stay in the library portion of the building or designate an alternate adult to stay in their place.
- the parent/guardian, if leaving, should leave a note with the circulation staff saying who is responsible for their child.

1.2 School age children:

- parents/guardians who enroll school age children in a library program must give the Library an alternate telephone number where they can be reached in case of an emergency involving the child.
- if the child is still in the Library at closing time, and the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the R.C.M.P. will be called.

2. Children left unattended in the Library: Steps will be taken by the library staff only if it is brought to their attention that a child is in need of their parent/guardian and this person cannot be located in the Library. In this case, the child may be unruly, crying, lost &/or asking for their parent, or in obvious distress.

2.1 An attempt to learn the child's name and telephone number will be made by the library staff.

2.2 The staff will call the parent/guardian.

2.3 If no response, staff may wait a while before calling again.

2.4 If unable to reach a parent, the R.C.M.P. should be called after a wait of approximately one hour.

2.5 If the child is quite upset (e.g. crying, wanting to leave), call the R.C.M.P. if parent/guardian cannot be reached.

3. Disruptive behaviour:

3.1 Ask the child to discontinue the disruptive behaviour - give them a warning that they will have to leave if this behaviour continues.

3.2 If the warning fails:

Under 12 - contact the parent/guardian or call the R.C.M.P.

12 & over - ask them to leave the building and escort them to the door.

3.3 If the child refuses to leave, and the staff cannot reach the parent/guardian, call the R.C.M.P.

4. Staff will make a written report of the incident. A form is available. The report will be retained in the library files.

RoseAnn Johnson
Board Chair

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