



Mercer County District Library

Unattended Children Policy

Board Policy:

To provide a library environment that allows all patrons of all ages to utilize library materials and information sources in a safe, relaxed manner.

Administrative Procedure:

1. The Mercer County District Library is not a child care provider but a public institution where all patrons have an equal right to quality library services in a safe and relaxed environment. Library staff cannot provide adequate security and safety for children.
2. Children age 8 and under may not be left unattended at the Mercer County District Library. Any member of the Library staff may take action they deem necessary to provide for the welfare and safety of an unattended child, such as:
 - a. Locate the parent or caregiver in the library.
 - b. Make every effort to contact the parent or caregiver who is not in the library to come and pick up the child.
 - c. Call the Celina Police, or the Mercer County Sheriff to pick up the child, if the parent or caregiver cannot be located within 30 minutes.
3. Children age 9 through 12 may use the Library unattended based upon maturity and ability to act accordingly. Children in this age range must be willing and able to provide contact information for a parent or guardian upon request. If Library staff deems a child age 9 through 12 to be in need of supervision and no parent or caregiver can be located or contacted within 30 minutes, any member of the Library staff will call the police.
4. Children age 13 through 17 may use the Library unattended based upon maturity and ability to act accordingly. Children in this age range, who cannot abide by the Behavior Policy, may be asked by any of the Library staff to leave the premises. The police may be called if warranted by the seriousness of Conduct in Libraries infraction. The Library does not assume responsibility or liability for children asked to leave the property.
5. No staff member shall transport any child from the library to another location.
6. No child is to remain in the library after hours, unless the appropriate police or sheriff's department has been notified. Two staff members are required to stay with children until they are picked up.
7. An incident report form must be completed and submitted to the Library Director and a copy provided to the police or children's services office when appropriate.