

# North Perth Public Library



Policy Title: **Unattended Children**

Policy Type: **Operational**

Effective Date: **June 2018**

Policy Number: **OP-07**

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The North Perth Public Library staff cannot assume responsibility for children left unattended within our facilities. The North Perth Public Library affirms the provisions of the *Ontario Child, Youth and Family Services Act, S.O. 2017 c14 Section 136(3)*, which requires that a person responsible for a child of less than sixteen years of age must provide for supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances.

## Section 1: Responsibilities of the parent and/or guardian or caregiver

1. Responsibility for the welfare and the behaviour of children using the Library ultimately rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver
2. The library expects parents, caregivers, and approved caregiver:
  - a) to not leave children under 16 requiring supervision to be unattended in or about library premises
  - b) to supervise children under their care while in or on library premises.
  - c) to be responsible for borrowed materials and fines incurred by children under their care
  - d) Monitor the use of the internet by children under their care as per *OP-06 Acceptable Use Policy*.
3. In this Library:
  - a) Children ages ten (10) and over are welcome to use the Library independently on a regular basis, but parents are still responsible for the behavior of any children up to the age of 16 while they are in the Library;
  - b) Children younger than ten (10) should be accompanied by an adult while in the Library;
  - c) Children under the age of five (5) attending programs, may be supervised by the Library staff only during the scheduled time of the program; their caregivers must always remain in the Library building.

## Section 2: Responsibility of Staff

1. Staff, having confirmed that reasonable care has not been provided for a child, will attempt to contact the caregiver.

2. Where a responsible adult cannot be contacted, Library staff will:
  - a) not leave a child unattended at closing time;
  - b) not give the child a ride home;
  - c) contact local police or Children's Aid Society (CAS);
  - d) remain with the child until the proper authorities can take the child into their protection.
  - e) Report this occurrence to the CEO

### Section 3: Duty to Report

1. The *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (Section 125)* recognizes that each of us has a responsibility for the welfare of children. It clearly states that members of the public, including professionals who work with children, have a legislated obligation to report promptly to the Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they suspect that a child or youth under the age of 16 is, or may be, in need of protection. The CYFSA defines the phrase "child in need of protection" as including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, and risk of harm.
2. Library staff who are concerned that a 16-or 17-year-old is, or may be, in need of protection may make a report to Children's Aid Society (CAS) and the CAS is required to assess the reported information.
3. When Library staff members have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be, in need of protection, they will advise the Library CEO and together they will promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the local CAS, as required in CYFSA s.136 (1).

### Section 4: Phone Numbers

Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society: 1-800-668-5094

Ontario Provincial Police Perth Detachment – Listowel Office: 519-291-1414 or 1-888-310-1122 (non-emergency lines)

### **Related Documents:**

- *Government of Ontario. Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990.*
- *Government of Ontario. Child, Youth and Family Services Act.*