

UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

Updated: 11JUL2013

One of the primary missions of the library is to provide a variety of services for people of all ages. The library encourages visits by children, and it is our desire to make these visits both memorable and enjoyable for the child. Parents are asked to come with their children, not only for their own safety, but to show respect for other Library patrons. Library staff cannot assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children in the library.

All children age 7 and under shall be attended to and adequately supervised by a responsible adult or caregiver 12 years of age or older. The caregiver must be with the child at all times while in the library.

Children ages 8 or older may be in the library unattended for a period of time not to exceed 4 hours, provided that their behavior is not disruptive to other customers or staff members. Parents are responsible for their children's behavior while at the library.

A child of any age who is unable or unwilling to follow the rules of the library or the direction of library staff or whose behavior is disruptive to customers or staff members may be required to have appropriate supervision while in the library.

A caregiver who is unwilling or unable to properly supervise children in his or her care will be reminded about the need for supervision and appropriate library behavior. If inadequate supervision or behavior problems causing disturbance to library users or operations continue, the family or group may be asked to leave the library.

For children under age 5, a parent or other caregiver must remain in the library while the children are attending library programs. When older children attend library programs, a parent or caregiver is expected to pick up their children as soon as the program ends.

While the majority of children are ready to come to the library unsupervised at the age minimums given here, many are not. Parents should keep their children's needs in mind when deciding at what age they are prepared for the responsibility of caring for themselves in a public and busy place such as the library.

When concerns arise about a child left unsupervised, library staff will attempt to contact a parent. If a parent cannot be reached within a reasonable amount of time or if the library is closing, staff may contact the Reedsburg Police Department to ensure the child's well being and may turn the child over to the police. The responding officer should make the determination about whether or not the child may return home alone.