

## **UNATTENDED CHILDREN**

The Anderson County Library welcomes and encourages children to visit the Library, use library resources and services, and attend library programs. Staff members are available to help and support children; however, the Library is not able to provide short- or long-term child care, or be responsible for unattended children.

### **(A) Definition**

Unattended children are children of any age who are apparently unaccompanied by a parent, guardian, and/or responsible caregiver. Children who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves may not be left alone in the Library and must have adequate supervision while in the Library. The Library is not responsible if children leave Library property unattended.

### **(B) Regulation**

Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of children at all times in the Library and on library property. Children are expected to respect library property and adhere to the rules outlined in the "**Code of Conduct**" policy.

- (1) Children age 11 and under should have a parent, guardian or caregiver with them in the library. In the case of children attending a library-sponsored program, the parent, guardian or caregiver must remain in the building during the program and pick up the child at the program's conclusion.
- (2) Children/Students, ages 12-17 will be held responsible for their own appropriate behavior within the library. Parents will be notified of inappropriate behavior and library visitation may be restricted.
- (3) Children may not be left unattended for prolonged periods of time or at closing time.
- (4) If an unattended child is being disruptive, is habitually left unattended for long periods of time, or is deemed to be at risk (as in the case of a child being left unattended when the library is closing), an effort will be made to locate the responsible parent, guardian, or caregiver. If necessary, appropriate law enforcement or child protective authorities will be called for assistance. All minors should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.

### **(C) Disruptive Children**

#### **Unattended Children age 12 and over**

- (1) Staff will warn the young person who is causing a disturbance and that after this warning he/she will be asked to leave.
- (2) If disruptive behavior continues, staff will tell the young person to leave and follow up to make certain that he/she does so. If the young person is without transportation staff should call a parent/guardian.
- (3) If a problem with the same young person recurs, a staff member will take down the young person's name and a staff member will contact a parent/guardian concerning the incident.
- (4) If at any time a young person becomes excessively belligerent or refuses to leave the library when asked, library staff may call Law Enforcement for assistance.

#### **Children age 11 and under attended by an adult**

- (1) If a child in this age group violates the Code of Conduct, the child and the parent/caregiver will be informed of the policy. If inappropriate behavior continues, they may be asked to leave the library.