



## Unattended/Under attended Child Policy

The **purpose** of this policy is to ensure the library remains a safe and welcoming place for our community's children and families and to guide staff and volunteer behavior in regards to unattended/under attended children.

The Swarthmore Public Library welcomes and encourages children of all ages to visit the library and attend youth programs. Children are the responsibility of their parent, guardian, or other responsible caregiver and at no time will library staff or volunteers be responsible for the behavior, safety, or supervision of children in the library.

An unattended child is any child who is apparently unaccompanied by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver. An under attended child is any child who is apparently without the immediate supervision of a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver.

***Children 7 years old or younger shall at all times be attended and supervised*** by a responsible person (parent, guardian, other caregiver, or mature adolescent (age 14 or older). That person must accompany the children in their care when in the library, hallway or restroom.

***Children over the age of 7 years may use the library unattended*** for a reasonable period of time, provided they are able to maintain proper library behavior. Children are expected to respect library property and adhere to the rules outlined in the library's behavior policy.

Children must have the telephone numbers of their parent, guardian or other designated adult so that a responsible person may be contacted to come and pick up the child in case of a health emergency or other special circumstances such as an unexpected library closing.

Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian and/or caregiver when a child is unattended or under-attended and

- the behavior of the child is disruptive or inappropriate (or)
- the child appears to be a danger to herself or himself or others (or)
- the child appears to be threatened by others (or)
- the child appears to be ill or upset (or)
- the child has not been met by a parent or caregiver at closing.

In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be located, staff will contact the State Police. In the event of an emergency, staff will call 911.

During our Youth Programs it is acceptable for children age 3 and above to attend programs independently. However, an adult responsible for the child must remain in the Library or Borough Building during the program.



*Approved by the Swarthmore Public Library Board of Trustees October 20, 2015*