

## Unattended Children

1. The NCPL does not have the staff or resources to monitor all patrons, in all places, at all times. The library cannot be responsible for the care and safety of minor children traveling to or from the library or while on library property. Out of concern for the safety and security of children using the library, the NCPL Board of Trustees has implemented the following:

- **All Patrons** regardless of age are expected to comply with the Patron Code of Conduct Policy.
- **Children ages birth through age 8** must have a parent or responsible caregiver (not under the age of 15) with them at all times while on library property unless attending library sponsored children's programs (parents must remain in the building during pre-school programs with the exception of KiPS).
- **Children age 9 through 17** may use the library unattended for any length of time as long as their behavior is not disruptive to other patrons or staff and they are complying with the Patron Code of Conduct policy.
- Parents and caregivers are ultimately responsible for ensuring the safety of and monitoring the activities and behavior of their children while the children are on library property.
- **Pandemic Exception:** During a government recognized pandemic, all children under the age of 18 may not loiter in the library and must social distance. They may checkout materials, use computers for school or work (not entertainment), and attend library programs.

2. If an unattended child is being disruptive, is habitually left unattended for long periods of time, or is deemed to be at risk of coming to harm (as in the case of a child being left unattended when the library is ready to close), an effort will be made to locate the responsible parent, guardian, or caregiver. When contact efforts fail, the appropriate law enforcement or child protective authorities will be notified to take custody of the child.

3. If a child (with or without a parent or guardian present) is felt to be a victim of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, library staff have been instructed to call the Department of Child Services hotline.