



Policy Title:	Unattended Children
Policy Type:	Public Service
Policy #:	PS 006-03
Policy Authority:	CEO
Effective Date:	2005
Revision Date:	2019

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines to staff on the handling of unattended children in the library.

POLICY

The Clarington Public Library encourages and promotes children's use of the library. In accordance with the *Ontario Child and Family Services Act, RSO 1990, C.11*, the responsibility for the safety of children in or about library premises rests with the parent/caregiver and not with library staff.

As outlined in the Guidelines for the Supervision of Children by the Durham Children's Aid Society, children under the age of 10 should not be left unattended at any time and a competent caregiver should be on the same premise as the child. The library defines a competent caregiver as an individual aged 12 or older to whom the parent/guardian has given responsibility for the care of the child.

A child under the age of 10 who is attending a library program need not be accompanied into that program by a parent/caregiver, unless otherwise indicated. Parents/caregivers must, however, be present in the building during the program in case an emergency should arise.

PROCEDURES

When an unaccompanied child under the age of 10 is found in the library, the library staff member should:

1. Attempt to locate the child's parent/caregiver in the library or by telephone if possible.
2. Remain with the child until the child's parent or caregiver arrives.
3. Remain in the public area for your own protection.
4. Because of potential food allergies do not offer the child food.
5. When the parent/caregiver arrives:



- a. Inform them that as per our Unattended Children Policy, no child under the age of 10 is permitted to be left unattended at the library at any time.
- b. If necessary, provide the parent/caregiver with a copy of this policy as well as the Durham Children's Aid Society Guidelines for the Supervision of Children. These guidelines can be accessed via the Durham Children's Aid Society website at: <https://durhamcas.ca/parent-resources/supervision-guidelines/>
6. If all reasonable attempts to contact the parent/caregiver fail, call the Durham Regional Police Service at (905) 579-1520 and explain the situation.
7. Library staff should under no circumstances, transport or take the child away from the library building.
8. If the child continues to be left alone in the library, Library Administration should determine the appropriate course of action and inform the parent/caregiver of the follow-up actions to be taken.
9. The Staff Member in charge should complete an Incident Report noting the child's name, parent/caregiver's name, phone number, and address as well as an account of the incident.

Please consult the Durham Children's Aid Society website for the most up to date information regarding these guidelines at: <http://www.durhamcas.ca>