

Booth Library Policy on Children in Library

Booth Library, including the Ballenger Teachers Center, welcomes children to utilize its facility with their parents or another responsible adult. Any resident of the State of Illinois over age 18 may apply for a resident card for checkout privileges at Booth Library.

It is not the library's intention to seek out unattended children but, rather, to have a reasonable response prepared if problems present themselves. Children are expected to abide by the same *Booth Library User Code of Conduct* as adult patrons. Young children may be able to occupy their time for a short while, but may soon become bored and restless, disturbing the work and study of others. A child left alone may become frightened and anxious. The following policy seeks to address these concerns for the children in a responsible manner.

General Procedures

1. Library staff members are not responsible for the supervision of children left unattended.
2. Disruptive children will be required to leave after receiving a warning.
3. Staff members who find an unattended child frightened or crying in the building will, with the help of at least one additional staff member, try to console the child and identify and contact the child's parent or attending adult.
 - a. If a parent is in the building:
 - 1) the child will be accompanied through the library to seek the attending adult.
 - 2) upon location of the parent or attending adult, the child will be reunited with the adult, and the library policy regarding unattended children will be explained.
 - b. If the child is alone in the library:
 - 1) the parent or guardian of the child will be contacted. Library staff will request that the child be picked up immediately.
 - 2) if library staff cannot reach the parent or guardian, the librarian on duty will call Campus Security.
 - c. If a child is alone in the library building at closing time and appears to be vulnerable:
 - 1) library staff will attempt to call a parent or guardian. If staff cannot reach a parent or guardian in the first attempt, the librarian on duty will call Campus Security.
 - 2) a librarian on duty and another staff member will remain with the child inside the library until a parent, guardian, or a Campus Security officer arrives.
4. Under no circumstances, unless the building is being evacuated, will library staff transport or take a child away from the library building.

Definitions

An *unattended child* is any young person using the library facility unaccompanied by a responsible adult.

A *vulnerable child* is any unattended child 12 years of age or younger whose safety or well being would be endangered if he/she were sent out of the building. Examples of vulnerability might include the child being too young to be on his/her own, the child being sent out into an unsafe area, or being left alone, outside the facility after business hours.

A *disruptive child* is any child whose behavior negatively impacts library activities, including reading, study, consultation, examination and selection of library materials, and related activities of other library users. For further examples of disruptive behaviors, please see the *Booth Library User Code of Conduct*.

Approved:
Library Services Council
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