

## **UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Unattended Child Policy is to ensure the safety of children using the library.

### **B. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Durham County Library welcomes children of all ages to use materials and services. The library staff nurtures children to develop a love of reading and learning, but is not responsible for their care, their supervision or for accidents or other incidents that happen to them or that result from their actions.

#### **Responsibility**

- At all times the responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children lies with the parent, guardian, or designated caregiver. This includes times when the parent, guardian or designated caregiver is not present within the library building or on library grounds. Library staff and/or security will determine whether a child's behavior is inappropriate and will respond to such situations in the manner deemed appropriate based on the Library's Courteous Conduct Policy.
- Parents, guardians and/or designated caregivers are responsible for any actions including, but not limited to monetary responsibility for property damage or loss caused by their children under the age of 18.
- Library staff will report suspected abuse or neglect to the Durham County Department of Social Services at (919) 560-8424, or by calling 1-800-CHILDREN (Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina).

#### **Supervision**

- Children aged 10 and under are to be supervised and must remain in the physical presence of the parent or guardian or caregiver age 18 or over during the child's entire visit to the library.
- If a parent, guardian, or designated caregiver cannot be located when needed, or if staff suspects neglect or abuse, staff will contact appropriate authorities.
- If a child aged 15 or under is left unattended at closing, staff will notify Durham Police.

#### **Behavior**

The Library's Courteous Conduct Policy applies to all customers regardless of age.

**C. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all children using the library, their parents/guardians, and/or designated caregivers.

**D. LEGAL REFERENCE**

G.S. 7B-301: Duty to report abuse, neglect, dependency or death due to maltreatment.

**E. DEFINITIONS**

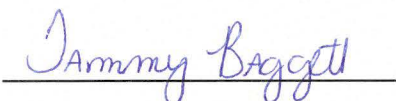
Neglected child: A child who does not receive proper care, supervision or discipline from his or her parent/guardian.

Supervision of children: Children age 10 and under are to be supervised and must remain in the physical presence of the parent/guardian or caregiver age 18 or over designated by the parent/guardian during the child's entire visit to the library.

**F. RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the responsibility of all library staff to understand this policy fully to ensure fair and equitable application. It is the responsibility of the Deputy Director, with the advice of the Board of Trustees, to interpret, monitor and recommend updates to the policy. The Library Director is the final authority regarding enforcing this policy.

Effective July 2023



Tammy Baggett  
Library Director