

LIBRARY POLICY: CS-01

EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/1/20 (This policy supersedes 7/08/19)

SUBJECT: Unattended Children in the Library

POLICY:

The Sunnyvale Public Library welcomes and encourages youth to use library services, materials, and spaces. The Library is a public facility open to everyone, and parents and caregivers are expected to accompany and supervise children under the age of eight at all times. Library staff cannot act in loco parentis (in place of parents). Parents and caregivers are responsible for their child's safety and well-being at all times.

If an unattended child appears to be lost, is being disruptive, or in the judgment of supervisory staff, is jeopardizing his or her own safety, Library staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver. If the parent or caregiver cannot be located, the child may be placed in the care of the Department of Public Safety.

Library staff will not, under any circumstances, be responsible for determining whether a caregiver, custodian, or parent is a legally authorized caregiver, custodian or custodial parent of the child. Parents, guardians, and caregivers acknowledge the risk of leaving a child unattended in the library and release the City from all claims which they may have on behalf of the child.

PROCEDURES:

WHEN A CHILD IS MISSING:

1. Staff receiving the initial report of a missing child will obtain the child's name, age, and description from the parent/caregiver.
2. The initial staff member will provide the description of the child to the a second, nearest-available staff member. If necessary, staff will use the intercom to call for help with the message: "*Attention Staff: Assistance is required at the Main Entrance.*" The second staff member will monitor the front door to ensure the child does not leave the facility while a search is conducted.
3. The initial staff member will assist the parent/caregiver and conduct a thorough search of the Children's areas and request a third staff member to provide the child's description to Circulation, Adult, and security staff.
4. Circulation, Adult, and security staff will conduct a thorough search of the library, including restrooms and plaza.
5. At the discretion of Children's staff, an announcement may be made for children ages 5 and older to ask the missing child to report to the Children's service desk.
6. If the child is found, they should be escorted to the Children's service desk.
7. If the child is not found, staff will immediately call 911.

PREPARED BY: Nan Choi 4/1/20  
Date

This policy was approved on 04/1/20 and is to be included in the Library Policy Manual.



Cherise Brandell  
Director of Library and Community Services