

POLICY MANUAL	Section No. : LS 7-7.1
	Effective : May 17, 1999
SECTION : Library Services - Other	Revised : November 21 2011; April 24, 2017, April 19, 2021, March 20, 2023
SUBJECT : Unattended Children	Page 1 of 2

Purpose

The Welland Public Library welcomes children of all ages and encourages children's use of the library.

While the Welland Public Library endeavours to provide a safe environment for all visitors, parents, guardians and/or caregivers are responsible for the supervision of children in their care while on Library premises.

Authority

The Welland Public Library adheres to all applicable legislation, including but not limited to, the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1*.

Definitions

Parent(s): The person or persons who have lawful custody of the child

Guardian(s): A person or persons who have lawful custody of a child, other than the parent(s) of the child

Caregiver: The person or persons who have been assigned to care for a child by a person or persons with lawful custody of the child

Key Principles

- It is the responsibility of the caregiver to monitor both the whereabouts and behaviour of children in their care when visiting a Welland Public Library facility
- Children ten (10) years of age or under must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver while on Library premises
- Children who are ten (10) years of age or under attending Library programs or events must have a parent, guardian, or caregiver present at the Library for the duration of the activity
- If a child under ten (10) years of age is unattended at closing time, staff will contact the Niagara Regional Police
- Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are responsible for supervising their child's access to all library spaces and resources including, but not limited to books, films, video games, makerspace equipment, library programs/activities and the Internet.

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Responsibilities

- Library Staff are expected to take appropriate action when children are left unattended at the Welland Public Library. Two employees are required to respond to these situations. Following attempts to calm and reassure the child, staff will make multiple attempts to locate/contact a parent, guardian, or caregiver. If all reasonable efforts fail, a Manager will contact the Niagara Regional Police. Under no circumstances will staff transport an unattended child away from the library.
- Under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1.*, library staff have a **Duty to Report** if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is in need of protection.