

## Unattended Child Policy

Approved 2/13/23

Sherrill-Kenwood Free Library welcomes children and strives to provide a safe, stimulating environment for their educational and cultural needs. Staff members are available to help and support children; however, the Library is not able to provide short- or long-term child care, or be responsible for unattended children. The responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver. As with any patron, a child's behavior is unacceptable if it disrupts the normal use of the Library by other patrons or interferes with the staff or volunteers in the performance of their duties.

Children ages 0-9 shall be accompanied by a responsible caregiver who is at least fifteen years of age, who will remain in the building, and will maintain responsibility for the child.

Children ages 10 and older may use the library independently provided they follow the library's policies set for all patrons. Parents/guardians remain responsible for the actions of their minor children, including, but not limited, financial liabilities.

Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian, and/or caregiver in circumstances such as the following:

- An unattended child is engaging in behavior that is disruptive to other library users, staff, or the normal operations of library business.
- An unattended child is involved in a situation that is potentially harmful to the health or safety of the child and/or others.
- An unattended child is left alone at the Library at closing time.

Such situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If parents, guardians, and/or caregivers cannot be reached, or are unresponsive, the Library will work with the City of Sherrill Police Department as needed.

Library staff will maintain a record of incidents regarding unattended children. Repeated incidents may lead to restricted or suspended library access. Parents/guardians/caregivers will be notified should restriction/suspension be invoked.