

Unattended Child Policy

STATEMENT

Carnegie-Stout Public Library encourages children of all ages to visit the library and is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment that encourages children of all ages to use and enjoy the library, collections, computers and programs offered. When children are left unattended for any length of time when no library programs are being offered, they can become bored, restless, and disruptive. The Library is not responsible for the care or supervision of children using library facilities, nor is it responsible if children leave Library property unattended.

In order to provide for the general welfare of all persons using the library, and to provide for the general safety of children using the Carnegie-Stout Public Library this policy sets forth the following guidelines.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 10

All children under ten years shall, at all times, be attended and supervised by a responsible person, e.g. an adult or a mature adolescent at least 16 years old. If a child in this age group is found unattended, Library staff will attempt to contact the parent(s). If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, police may be called to provide assistance. More than one such occurrence will result in suspension of Library privileges. Parents and/or guardians are required to maintain direct supervision of children under 10 with the exception of participation in certain library programs.

Children ten years and older may use the library unattended, subject to rules and regulations of the Carnegie-Stout Public concerning behavior, conduct and demeanor. Parents/guardians are responsible for their children's actions while the children are on library property. Children and young people who are disruptive in the Library or on Library grounds interfere with Library service to all users may be asked to leave.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN IN NEED OF MEDICAL ATTENTION

The library is not an appropriate place to leave children with obvious medical conditions that require close monitoring. If the staff determines that a child needs a parent's or caregiver's attention, staff will attempt to reach the parent or caregiver by telephone. If the parent or caregiver cannot be reached or is reached but does not come within a reasonable period of time to pick up the child, the staff may report the circumstances to either law enforcement or the appropriate social services agency. Parents and caregivers who disregard this policy risk losing library privileges for a period of time to be determined by the director.

CHILDREN LEFT AT THE LIBRARY AFTER CLOSING

The Carnegie-Stout Public Library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended on library premises. Children fifteen (15) years old or less should not be left on Library property at closing time. Procedures for dealing with the situation if a child is left at closing may include contacting the parent, contacting the police, and assigning staff to stay on a paid time basis. Children who leave Library property on their own are not the responsibility of the Library or its staff. Violation of this policy may also result in the suspension of privileges of the parent(s), the child and/or a fine of \$25.00 per ¼ hour that the child is left after closing if Library staff needs to stay after hours.

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By, *Pamela A. Mullin*
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