

**BERKELEY PUBLIC LIBRARY
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

A.R. Number:	10.5
ORIGINAL DATE:	12/06/06
BOLT Resolution #:	R -
REVISED DATE:	04/09/14
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SUBJECT: Unattended Children Policy

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this administrative regulation is to establish policies and procedures for identification of and handling unattended children in the Library.

II. Policy:

The Berkeley Public Library welcomes children of all ages. Library staff strive to provide a safe and appropriate environment for all Library users. Our libraries, however, are public buildings, and any public place may be dangerous or frightening for a child who is left unattended even for brief periods of time. Library facilities are neither designed for nor licensed to provide childcare.

Parents and caregivers are solely responsible for the welfare and the behavior of children using the Library. Children aged seven or younger must be supervised by a responsible caregiver at all times while they are in the Library.

If a child aged seven or younger is found to be unattended in any area of the Library (or an unattended child aged eight or older is found in distress), staff will stay with the child while they attempt to locate the child's caregiver. If Library staff cannot find the child's parent or caregiver, the Berkeley Police will be notified and asked to assume care of the child.

If a child is found unattended in the library at closing and is unable to wait for a caregiver alone, two members of staff will stay inside the library with the child while they attempt to contact a caregiver. If a parent or caregiver cannot be located or cannot take responsibility for the child in a timely manner, the Berkeley Police will be notified and asked to assume care of the child.

III. Procedure:

Unattended Children

Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is left unattended even for brief periods of time. Parents and other caregivers are solely responsible for the welfare and the behavior of children using the Library.

Relevant Rule of Conduct:

The following behaviors are also prohibited:

- *Leaving children under the age of eight (8) unattended by a parent or authorized adult.*

Staff procedure (during library hours):

- If a child aged seven or younger is found to be unattended in any area of the Library (or an unattended child eight or older is found frightened, crying, or otherwise in distress), approach the child and ask what is the matter.
- Ask the child their name and the name and whereabouts of their parent or caregiver.
- Notify a Children’s Librarian of the situation if possible; if not, notify another staff member.
- If the parent/caregiver is not in the immediate area, page the parent/caregiver.
- If you are unable to locate the parent/caregiver, call the supervisor in charge and/or security. Identify the child and write down his/her name, library card number and phone number; call to alert a parent/caregiver to the situation.
- Stay with the child until a parent/caregiver can be located. If they cannot be contacted by phone or do not arrive in a timely manner, call the Berkeley Police Department at (510) 981-5900 and ask that they assume responsibility for the child.
- Fill out an Incident Report Form.

Staff procedure (at closing):

- If staff judges that a child should not be left alone after the library closes, two staff members, one of whom should be the manager/supervisor in charge, will remain with the child.
- Identify the child and write down his/her name, library card number and phone number; call to alert a parent/caregiver to the situation.
- If a parent/caregiver cannot be located or does not arrive in a timely manner, call the Berkeley Police Department at (510) 981-5900 and ask the police to assume protection of the unattended child.
- A minimum of two staff members must wait with the child inside the library building until the parent/caregiver or police officer arrives.

Reviewed by: _____	
Director of Library Services	Date
Approved by: _____	
Chair, Board of Library Trustees	Date