



# VESTAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

## UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

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The Vestal Public Library considers ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its patrons our highest priority. Special consideration must be given to underage children.

### **POLICY**

- I. Children (under the age of 12 years old), must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver, (who is at least 14 years old).
- II. VPL staff are prohibited from assuming the responsibilities and liabilities of a parent, guardian, or caregiver for unattended children within the library.

### **LIABILITY**

VPL may not be held liable for any incidents, accidents, or other consequences resulting from a parent, guardian, or caregiver's: negligence, absence, or failure to supervise unattended children in their care. The supervisory and behavioral responsibility of children under the age of 12 lies solely with their parent, guardian, or caregiver.

### **GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines are strictly enforced in regards to the behavior, care, and wellbeing of children visiting and using the Vestal Public Library (building, grounds, including, but not limited to all VPL led or sponsored services and programs):

1. Children under the age of 12 must have a parent or guardian or caregiver within the immediate vicinity of the child at all times.
2. A parent or guardian or caregiver is defined as someone who is at least 14 years old and able to supervise a child between the ages of (0 years - 12 years).
3. If a child under the age of 12 is found unattended, VPL staff will attempt to locate the child's parent or guardian or caregiver informing them of the VPL Unattended Child Policy. If the parent or guardian or caregiver cannot be found on the VPL grounds, VPL staff will attempt to contact the child's parent or guardian or caregiver via telephone.
4. If a child under the age of 12 is with a parent or guardian or caregiver, but is not being supervised, VPL staff will inform the child's parent or guardian or caregiver that they must supervise the child. If the child's parent or guardian or caregiver fails to adequately supervise the child after two warnings, the parent or guardian or



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caregiver and the child will be asked to leave the Library.

5. Children age 12+ are allowed to use the Vestal Public Library unattended, however, children age 12+ should have emergency contact information readily available. The parent or guardian or caregiver is still responsible for the behavior and wellbeing of their child, and the child may be asked to leave the Library if the child is:
  - too loud
  - disruptive
  - not following Vestal Public Library Patron Rules of Conduct
  
6. If a child, age 12-17, has not been picked up from the Library by closing time, two Vestal Public Library staff members will remain with the child and attempt to contact their parent or guardian or caregiver via telephone. If the child's parent or guardian or caregiver does not arrive or cannot be reached within 15 minutes, Library staff will contact the Vestal Police Department for assistance.