

BETHEL PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY NUMBER: 108
TITLE: Unattended Child Policy
DATE ISSUED: Revised May 2009

PURPOSE: To address the safety and well-being of children in the library, and to maintain an orderly place where all patrons can make appropriate use of the library.

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

The Bethel Park Public Library welcomes the use of its facility by children. Since the library is open to the public, parents are asked to use good judgment by not leaving children unattended. The library is not responsible for the safety or well-being of any person beyond the extent reasonably expected of a public facility.

RULES AND REGULATIONS:

1. While the library staff will work to provide a safe environment for children, the library staff is not responsible for any unattended minor child (age 17 and under).
2. Children under the age of ten (10) must be directly supervised by a parent or responsible caregiver at all times while in the library.
3. Children attending library programs are, for the duration of the program only, considered to be supervised by library staff and thus are not considered unattended. However, the parent or responsible caregiver is expected to stay in the library building.
4. Parents or caregivers *cannot* leave children under age ten (10) unattended in the Children's Department while using other parts of the library.
5. Children ten (10) and older may be left unattended providing they can behave appropriately and follow library rules and policies. Children are subject to the same rules of behavior as all patrons and the same consequences apply.
6. The library staff is not responsible for preventing minor children from leaving the library. However, should a child be found alone or waiting for transportation at the time of library closing, efforts will be made to contact the parent(s) or legal guardian. Should appropriate arrangements not be possible, local police will be called and a staff member will remain with the child until the police arrive. Under no circumstances will staff transport children in a vehicle or accompany them home.
7. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for the conduct of their minor children in the library, regardless of whether they are accompanying the child.
8. As library staff do not serve in the role of parent or police, they do NOT have any responsibility to report persons who may be truant from school.
9. Persons of any age with mental, physical or emotional disabilities which affect their ability to use the library or render supervision otherwise necessary must be accompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver at all times.

NONCOMPLIANCE:

1. Failure to comply with this policy and/or the established rules, regulations, and procedures of the library may result in a verbal or written warning to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) via the Library Policy Violation form and may be reported to the appropriate authority.
2. Repeated violations of this policy may result in expulsion of the child and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) from the library for a specified period of time.

3. If any patron is creating a disturbance or causing problems in the library and refuses to comply, that person will be considered as trespassing and the staff has the authority to contact the police to eject that patron from the library.
4. Any patron whose privileges have been denied by library staff may appeal the decision to the Bethel Park Public Library Board of Trustees within thirty (30) days of the decision.

APPENDIX A – LIBRARY POLICY VIOLATION FORM

Bethel Park Public Library Policy Violation Form

_____ has violated the following library policy or policies:

_____ **#106 Internet and Computer Use** _____ **#102 Patron Behavior**

_____ **Other:** _____

This is a **1st warning** **2nd warning** **final notice**. By violating library policy, the above-named patron has forfeited the right to use the library and/or its resources including

computers for the following period: _____ . Upon return, if the

above-named patron violates a policy again, the library reserves the right to rescind all use of

the library by said patron. Comments: _____

Date: _____ **Patron Signature:** _____ **Staff:** _____

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