

# Unattended Children Policy

*Adopted by the Provincetown Public Library Board of Library Trustees on April 4, 2008*

*Amended and approved by the Provincetown Public Library Board of Library Trustees April 18, 2018*

The Staff seek to create a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere; yet the library is a public building, and as such it could be a dangerous place for children left alone. Therefore, for the protection and well-being of children who are using the library, the following policy has been established:

- The Provincetown Public Library welcomes children of all ages to enjoy the library and its services.
- Responsibility for children using the library rests at all times with the parent(s) or assigned caregiver(s), not with Library staff. Parents and caregivers must use their discretion in determining when their children are sufficiently mature and responsible to use the Library unaccompanied by an adult; however, children 12 years of age or younger must be attended by a parent or caregiver while in the library.
- The Library acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing. Library staff will not act *in loco parentis* when children are accessing library materials without an accompanying adult.
- If a child is left unattended, the staff will walk around the library in order to find the parent or caregiver, and when located, the staff will explain the library policy on unattended children.
- If the parent or caregiver is not found in the building, the staff should stay with the child until the parent can be located. If the parents have not been located within a reasonable time, or if the library is closing, library staff will call the police who will handle the situation according to their policies and procedures. Staff will wait with the child at the library until the police arrive.
- Under no circumstances will library staff transport or take the child away from the library building.
- In addition, parents and caregivers should be familiar with the library's hours of operation and should not leave children before opening or after closing. The library staff is not responsible for supervising children left alone when the library is closed but will make attempts to reach a parent or caregiver for immediate pick-up.