

CHESTER COUNTY LIBRARY
UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

Approved by the Chester County Library Board on February 13, 2012

The Chester County Library Board has adopted an Unattended Children Policy in order to:

- Ensure the safety of library patrons, employees, and volunteers.
- Protect the rights of individuals to use library property, materials, and services.
- Protect the rights of library employees and volunteers to conduct library business without interference.
- Ensure the use of facilities, materials, and services by the greatest number of individuals.
- Preserve those materials and facilities from harm.

These rules exist for the comfort and protection of all. They will be courteously but firmly enforced by library staff. Any library staff member has the authority to enforce this policy, and all other library patron policies. If a library security guard is on duty, violations of this behavior policy may be referred to him or her.

Violations of this policy or any other Library policies may result in loss of library privileges, including notification to appropriate local law enforcement agencies of illegal activity subject to prosecution by local, state, and federal authorities.

Loss of Library privileges will be based on a progressive scale as follows:

The first violation of Library policies will result in loss of privileges for one month.

The second violation of Library policies will result in the loss of privileges for six months.

The third violation of Library policies will result in the loss of privileges for one year.

The fourth violation of Library policies will result in the loss of privileges on an indefinite basis.

Appeals to regain privileges must be made to the Library Director. Final appeals will be decided by the Chester County Library Board. Restoration of privileges may be made on a probationary basis subject to future incidents.

RULES REGARDING UNATTENDED CHILDREN

The safety and well being of children left unattended in a public building is of serious concern. Children left alone may become frightened, anxious, or bored. Older children cannot be expected to deal with a small child who is frightened, tired or ill.

Library staff has many public duties and cannot serve as babysitters.

We ask your cooperation in the following areas as we strive to make the library a safe and happy place for your child.

1. Children **5-years-old and younger** must always be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult caregiver at all times.
2. Children **6-8-years old** must have a parent or responsible adult caregiver at all times.
3. Children **9-years-old and older** are responsible for their own behavior in the library and must follow library rules and regulations. Any child 9 or older who is left unattended must have a means of contacting his/her parent or guardian.
4. The library staff will attempt to contact parents of children whose safety is in doubt. If parents are unavailable, the library staff and/or the security guard will contact the police department to provide custody.
5. If any child under 18 has not been picked up at closing, the Library will contact the police to provide custody.

Parents, not library staff, are responsible for the behavior of their children using the library, including supervision of computer use by minors. Parents will be notified if their children are left unattended and require supervision. If parents or caregivers are unavailable, proper authorities will be notified.

Additional policies governing unattended children may be detailed in other policies, including but not limited to: Patron Behavior Policy, Meeting Room Policy, and Computer Use Policy.