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| <b>Latest Revision Date</b><br>February 2017 | <b>Reviewed</b><br>Annually | <b>Point of Contact</b><br>Kathy Williams, Director of Public Services |

## Unattended Child Policy

### Policy Statement

Children of all ages are welcome in the Library. While the Pickering Public Library tries to provide a safe environment for all, caregivers are responsible for the supervision of children in their care while the children are on Library premises. In accordance with the Ontario Child and Family Services Act:

*No person having charge of a child less than sixteen years of age shall leave the child without making provision for his or her supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances. RSO 1990, C.11, S.79 (1) (3)*

### Definitions

*Child or Children* means all person who are under the age of twelve (12) years of age.

*Caregiver* means parents, guardians, caregivers, older siblings, relatives who are directly responsible for the care and wellbeing of the child, while in the Pickering Public Library.

*Competency* means the ability of the child to accept social cues, be responsible for their own functions and behaviour and accept the direction of staff.

*Unattended* means a child left without visible supervision by a caregiver within the Pickering Public Library.

### Principles

1. It is the responsibility of the caregiver to monitor both the whereabouts and behaviour of children in their care on Library premises.
2. Children who are seven (7) years of age or under must be accompanied by a caregiver while on Library premises. A caregiver for a child 7 years or younger must be 12 years of age or older.

3. Children who are seven (7) years of age or under attending Library programs or events must have a caregiver present in the Library. Where Library programs or events are held outside of the Library building, the caregiver must remain within visual range of children.
4. Children who are eight (8) to eleven (11) years of age will be assessed by Library staff for their competency related to being unsupervised in the Library. Some signs that indicate that a child might not be competent to be on their own are: crying or frightened; acting in a manner that may be harmful; unable to unwilling to change their behaviour; cannot follow direction from staff or seeking ongoing attention from Library staff due to loneliness. Staff will advise caregivers if their child appears to need assistance while on the premises.

## **Application of the Policy**

Staff are expected to respond when children are left unattended at the Pickering Public Library and will take the appropriate action, including contacting the child's family, Durham Regional Police or Durham Children's Aid Society.

For further information please contact Kathy Williams, Director of Public Services at [kathyw@picnet.org](mailto:kathyw@picnet.org) or 905-831-6265 extension 6251.

*Alternate formats available upon request. Please talk to Library staff.*