

UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

The East Lake Community Library welcomes the use of its services and facilities by children. Staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children. However, library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide basic childcare needs or emergency care if the child becomes upset or ill.

Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is left unattended. Arrangements should be made ahead of time for children to be picked up after programs.

The Library reminds parents to consider the safety and well being of their children and the needs of other library users of all ages. Children should be supervised at all times and reminded that the materials in the library are to be respected and treated with care.

POLICY STATEMENT

Children under the age of 10 may not be left unattended in the library or on library property. They must be directly supervised by a **responsible adult or caregiver 16 years or older**, with no exceptions. This does not apply to children in library-sponsored programs.

Children age 10 and over may use the library unattended provided that their behavior is not disruptive. Parents are responsible for the actions of their children in the library and on library grounds whether or not the parent is present. Parents will also be responsible for any disturbance or damage done to the library by their child. Disruptive children, older than nine years of age may be asked to leave the library after one warning. In such instances, parents will be contacted or, if the parent is unavailable, police custody will be utilized.

The library must not be used as a childcare service. Any child unaccompanied by a responsible adult or a caregiver for an extended period of time may be approached for information concerning his/her parent's availability. The parents will be notified of library policy. If the situation continues, proper authorities will be notified.

If a minor under the age of 16 is left unattended at the time of closing and attempts to reach the parents have failed, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office may be called to take responsibility for the child.

