**XXXX Library**

**Unattended Children Policy**

**TEMPLATE**

***Use the following guidelines to create your own Unattended Children’s Policy that fits the needs of your library. These guidelines were adapted by Amanda Schiavulli from*** [*http://www.librarytrustees.org/policies.php*](http://www.librarytrustees.org/policies.php)

**Definitions**

* **Child** or **Children**: person/persons under the age of 12
* **Youth**: person/persons between the ages of 12 and under 18 years of age
* **Adult**: person 18 years or older
* **Caregiver** :individual over 18 who is responsible for child(ren)/youth (parent, legal guardian, grandparent, nanny, etc.)
* **Staff member**: employee of the XXXX Library.
* **Volunteer**: someone who has been approved as a volunteer through XXXX Library’s Volunteer Policy

The public library is open to everyone regardless of age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, citizenship status, race, class or educational level. Children, as well as adults, should feel they are welcome at any time. However, since the Library is not staffed for childcare, the following has been put into place for the safety of all:

* Children 7 years of age and younger may not be left unattended in the Library.
* Children between the ages of 8 and 10 may be left alone in the Library for no longer than 30 minutes, and only until 5:00 pm.
* No child younger than 11 may be left in the Library unattended after 5:00 pm.
* A parent or other adult responsible for a child must supervise that child while in the Library.
* The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children/youth in the Library rests with the caregiver and not with the Library staff.
* Parents/guardians will be notified of misbehavior of their child. Library staff cannot act in loco parentis for **any** reason. Violation of this Unattended Children’s Policy may result in suspension of library privileges for the family.

**Children’s Programing Off Site**

Parents or legal guardians are required to sign a *permission slip* before their child/youth may be taken from the Library premises by staff members.

**Child Abandonment**

Fifteen minutes before closing, XXXX Library staff will check in with any child to make sure their caregivers are aware the building is closing. Library staff may offer the library phone to give the child(ren) a chance to call their caregivers. If a child is left unattended at closing time—whether it is our regular closing time or for an unforeseen reason—Library staff will follow the following procedure:

1. If no ride has arrived at closing time, an attempt will be made to contact the caregiver of the child/youth.
2. If contact cannot be made with the caregiver, the staff will call the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Sheriff’s Department or New York State Troopers and report the child as abandoned at the Library. If available, two Library staff members will wait for the police with the child/youth.
3. Staff will record the caregiver’s name, address, telephone number, and the child’s name while waiting for the police.
4. The child will be picked up by a police officer and will be taken to the police station to await pick-up by their caregivers. The officer will be given a copy of the *Unattended Children’s Policy* to give to the child’s caregiver. XXX Library will also mail a copy to the caregiver’s address that is on file with the library.
5. Under no circumstances may library staff offer a ride to an unattended child.