

HINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
CUS-3 UNATTENDED CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY

(INTERIM 6/21/05)

- **Policy Statement:**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Hingham Public Library endeavors to take reasonable measures regarding the safety and welfare of children visiting the Library, the Board of Trustees of the Hingham Public Library has adopted the following definitions, regulations and procedures to address unattended children visiting the Library.

- **Definition:**

This policy covers children who are age sixteen (16) and younger and who are in the Library building.

- **Regulations:**

1. While in the Library, children who are age eight (8) or younger must be accompanied and adequately supervised at all times by a person older than age sixteen (16) who is responsible for the child. This means that a person older than age sixteen (16) who is responsible for and who accompanies a child to the Library must not move to a separate area of the building without the child, since the caretaker would not then be in a position to supervise the child.

2. Children age nine (9) and older may use the Library unattended, but are subject to Policy CUS-2: Unacceptable Behavior, Conduct and Acts in the Hingham Public Library.

- **Procedures:**

1. A staff member who believes that a child age eight (8) or younger is not being adequately supervised should take the following steps:

- (a) The staff member should attempt to learn the name and age of the child and to locate the person who is accompanying the child. Once caretaker is located, the member will inform that person of the foregoing policy and see that the child is properly supervised.

- (b) If no responsible person is located within the Library, but the child has been identified, and it has been determined that the child is eight (8) years of age or younger, the staff member will telephone the parent, guardian or caregiver of the child and request that he or she come to the Library immediately and assume supervision of the child.

- (c) If the child is age eight (8) or younger and cannot be identified, within fifteen (15) minutes from the time the child has been determined to be

unaccompanied, the staff member will telephone the Hingham Police Department and request their assistance in reuniting the child with the responsible caregiver. Until a police officer arrives, the child should be brought to a location within the Library where he or she can be monitored by staff. An incident report should be prepared by the staff member coordinating the effort to reunite the child with the caregiver. This report should be forwarded to the Library Director within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

2. If a staff member becomes aware that a child who is age sixteen (16) years or younger is not accompanied by a person who is older and is not being picked up before the Library closes, the staff member will call the parent, guardian or caregiver to request immediate pickup of the child and if this cannot be arranged, the staff member will contact the Hingham Police Department and request that the police monitor the child on the Library's property or take any appropriate action to ensure the child's safety. Under no circumstances, may a staff member transport a child from the Library.