

Raquette Lake Free Library
Unattended Children & Child Safety Policy

Appropriate Behavior – Code of Conduct

The Raquette Lake Free Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. Service to children is an important part of the Library's mission. However, the responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver.

- Children through age 7 must have a parent or caregiver present in the Library (also during special library programming for children).
- Children 8 - 12 may use the Library unattended for an amount of time appropriate to their age and maturity provided that the Library director, staff or volunteer has been informed of how to contact the child's parent or caregiver.

Library staff (this includes the Library Director, staff and volunteers) are not responsible for supervising children. The Library is not a substitute for daycare. Library staff will not physically prevent a child from leaving the Library, assume responsibility for a child or accompany an unrelated child off Library premises.

Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. As with any patron, a child's behavior is unacceptable if it disrupts the normal use of the Library by other patrons or interferes with the staff in the performance of their duties.

Library staff who observe unacceptable behavior will inform the child and the parent or caregiver, if present, of this policy. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be asked to leave the Library. If the child is unaccompanied by a parent or caregiver, the staff will follow the policy for unattended children.

Unattended Children

If a child under the age of 8 is in the Library without a parent or caregiver, or an unattended child of any age is in the Library within 15 minutes of closing time the library staff will:

- (i) make reasonable efforts to contact the parent/caregiver to pick up the child
- (ii) If a parent or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive within 15 minutes following closing, the library director, staff or volunteer will inform a trustee who will then call local law enforcement
- (iii) remain with the child until the parent or caregiver or police arrive;
- (iv) leave a note on the Library door stating "Unattended child is in the custody of local law enforcement [include name and phone #]" once the child is in the care of the police. The child's name will not be stated on the note.
- (v) not transport any child from the Library to another location

Each incident in which a child has been asked to leave the Library or in which an unattended child has been present after closing will be reported in writing to the Board of Trustees by the Library Director within 24 hours.