



# Putnam County District Library

## Unattended Child Policy

The Putnam County District Library (PCDL) welcomes children to use its facilities and services. However, in an effort to provide an environment that allows all patrons to utilize Library materials and information sources in a safe, relaxed manner, the care and behavior of minor children visiting the PCDL is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or caregiver. The library does not act *in loco parentis* and library staff members have many duties and cannot supervise children nor are they trained to act as a substitute for daycare.

The PCDL makes every effort to provide a safe comfortable environment for children to use, and we recognize that the safety for children deserves special consideration. Therefore, the following provisions apply to children using the PCDL:

- 1) Children under the age of 8 must have a parent/ guardian or caregiver in the immediate vicinity. If the child is attending a Library program, the parent must remain in the building at all times.
- 2) Children between the ages of 8 and 13 may use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions and the well-being of their child(ren).
- 3) Teenagers are treated as adult users. However, they are still legally the responsibility of their parents.

If a child is left unattended in the PCDL, the staff will attempt to do the following:

- 1) Locate the child's parent/guardian or caregiver.
- 2) If the librarian is unable to reach the parent/guardian, they will contact the Putnam County Sheriff's Department to report the presence of an unattended minor in the library. The Sheriff's department will be asked to pick up the minor for transport to the Sheriff's department until the parent/guardian can be located.
- 3) Staff will remain with the unattended child until they are picked up by their parent/guardian, caregiver or the Sheriff's Department.
- 4) Under no circumstances are staff members permitted to give the child(ren) a ride home.

Library patrons, including minors, who engage in unacceptable behavior, as defined in the "Rules of Conduct Policy," shall be subject to action as specified in the policy.