

## **F. Maxine and Thomas W. Cook Memorial Library's Children's Policy**

### **Unattended and Disruptive Children**

The staff at Cook Memorial Library strive to create a warm, inviting, and fun environment for children. The library offers many programs and services that encourage children to develop the love of books, reading, and learning. However, the safety and well-being of children at the library is of serious concern. It is the intention of this policy to enlist the cooperation of parents and other adults responsible for children to ensure that the library provides a safe and pleasant experience for all who use it.

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children while they are in the library or on library property. The library staff is committed to helping children with activities related to the library. However, it is not the library staff's responsibility to serve as babysitters, or disciplinarians. As it is for adults, violations of the library's Code of Conduct are grounds for suspension of library privileges. Whenever advisable, the library will notify the parent of incidents involving an unattended or disruptive child.

Children age 9 or under must be accompanied by an adult in the library. "Accompanied" is defined as "within sight." It is strongly recommended that all children are accompanied by someone who can take responsibility should an emergency occur.

If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the responsible adult and inform them of the rules. If the responsible adult cannot be found, and the child is not able to contact them via phone, the police will be called for assistance in locating that person.

Children age 10 and older may use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for actions and the well-being of their children. Children using inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library. Staff may contact authorities such as the police either to assist with the enforcement of discipline in the library or to ensure the safety of an unattended child.