



## Austin Public Library Policy and Procedures Manual

**Subject:** Children at the Library  
**Effective Date:** August 8, 2001  
**Revised:** November 24, 2010  
**Contact:** Library Services Manager  
Youth Services Division

**Telephone:** 974-7405

**Reference:**  
**Department Director's Approval:**

- I. The Austin Public Library is a valuable community resource providing materials, information services, and programs. For the safety and protection of youth, and for the benefit of all customers, the Austin Public Library has developed the following policies.
- II. Policies
  - A. All children under age 10 must be accompanied by an adult or mature adolescent (at least 17 years of age or older.) The library assumes no responsibility for the safety of children. Parents are responsible for their children's care and behavior at all times while in the library.
  - B. Parents may allow children aged 10 years old and over to use the library unattended, subject to policies and procedures concerning conduct and behavior. Parents/guardians should not view the library as an alternative to daycare or after-school care. Unlike a daycare facility, the library is not a closed environment and anyone is free to use any public area within the library. Parents should be advised that if their children misbehave, they may be told to leave the library grounds. Parents should further realize that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their children's behavior. (Specific behaviors outlined below in II. D.)
  - C. Everyone must leave the library at closing time. Children left to wait outside for a ride after the library has closed are placed in a vulnerable position. When staff members are made aware of an unattended child waiting outside, they will attempt to contact parents, but if unsuccessful, the police will be summoned to assist the child.

- D. Behavior that is unacceptable in the Library includes running in the library; sitting or standing next to Library customers engaged on the Internet stations; fighting or verbal abuse; shouting or being loud enough to disrupt others who are using the library; failure to follow library rules or staff instructions; refusal to leave the library at closing time or when asked to leave due to misconduct.

### III. Definitions

Unattended child: A child, under the age of 10 years old, who is not under the authority of a parent or responsible adult; a child over age 10 who is not able to care for him/herself for extended periods of time on a regular basis; or, a child of any age who is not picked up at closing time.

Original Signed by Brenda Branch