

# Barneveld Public Library

## CHILD SAFETY AND UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

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The Barneveld Public Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment that encourages children to visit the library. Library staff are available to assist and support children in using the library and its materials, programs and services. However, staff have many duties to perform serving all patrons and cannot be responsible for the safety and behavior of unsupervised children in the library.

Parents and caregivers must recognize that patrons using the library are not screened nor are their movements in and out of the library monitored. Library staff will enforce the posted rules of conduct for the safety and comfort of all patrons and respond with care and concern to unattended children who appear lost, uncomfortable, or upset. But staff cannot serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent).

***The following policy has been adopted to ensure the safety of unattended children in the library. All children using the library unaccompanied must be responsible, follow the code of conduct and be able to give emergency contact information when asked.***

- **Children under the age of 11** must have a parent, guardian, or caregiver in the immediate vicinity of the child. The assigned caregiver must be at least 12 years old, actively and effectively engaged in supervising the child, and able to give emergency contact information for the child when asked.
- **Children ages 11 years and older** may use the library unaccompanied at the discretion of their parent, guardian, or caregiver. *NOTE: children in middle school (ages 11 to 13 years old) should not be unattended in the library more than 2 hours at a time.*
- **Children under the age of 16 who want to use the library computers or I-pads** must present their own library card with indication of a parent's or guardian's permission on record. Permission to use the library computers is obtained through a form to be signed by the parent or guardian.

*If a parent, guardian, or caregiver of an unattended child can not be contacted after a reasonable amount of time, the Barneveld Police Department may be contacted to assume supervision of the child. Library staff cannot transport an unattended child to the child's home.*

*Parents who feel the policy above does not reflect their individual child's ability to be safe at the library and follow the rules of conduct, should contact the library director.*