**UNATTENDED CHILDREN**

**Overview**

Responsibility for the care and safety of the children using the library rests with the parent, guardian or assigned caregiver, not with library staff. While the Library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended, staff shall observe the actions listed below.

**Actions**

**Closing time:**

* + - 1. Before closing, staff will check for unattended children and make sure they have a ride home. If they do not have a ride, staff will contact an adult to come and pick them up, making sure to tell the adult that police will be called if the child is here 15 minutes past closing.
      2. At closing time, if a child 12 years or younger is still here unattended, staff will contact the person in charge.
      3. The person in charge and one other person of their choosing will wait with the child until 15 minutes past closing. Staff will try to call the parents/guardians to come pick up the child.
      4. If the parents/guardians are reached and request that the child be allowed to walk home, staff will fill out an Incident Report with this information.
      5. Once 15 minutes have passed, staff will call the New Lenox Police non-emergency number (1-185-XXX-XXXX) and request that police pick the child up at the library.
      6. Library staff or police will inform the parent, guardian or caregiver of the library’s policy regarding unattended children.
      7. If police pick up the child, staff will post a notice on the front and back doors that the child was taken to the police department. DO NOT POST THE NAME OF THE CHILD.

**Reminders**

1. Under no circumstances will library staff transport a child or take a child away from the library.
2. Two staff members must stay with child.
3. In the event of repeat incidents, the library may send a letter to the parent, guardian or caregiver (certified mail, return receipt) that states the library policy regarding unattended children and informs the individual(s) that, if the child is again left unattended, the police will be notified immediately and the Township Social Worker will be contacted.

**PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Overview:**

In Emergency situations, patrons will disabilities may not have access to the elevators.

**Actions:**

1. In the event of an emergency, staff in each department will check their assigned areas to make sure that all patrons are able to evacuate the building. Staff will assist any patrons with disabilities or special needs to safely exit the building using the stairs and emergency exits.
2. If there are patrons on the 2nd floor who are unable to exit using the stairways, staff will ***immediately*** call 911 and the Circulation Department and inform them of the specific location of the patron(s). Staff will then inform the Person in Charge. The Circulation Department and Person in Charge should be informed as quickly as possible of any change in location. The Fire Department should be notified immediately upon their arrival of the location of patrons with disabilities.

**Fire**:

1. On the 2nd floor, patrons with disabilities who are unable to exit using the stairways should be assisted to the emergency stairwells.
2. Circulation will inform the Person in Charge immediately if there are patrons being assisted from the 2nd floor so that they can inform arriving Fire Department personnel. Inform Circulation and the Person in Charge as soon as possible of any changes in the location of patrons with disabilities.

**Tornado/Severe weather**:

1. If the warning sirens sound or if weather conditions seem extremely threatening, the Person in Charge should use the PA system to announce the weather emergency and instruct patrons to take their personal belongings and move quickly and calmly to the hallway by the board room.
2. The Person in Charge should also announce that any patron needing assistance in proceeding to the first floor should go immediately to the nearest service desk. Staff should contact 911 and inform them of any patrons needing assistance.
3. Staff will assist and/or accompany patrons with disabilities or special needs to proceed down the stairs to the hallway.
4. If safe evacuation to the 1st floor via the elevator is not possible and patrons are unable to use stairs to exit the 2nd, call the Fire Department

**Power outage**:

1. If there is a power outage and there are patrons with disabilities on the 2nd floor who may need assistance should the Library close, inform the Person in Charge.
2. If the Library does close, Library staff should announce that anyone needing assistance in exiting the building should inform the staff.
3. Staff should assist patrons with disabilities or special needs to contact transportation as required.
4. Staff should accompany any patrons needing assistance walking down the stairs, using flashlights for additional light if needed.
5. The Fire Department should be called to assist in evacuating patrons in wheelchairs or who are unable to use the stairs safely to exit the building.
6. Staff should use judgment when the power outage occurs in the evening or when there is limited light. The Fire Department should be called for assistance when there is any question about patrons safely exiting the building using the stairs due to low vision or other disabilities.
7. Patrons with disabilities will not be asked to vacate the building with other patrons if additional time is required to allow them to safely exit the Library. Under no circumstances should patrons be allowed in an area of the Library without staff presence. Maintenance/Security staff and the Person in Charge will remain with patrons until all are able to safely leave the building.

**Reminders:**

* **NOTE**: Unless there is an extreme emergency where immediate exit from the 2nd floor is critical (life-threatening situations such as fire or tornado), the Fire Department recommends that Library staff wait until Fire Department personnel are able to assist patrons with disabilities. If a life-threatening situation exists, contact the Fire Department immediately.