Warren-Newport Public Library District
Lake County, Illinois
Board of Trustees

Policy 3063 Safe Child

ARTICLE 1. RESPONSIBILITY

The Warren-Newport Public Library (WNPL) welcomes children and wants their visits to be safe and enjoyable. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for their children's safety, behavior, and well-being while their children are visiting WNPL, whether or not the parent or guardian is present. The Warren-Newport Public Library District (WNPLD) cannot and does not assume responsibility for the safety, supervision, and well-being of unattended children. Library staff serve all patrons and cannot continuously monitor the whereabouts or activities of unattended children. The library is a public facility and does not provide childcare, daycare, or an after-school program.

Nothing in this policy limits the duty of library staff to respond to emergencies or to a child whose safety appears to be at risk.

ARTICLE 2. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy:

Section 2.01 Responsible Person

"Responsible Person" is a person sixteen (16) years of age or older, including a caregiver who is sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age, designated by a parent or legal guardian to supervise the child.

Section 2.02 Library Premises

"Library Premises" means the library building and the grounds on which it stands.

Section 2.03 Continual Staff Intervention

"Continual Staff Intervention" means behavior that requires a staff member to repeatedly redirect, monitor, or assist a child to the extent that the staff member cannot perform regular duties - for example, repeated redirection of the same behavior, inability to leave a service point, or interruption of library programs or operations.

ARTICLE 3. SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

To help ensure the safety and comfort of children using WNPL and to maintain an atmosphere conducive to reading and studying, the Board of Trustees of WNPLD has adopted the following supervision guidelines:

- **Children eight (8) years of age and younger** must be accompanied and actively supervised by a Responsible Person, who must remain in the same department and be aware of the child's location and activity.
- **Children nine (9) to ten (10) years of age** may use the library if a Responsible Person remains on Library Premises and can be located as needed.
- **Children eleven (11) to fourteen (14) years of age** may use the library independently if they can follow all library rules, use library resources or participate in activities without Continual Staff Intervention, and leave the library independently if asked to do so.
- **Young people fifteen (15) to seventeen (17) years of age** are treated as adult users and are not subject to the pickup procedures in Article 4.

The following provisions also apply:

- Parents or legal guardians are responsible for their children's behavior in the library. WNPL staff will assist children with using the library but do not provide individual supervision or childcare.

- A child using the library independently must be able to tell library staff their full name and a parent's or caregiver's name and phone number upon request and must be able to contact a Responsible Person for transportation or pickup when needed.
- A child who refuses to provide this information is subject to Article 5. A child who cannot provide this information and is not under the supervision required by this article is subject to the unattended child procedures in Article 4.
- A child who is able to leave the library independently may do so, including walking home. The decision whether a child may travel home alone rests with the parent or guardian. Staff may not physically prevent or detain a child. If staff are concerned for the safety of a child who is leaving or has left the library, they may contact the Gurnee Police Department.
- A child of any age who has a medical, developmental, or other condition that requires substantial monitoring must not be left alone in the library.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for arranging their children's transportation before closing. Under no circumstances will a staff member transport or drive any child home or take a child off Library Premises.

ARTICLE 4. UNATTENDED CHILDREN

Section 4.01 During Library Hours

If a child is not under the supervision required by Article 3, staff will immediately attempt to locate the parent or Responsible Person. If that person cannot be located within ten (10) minutes after staff begin trying - or sooner if the child's safety appears to be at risk - staff are authorized to contact the Gurnee Police Department. If the safety of any child of any age appears to be in doubt, staff may contact the Gurnee Police Department at any time.

Section 4.02 At Closing

Beginning thirty (30) minutes before closing, staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian, or caregiver of any unattended child fourteen (14) years of age or younger. If

the child has not been picked up within fifteen (15) minutes after closing, staff are authorized to contact the Gurnee Police Department after making reasonable efforts to reach a parent, guardian, or caregiver. At least two (2) staff members must remain with the child on Library Premises until the police arrive, or the child is picked up.

Staff will document each unattended child incident, including contact attempts and any police contact, in the library's incident log.

ARTICLE 5. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Children are subject to the same standards of conduct as all other library users, as detailed in the Policy 3060 Standards of Public Conduct. Behavior that disrupts library operations or other patrons' use of the library, creates a safety concern, damages property, or requires Continual Staff Intervention is not permitted.

- Staff may give a child or group of children one warning and a reasonable opportunity to correct their behavior. Serious, unsafe, threatening, or unlawful conduct may result in immediate action without a warning.
- Except in cases of serious, unsafe, threatening, or unlawful conduct, a suspension may be imposed only after a warning has been given, and the disruptive behavior has continued. The manager, supervisor, or staff in charge of duty imposes a three (3)-day suspension of library privileges. The child or group must leave the Library for the remainder of the day and may not return until the suspension ends.
- If a child of fourteen (14) years of age or younger cannot safely leave the library independently, staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian, or caregiver and require prompt pickup. The child may remain in a designated area under staff supervision until the person responsible arrives. If the child is accompanied by a Responsible Person, staff will first attempt to locate that person before the child leaves.
- A suspension of one (1) week or longer, or a requirement that the child visits the library only with a Responsible Person, is imposed by the library administrator. A

parent or guardian must be notified of any suspension imposed on a minor and may request review by the library administrator within ten (10) days of notification.

- The library is not licensed or staffed to provide childcare. Regular or extended use of WNPL as a substitute for childcare, daycare, or an after-school program is not permitted.
- Staff will document each warning, suspension, parent or guardian contact, and police contact in the library's incident log.

Adopted: June 13, 2006
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*Title changed from Unattended Children