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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Unattended Children
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## CHILDREN AND TEENS IN THE LIBRARY

The Danville Public Library welcomes the use of its services and facilities by children.

Staff members are committed:

- to helping children and teens find materials for school work and recreational reading.
- to providing an environment that encourages study and exploration.
- to planning short programs that inform and enrich.

Staff members are also committed to the well-being and safety of children and teens. However, library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide basic child care needs such as healthy snacks, physical exercise, or emergency care if the child becomes ill or upset. Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is left unattended for long hours or who is left stranded after closing hours.

Teens are expected to show respect for themselves, staff and the Teen Zone as well as set examples of good behavior for younger children by following the policy for usage of the Teen Zone.

The library encourages parents to consider the safety and well-being of their children and the needs of other library users of all ages.

### POLICY STATEMENT

Children age eleven or under are not to be left unattended in the library or on library grounds by caregivers.

Children age eleven and under must be accompanied by a caregiver age sixteen or older. Caregivers are responsible for the behavior of the child while the child is in their custody on library property and are expected to stay with the child and follow and support staff directives. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions for both the caregiver and the child, up to and including a ban from the library.

Disruptive children, attended or unattended, age twelve or older may be asked to leave library property after one warning.

### PROCEDURES

#### A. *DISRUPTIVE ATTENDED CHILDREN*

Disruptive behavior is any form of behavior that seriously or constantly disturbs library patrons or staff, damages library property, interferes with library service or endangers the well-being of the disruptive child or others.

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Children who are disruptive will be asked by a library staff member to behave.

If the disruptive behavior continues, a staff member should inform the caregiver that the child is disturbing others.

If the caregiver refuses or is unable to control the behavior of the child, they will be asked to leave the library.

Legal guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, whether or not the guardian is present.

Disruptive children, attended or unattended, age twelve or older may be asked to leave library property after one warning.

#### PROCEDURES

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If the caregiver refuses or is unable to control the behavior of the child, they will be asked to leave the library.

##### *B. NON-DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN AGE ELEVEN OR UNDER LEFT UNATTENDED IN THE LIBRARY:*

Caregivers are expected to stay with the children they accompany and not leave them unattended in the Children's Room or any other part of the library. If it is determined that a child is lost or unattended in any part of the library or on library grounds, a staff member should bring the child to a Youth Services staff member, Department Manager or Security.

Ask the child where the caregiver is or walk around the library to find the caregiver. If the caregiver is not found in the building, a library staff member should stay with the child until the caregiver can be located or contacted by phone.

If the caregiver has not been located within an hour, or if the library is closing, the person in charge shall call the police.

The Youth Services staff member, Department Manager or Security should try to locate the caregiver:

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Under no circumstances should a library staff member take a child out of the library building. If the library has been closed, then two staff members should wait with the child inside the library building. No staff member should take the child home.

*C. DISRUPTIVE UNATTENDED CHILDREN ELEVEN OR UNDER*

The library staff member will obtain the child's and the caregiver's names and attempt to locate the caregiver in the building. If the caregiver is located in the building, the library staff member will explain that the child is not to be left unattended and is being disruptive, and inform the caregiver of the library's policy. If the caregiver refuses or is/are unable to control the child, the caregiver and child will be asked to leave.

If the caregiver cannot be located within the building, the library staff member in charge will follow the above policy on unattended children.

*D. DISRUPTIVE UNATTENDED CHILDREN AGE TWELVE AND OLDER*

A library staff member will tell the child that the child is causing a disturbance and warned that they will be asked to leave for the day if the disruptive behavior continues.

If the disruptive behavior continues, a library staff member will tell the child to leave the library property, including the entrance way, parking lot and grounds, and will follow through to see that the child does leave.

If the child does not cooperate, a library staff member will call the police or security. The security/police officer is responsible for contacting the child's parents and/or making sure the child leaves the property and does not return until allowed, following infraction schedule.

*E. CONSEQUENCES OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR AND APPEALS*

Any child, teen and/or family who has been asked to leave the library due to disruptive behavior up to three times within thirty days will receive a thirty-day ban.

Further disruptive behavior may result in a longer ban from the library.

Some disruptive behaviors, such as threats or acts of violence, may result in longer and/or permanent bans from the library, as determined by the library director.

An individual that received a permanent ban as a child may appeal the decision by writing a letter to the library board of trustees upon turning eighteen. They must address the behaviors that resulted in the ban and acknowledge their commitment to following library policy and procedure as an adult. The library board of trustees will review the appeal with the director and make the final determination if the individual will be allowed in the library.

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## TEEN ZONE

The Danville Public Library is committed to providing an inviting and safe space for teenage patrons to study and engage in individual and group activities.

The Teen Zone at the Danville Public Library is for teens in high school. The Library recognizes that some families homeschool their children. High school aged homeschool students are encouraged to take advantage of the Teen Zone for studying, accessing computers and utilizing the collection.

While patrons of all ages are welcome to browse and check out materials from the Young Adult Collection, the use of computers, television and other electronic equipment within the Teen Zone room is exclusively for the use of high school-aged teens.

The Library reserves the right to utilize the Teen Zone for scheduled teen programs, events and activities.

### *BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES*

Teens are expected to respect the overall Library environment, and may not engage in activities or communications that disrupt other Library users or staff. All other Library policies apply to the Teen Zone. The library reserves the right to limit the use of the library by teens who, in the judgment of the library staff, are infringing upon the rights of other library users by inappropriate behavior.

Teens shall respect each other, library staff and other patrons in word and action.

The Teen Zone should be used only for its intended purposes, therefore, no rough housing, no running, no hitting, no spitting, no public displays of affection, and no swearing or abusive language will be permitted.

Verbal or physical abuse of staff or patrons such as cursing, rude or demeaning comments, talking back to library staff or patrons, hitting, biting, kicking, punching, teasing other patrons is not permitted.

Any behavior considered aggressive by the staff may result in security and/or the police being notified and further actions may be taken, up to and including permanent banning.

Vandalism, theft or damage of library property or to library grounds is a legal matter and the police will be notified.

Bottled water with twist tops are allowed in the Teen Room. Other food and beverages are not permitted.

### *TEEN ZONE COMPUTERS*

The Library recognizes the importance of supporting the educational and recreational needs of teens by providing access to computer equipment. The Library has designated the computers located within the Teen Zone as "Teen Only" computers. The use of the teen computers is restricted to high school aged teens. No exceptions will be made for library patrons whose age falls outside this range. Water bottles are prohibited near computer equipment.

### *ENFORCEMENT*

Teens are required to present photo identification and sign in with a staff member upon entering the Teen Zone.

Teens in violation of the Teen Zone Policy or any other Library Policy will be given a warning. Library staff reserves the right to immediately ask teens in question to leave in cases of extreme behavior or repeated violations of the same policy. Teens who cannot behave may lose library privileges and be required to be accompanied by an adult when on library property. Disruptive teen behavior will follow same schedule as outlined above under "E.

### **Consequences of Disruptive Behavior and Appeals."**

These rules will be posted in the Teen Zone and reviewed with teens as necessary.

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