

Highline Community College Library  
Operational Policy and Procedures

**Unattended children in the library**

**Objective:** This policy attempts to balance the library staff's desire to be supportive of the needs of the students and protective of the dangers for unattended children in public places. The staff of the library is sympathetic to the demands of parents who are attempting to balance work, school and child care; however, the library cannot be assumed to be a safe place for unattended children.

**Policy:** Young children (12 years of age and under) are permitted in the library only when under the direct supervision of a responsible adult (18 years of age or older).

**Procedure:** When a staff member observes an unsupervised young child (as defined above), the staff member should approach the child and try to determine who is supervising the child. The staff member should identify her/himself as an employee of the library.

If a supervising adult (as defined above) is not present, the staff member, in a non-threatening way, should try to determine the name and location of the responsible adult.

**If the adult is on campus,** the library staff member will then call Public Safety and relay the following [message](#). Public Safety will then locate the responsible adult and escort her/him to the library. The library staff member will explain the library policy to the adult.

**If the adult is not on campus,** the library staff member will ask the child to leave, unless to do so would put the child at risk. If it is determined that it is too risky for the child to leave unattended, the library staff member will call Public Safety. Public Safety can then attempt to determine the child's home telephone number and contact a responsible adult or refer the case to local police.

This policy applies to the children of students and employees of the college as well as the general public.

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Key Department: **Instructional Resources Administration**  
Key Person: Frances Clark, **Director of Circulation**  
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