



250 5<sup>th</sup> St. Box 541 · Delaware City, DE 19706 · (302) 834-4148 · [delawarecity.lib.de.us](http://delawarecity.lib.de.us)

## **UNATTENDED YOUTH RECREATIONAL USE POLICY**

Approved June 2019

### **DEFINITION OF ACCOMPANIED**

Parent/caregiver/legal guardian must be near enough to either see or hear children who are 8 years old or under.

### **DEFINITION OF UNATTENDED**

Children who are 9 years old and older who visit the library on their own.

### **PURPOSE**

The Delaware City Library (DCL) is designed to serve children and families with a wide range of educational and recreational collections, programs, and services. It is the policy of the Delaware City Library to provide a safe and appropriate environment for library customers of all ages. The Delaware City Library operates a community library with staff trained to provide public library services, but is not equipped to provide long or short term daycare for children of any age. The purpose of this policy is to inform parents, caregivers, guardians, and children/teens of the responsibilities regarding all unattended youth's recreational use of the library.

### **STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Parents, caregivers, and guardians are responsible for their children's behavior, safety, and welfare while their children are in the library or on library grounds. The Delaware City Library requires that a parent, guardian, or other responsible party age 15 or older be present to supervise children ages 8 and younger. DCL staff is available to assist parents, caregivers, guardians, and their children in the use of the library, however, DCL staff cannot act "in loco parentis" (in place of a parent) for children in the library. Neither the library or library staff nor board of directors will be held liable for any incidents, accidents, or injuries arising from the use or misuse of the library materials, equipment, or facility. Children and teens age 9-17 are permitted to use the library without a parent/caregiver/legal guardian present. If a child or teen is acting in an unsafe manner, behaving inappropriately, otherwise violates the library's Patron Code of Conduct, or appears to be in distress, staff will attempt to locate or contact the parent, guardian, or other party responsible for the child or teen. If the parent, guardian, or responsible party cannot be reached the child or teen may be banned from the library or staff will contact law enforcement for assistance.

### **AGREEMENT**

In order for unattended youth to use the library for recreational purposes, this policy must be



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reviewed by parents/caregivers/legal guardians and children/teens, and the attached form completed in full and returned to library staff. Those ages 9 and up will be unable to use the library recreationally without a parent/caregiver/legal guardian present until the form is completed and returned. Recreational use is defined as any use of the library that does not include activities associated with the use of a public library such as reading, studying, using library materials and equipment, participating in library programs, or use of meeting rooms.

## **BEHAVIORAL VIOLATIONS**

All users of the library are required to familiarize themselves with the Library Patron Code of Conduct. Unacceptable behaviors such as running, jumping on the furniture, throwing furniture/library property, loud voices, defacing library property, being disrespectful of library staff or other library users, or any other behavior that infringes on the rights of other library users or interferes with the ability of DCL staff to operate the library are not permitted. The following procedures will take place if unacceptable behaviors occur within the library premises:

1. Verbal warning that behavior is unacceptable. One verbal warning will be issued per day.
2. If inappropriate, unsafe, or disturbing behavior continues after a verbal warning is issued, DCL staff will request that the youth leave the library premises for the rest of the day and a parent/legal guardian will be informed either in person or by telephone call.
3. If the disruptive behavior persists, a longer ban may be instituted at the discretion of the Library Director. If a parent/legal guardian is either not on the premises or cannot be reached, the police will be notified. A written letter detailing the length of and reason(s) for the ban will be provided along with a copy of the Library Patron Code of Conduct.

Any behavior observed by library staff that is deemed especially unsafe, disruptive, or inappropriate will result in an immediate request to leave the premises. If the youth refuses or continues to be disruptive, library staff will contact a parent/legal guardian, and if they cannot be reached, local law enforcement. Any destruction of property, accidental or intentional, by accompanied or unattended youth may result in financial charges.

## **CLOSING TIME**

If a youth is left unattended after closing hours and a parent/guardian cannot be reached, library staff will contact local law enforcement. Unattended youth must be picked up within 15 minutes of the library closing. Under no circumstances will staff provide transportation or accompany a child home.



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## UNATTENDED YOUTH RECREATIONAL USE POLICY AGREEMENT

Please provide the requested information below. Photo ID must be presented for the parent/legal guardian/caregiver and a school ID for the youth (if issued). The signatures provided acknowledge the attached policy has been reviewed in full and is agreed to by all parties. If there are any questions, please contact the library. Once completed, please return this form to a library staff member. If any information provided is false, inaccurate, or otherwise results in failure for DCL staff to reach a responsible party, the agreement will be considered incomplete until updated and/or accurate information is provided.

**Youth Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Youth Birth Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name and Phone Number of Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Address (please include PO Box if Delaware City resident). If address differs for youth and parent/legal guardian/caregiver, please provide additional details on the back of this form:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Youth Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

All information provided will be accessible by library staff and if necessary, shared with law enforcement and/or emergency personnel. It will not be used by the library for any purposes outside of those addressed in the attached policy.