Ames Public Library Policy	**Board**
Section: Library Operations	**Approved: 11/96**
Subject: Unattended Child Policy	**Reviewed: 3/04**
	Revised: 9/00, 1/05, 2/06, 11/09, 9/12

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a **child** is anyone eight (8) years old or younger.

For the purposes of this policy, a **responsible caregiver** is either a parent/guardian or is another person who takes responsibility for a child by carrying emergency contact information and staying within eye contact in the immediate vicinity of the child.

For the purposes of this policy, an **unattended child** is a child who is out of visual contact or not in the direct vicinity of a responsible caregiver or left alone in the building.

Statement of Philosophy

Ames Public Library welcomes children of all ages. The responsible caregivers assume the responsibility for the safety, comfort, and behavior of their child/children in the library and must not leave the child unattended in the library. Library employees can not assume this role.

Unattended Children

Children must have a responsible caregiver within visual contact and in their immediate vicinity while on library premises.

Exceptions may be made by library staff for children age three (3) and older who are attending select library programs. When an exception is made, the responsible caregiver is expected to remain *in the library building and available* during the program and to immediately join the child at the end of the program.

When library staff is made aware of an unattended child, library staff will make a reasonable attempt to locate the responsible caregiver. If the responsible caregiver is not located, library staff will notify the police.

Although young persons age nine (9) and older may use the library on their own, their actions and well-being remain the responsibility of their parents and caregivers. The Library's Conduct in the Library policy defines misconduct and states that some behaviors will result in a request for the person to leave the library. A young person who is not able to leave the library without an adult should not be left alone at the library.