



DOWNTOWN • 610 Quincy St. Rapid City, SD 57701 • (605) 394-6139 or (605) 394-4171  
NORTH • 10 Van Buren St. Rapid City, SD 57701 • (605) 716-4098

Date: May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
To: RCPL Board of Trustees  
From: Maryanne Rohrer, Policy Committee Chair  
Re: Unattended Children & Hours of Operation Policies

Date: May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
To: Maryanne Rohrer, Policy Committee Chair  
From: Sean Minkel, Assistant Director  
Re: Unattended Children & Hours of Operation Policies

**Motion:** Move to approve changes to both the [Unattended Children](#) and [Hours of Operation](#) Policies removing the unattended children exemption for the North Library and changing the opening time at that location to 3:15 on weekdays.

**Background:**

In September of 2013, the Board adopted a policy on unattended children to increase safety in the library and provide direction in dealing with these instances consistently. As the North library is run in partnership with General Beadle elementary school, an exception was included in the policy allowing younger children to be in the library until 5:30 p.m. on weekdays during the school year.

This exception has led to numerous cases of young children remaining in the library after school gets out and past the time when the school office closes. Library staff are frequently unable to get valid contact information for parents or guardians from younger children at 5:30 when the policy comes into effect. Additionally, library staff are left with little recourse when these children fail to abide by other library policies.

In a conversation with the North Rapid Community Coordinator and the principal of General Beadle in April, it was agreed that removing this exception from the policy would help with these issues. At that time, they also suggested a change to the library hours of operation to opening at 3:15. This provides a needed buffer to encourage children and guardians to make better decisions after the school closes.

The change in opening time removes approximately 130 hours of operation yearly. However, we anticipate that the library will be a calmer and more welcoming environment for all patrons after the changes and more use of that branch may result.

**Policy Text:**

Unattended Children Policy

The purpose of this policy is to inform patrons of the Rapid City Public Libraries of the expectations and guidelines for use of the Libraries' premises by children. Safety of children is of the utmost concern for the Libraries' Board and staff. However, the safety and responsibility of children at the Libraries remains with the parent or caregiver and not with the Libraries.



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The Rapid City Public Libraries welcome children of all ages, but requires supervision of children 8 years of age and under. The Libraries are educational and enriching community spaces but can pose hazards for unattended children, who may encounter circumstances they are unprepared to handle effectively. This may lead to potentially unsafe situations or behavior policy infractions.

Under this policy, children age 8 and under must remain in the immediate vicinity of a parent or a responsible caregiver. Caregivers may be a sibling, relative or anyone a parent designates as a responsible party, and caregivers shall be over the age of 16.

Children of every age are expected to adhere to the Behavior Policy. Failure to adhere to this policy may warrant loss of library services as outlined in the Libraries' Behavior Policy.

Should a child be found unattended on the Libraries' premises, staff will attempt to reach a parent or guardian to pick up the child. If a parent or guardian is unavailable, the appropriate authorities will be contacted, to reach a parent or guardian and/or escort the child home. Likewise, if children aged 8 or younger violate the Behavior Policy to the extent that a suspension is imposed their responsible party must remove them from the Libraries for the duration of their suspension.

~~Because of the unique relationship with the General Beadle School/Community Center, this policy is enforced at that location on weekends, during summer hours, and after 5:30 PM weekdays during the school year. However, all aspects of the Behavior Policy are enforced at all times.~~

Additionally, children under the ages of 12 who do not have transportation at closing time will be asked how to contact a parent or guardian. Staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian by phone and ask that person to pick up the child within 15 minutes. Should there be no response to the calls; staff will contact the appropriate authorities.

Hours of Operation

**Service Hours:**

|          |                     |                       |
|----------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Downtown | Monday – Thursday   | 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. |
|          | Friday and Saturday | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00p.m.  |
|          | Sunday              | 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
| North    | Monday – Thursday   | 2:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. |
|          | Friday              | 2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
|          | Saturday            | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
|          | Sunday              | 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |

**Beginning August 31, 2016:**

|       |                   |                       |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| North | Monday – Thursday | 3:15 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. |
|       | Friday            | 3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
|       | Saturday          | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
|       | Sunday            | 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |