

Unattended children in the library

All children under 12 years of age who use the library must be supervised by a parent/caregiver of at least 16 years of age.

Libraries offer a range of services which support the information, literacy, education and recreational needs of children. Programs held for 0-5 year olds are planned as an interactive opportunity and therefore, the presence of a parent/carer is considered compulsory.

Activity sessions for children aged 5-12 years, which are supervised by Library Staff, do not require parent attendance. However, a parent or carer is required to remain in the library in case of emergency. Parent and carer expectations such as required attendance or pick up times will be advised at time of booking. Parent/carer contact details are given at the point of booking. Libraries are not a substitute for child care agencies, and any parent/carer who uses libraries as such is putting their child at risk. Libraries do not have the facilities or appropriate licences to attend to children who are left unsupervised, such as after school or during school holidays.

Unsupervised children can be at risk in any public place, including public libraries. There is a likelihood that unattended children will leave the library at any time, hurt themselves, or be approached by strangers. Libraries are busy public places, open to all. Libraries do not have the facilities to attend to children who are sick, injured, hungry or require access to a telephone.

Young children left alone in a library can become distressed, bored or disruptive. In circumstances where a child is repeatedly left unattended, or is not collected by closing time, parents/carers will be contacted and informed of library policy. This policy is also available on our website and when booking for events. If, after a reasonable number of attempts, the parents/carers cannot be contacted, the situation will be reported to the Local Police and if the parents/carers still cannot be contacted by the Police then the Police will notify the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).

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Camden Council Library Services