



## **UNATTENDED CHILDREN IN LIBRARY POLICY**

The DeWitt Community Library welcomes library use by children. Staff Members are available to assist children with library materials and services. The Library desires to provide a safe and appropriate environment for children of all ages. The Library, however, is a public building with staff trained to provide public library services. The Library is not equipped, nor is it the Library's role to provide long or short-term childcare.

### **CHILD SAFETY**

Children are welcome in our library, and we are concerned about their safety and welfare. Parents and caregivers, however, are responsible for monitoring the activities and behavior of their children while the children are in the library. The DeWitt Library staff is committed to help children with activities related to the Library. However, the staff cannot, nor is it their responsibility to serve as baby-sitters, teachers or disciplinarians.

Children age 12 and under may not be left unattended in any area of the Library. A parent, guardian, or assigned chaperone must be within physical proximity at all times. Children 13 and over are left alone at the discretion of a parent, and the parent must accept all responsibility for the decision.

If an unattended child is disruptive, left alone for long periods of time, or is at risk of harm (e.g. being left behind at closing time), an effort will be made to locate the parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver. If necessary, mall security or appropriate law enforcement or child protection authorities will be notified.

From time to time the DeWitt Library schedules or provides programs, which are designed and suitable for attendance by children without parental supervision. If the parent or caregiver intends to be absent from the library during these programs, they must leave word as to their whereabouts and a phone number if possible.

### **UNATTENDED CHILDREN AFTER HOURS**

In the event a young person (under the age of 12) is still at the library 15 minutes after the library closes to the public, the mall security or police will be called to pick up the young person. Attempts will be made during that 15 minutes to reach parents or caregivers.

### **GROUP VISIT POLICY**

The DeWitt Community Library welcomes visits from groups, such as schools, daycare centers and home-schooling groups. Groups of children coming into the library must be accompanied by an adult. Groups of eight (8) or more children must be accompanied by at least 2 adults.

Teachers or group leaders are responsible for group discipline and must remain with the group the entire visit. The behavior of the group should not disturb other library patrons.