

Lister Hill Library Policy on Children in the Library

Library staff cannot be responsible for unattended children in the library. The safety and security of children are the responsibility of parents or adult caregiver. Children under the age of 15 must be under the direct supervision of an adult caregiver (age 18 or older) at all times.

Safety concerns:

- Since Lister Hill Library (LHL) is a medical research library, LHL Internet access is unfiltered. This unedited access to the Internet may not be in a child's best interest.
- Library staff cannot be responsible for children's safety and comfort, especially in an emergency situation.
 - If an unattended child is injured or becomes ill while in the library, library staff do not know the parent/caregiver to contact in an emergency and cannot authorize medical care for the child.
 - If a child wishes to leave the library, or leaves with a stranger, the library staff cannot legally detain the child, even if the parent has told the child to remain within the library in the parent's absence.

Distraction Concerns:

- In support of its medical research mission, Lister Hill Library selects library resources for the adult researcher and advanced student. The library maintains an environment conducive to study and research. Children can become bored or restless, and may either injure themselves, harm expensive library equipment, or distract library patrons and staff.

Responsibilities of Lister Hill Library Staff:

1. If a child is with an adult but is not being actively supervised by the adult and is acting inappropriately (i.e. distracting other patrons, making noise, playing with library equipment), library staff will attempt to locate the adult and inform him/her that the child must be supervised. The staff member will give the adult the library handout on unattended children. If the parent/guardian requires further information, he/she will be referred to the Lister Hill Library Policy on Children in the Library, available at the Information Desk and through the Library's website at <http://www.uab.edu/lister>.
2. If the child is left in the library without any adult present, a staff member will ask the child for his/her parent's name and telephone number and attempt to reach the child's parent or guardian by telephone. The staff member will tell the parent that the child must not be left in the library without supervision. When the parent arrives, the staff member

3. will give the parent the library handout on unattended children. For further information, the parent will be referred to the Lister Hill Policy on Children in the Library, available at the Information Desk and on the Library's website at <http://www.uab.edu/lister>. If the parent cannot be reached, the staff member should call UAB Police.
4. If a child is left in the library alone at closing time, the staff member should notify UAB Police at once.
5. In the event that a child is ill or injured in the library, attempt to notify the child's parent or caregiver if possible. In an emergency, call UAB Police at once.