Unattended Child Policy

The Library welcomes use by your child and staff will assist him/her in use of Library materials or services. For a child’s safety and comfort, a responsible adult or caregiver shall accompany a young child while he/she is using the Library.

For the purposes of this policy:

A child is anyone under 8 years old

A caregiver is any individual 12 years of age or older who has been given the authority and responsibility to care for a child by the child’s parent or legal guardian.

The Library does not act in loco parentis (in place of parents) and Library staff does not have the authority to take responsibility for your child. A child must be continually accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or caregiver unless the child is attending a library program.

If an unattended child calls attention to him/herself by running in the library or loud behavior, Library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library and inform him/her of the policy.

If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, the Police Department will be asked to intervene. Under no circumstances will library staff offer a patron of any age a ride home or anywhere else.

The Police Department will be notified when children under the age of 10 are left at the library at closing time.

The ages above are minimum ages. Staff will apply these guidelines for older minors or others if the patron’s actions or circumstances warrant. Any minor left unattended in the library in violation of this policy may be considered an unaccompanied individual in need of care, and the matter referred to the police department, or other legally constituted, empowered and competent authority, regardless of age.

Parents/legal guardians/caregivers and children who are in violation of this policy are subject to suspension of library privileges for a period of no less than one month and up to one year as determined by the Director.

Revised and approved – Valley Center Public Library Board of Directors

January 14, 2019