

## **Unattended Children Policy**

The Olive Free Library is a unique institution that welcomes customers of all ages to use its facilities, services and resources.

Children and their safety are of utmost importance to the Library. We encourage families and youth to use the Library. Children, like all library patrons, are expected to behave appropriately. Parents and caregivers, not library staff, are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children in the library.

### **SUPERVISION:**

As the Olive Free Library is a public place, the Olive Free Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following policies:

1. Children 10 years old or younger, who are using the Library's resources or who are participating in a Library program shall at all times be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult. A responsible adult is defined as a parent, guardian, teacher, or assigned caregiver over the age of 18, who must remain with the child in the Library for the duration of the visit.
2. Children over the age of 11 years may use the Library unattended for a reasonable period of time provided they are able to maintain proper Library behavior. Children must have the telephone numbers of their parent, guardian, or another

responsible adult, who may be contacted to come and pick up the child in case of a health emergency, or other special circumstances.

3. Parents are advised that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their

child's behavior. The Library is not responsible for an unattended child while in the building or if they leave the Library premises.

### **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR:**

- If a child behaves in a disruptive manner (whether or not accompanied by a responsible adult), they will be given a warning that they must correct their behavior or leave the Library.
- If the child continues to be disruptive after this warning, then the Library staff, may, at their discretion, contact the responsible adult and ask the child to leave the Library. A staff member will remain with the child until the adult arrives.
- If a responsible adult cannot be contacted within 15 minutes, the Library reserves the right to contact the appropriate authorities for assistance in order to preserve the Library's operations and/or protect the interests of the child.

### **LIBRARY CLOSINGS:**

Parents must be aware of the Library's hours and must arrange to pick up their children by closing time. We ask each parent to make advance arrangements to pick up or have their child picked up by a responsible adult by closing and to inform their children what action they are to take in the event of an unexpected closure of the Olive Free Library. If

an unattended child is still in the Library at closing time, then the Library staff will act according to the following guidelines:

- Library personnel will not transport or escort the child to any location off the premises under any circumstances.
- Every reasonable effort will be made by the staff to assist the child in contacting an appropriate adult 15 minutes prior to Library closing.
- Children ages 16 and under will not be left on the Library property unattended after Library hours. Two staff members will wait with the child until the parent or responsible adult, or the appropriate authorities come to the Library to pick up the child.
- If no responsible adult is reached, the Library reserves the right to contact the appropriate authorities to request assistance.

**Reviewed and amended by the Olive Free Library Board of Trustees, April 2021**