

The Dr. Grace O. Doane Alden Public Library Unattended Child Policy

The Dr. Grace O. Doane Alden Public Library asks parents to join us as partners in ensuring the safety of our younger patrons. Because the library is a public place, and because library staff is generally busy helping library patrons, they are not responsible for supervising children who are using the library. **The use of the library as a temporary baby-sitting service is strictly prohibited.** Parents, please make sure your children are with responsible caregivers at all times. Leaving children unattended may put them at risk.

The Dr. Grace O. Doane Alden Public Library welcomes all children to use our facility and services. However, responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or assigned chaperone. **Children are expected to behave in a manner conducive to maintaining an appropriate atmosphere in the building for all patrons.** For the safety and protection of our youth, the Alden Public Library Board of Trustees has developed the following rules:

- Children pre-school age and younger must be accompanied and supervised by a responsible caregiver. This caregiver must be in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. An exception would be children attending a library program without a parent/caregiver in the room. However, the parent/caregiver is expected to immediately join the child at the end of the program.
- Older unsupervised children are welcome to use the library as long as their behavior is not disruptive.
- The library assumes no responsibility for an unattended child.
- Staff members cannot monitor everyone who enters the facility and all adult patrons are free to use any public area within the library. For safety's sake, parents should make sure that their children are sufficiently mature before allowing them to visit the library by themselves.
- Parents should be advised that if their children misbehave, they may be told to leave the library and the library grounds. **If a child is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone.**
- Parents/Guardians are legally responsible for their children's behavior whether present to supervise or not.
- Thirty minutes before closing time, any unattended children will be informed of the approaching closing time and asked when he or she will be picked up. Library staff will make sure arrangements have been made and that the child has been picked up, before leaving for the night. Older children may walk home, if given permission by their parents or guardians. Library staff is not allowed to give rides to children. Parents will be contacted if their child is left without a way to get home more than once. (This does not pertain to neighborhood children playing outside at closing time.)
- If the library is closing at the regular time or in an emergency situation and a parent or guardian of an unattended child cannot be located, the Sheriff's Department may be called to take the child.

The Alden Public Library assumes no responsibility for children of any age left unattended in the library.

Revised and Approved by the Alden Public Library Board of Trustees:

2009

2012

June 2016