


<b>POL-LIB-2015-03</b>	<b>Issue No: 1.0</b>	<b>April 23, 2015</b>
Prepared By: <b>Catherine Christmann</b>	Page 1 of 2	Approved By: <b>Renee Payne Frankel</b> 
<b>Unattended Minors Policy</b>		

## **PURPOSE/SCOPE**

Service to children is a high priority of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library. Children are welcome and are encouraged to use the library's materials, services, and programs. However, busy public access buildings are not safe places for children to be left alone. Library staff are not licensed caretakers, and are not responsible for a child's safety, behavior and/or discipline. When left alone for an extended period of time, children can become frightened, anxious, or restless and disruptive. The library staff does not know whether the person with whom a child is interacting or leaving the library with an appropriate caregiver or a stranger. This policy has been established to provide a safe and positive environment for children who use the Library.

## **POLICY:**

- Responsibility for the welfare and behavior of children in the Library rests with the parent/legal guardian or assigned caregiver. The Library staff does not provide care or supervision of children.
- Children eight (8) years of age and younger must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian at all times. This means the caregiver supervising must maintain a line of sight with the child during the entire visit to the library. A caregiver cannot be under the age of fourteen (14) years old.
- If a parent or legal guardian of any child age eight (8) or under cannot be contacted or located the Library will ask the Las Cruces Police Department to intervene.
- Children aged nine (9) and older may be left unattended provided they are mature enough to stay alone and observe proper conduct. Disruptive children will be required to leave the Library. Children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other library patrons, and the same consequences apply, including suspension from use of the library or intervention by Las Cruces Police Department. The possibility that such consequences may be imposed should be considered when deciding whether or not to allow your child to use the library without parental supervision.
- Staff will consider children left unattended in violation of this policy as endangered, and they will be referred to the Las Cruces Police Department for intervention or other appropriate action.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

- Unattended children who experience a medical emergency are not the responsibility of Library Staff. When staff recognize a medical emergency they will immediately call 911 for emergency assistance. Staff will not assume any responsibility for the treatment or transport of a child in medical distress. Staff will attempt to contact the parent/legal guardian or assigned chaperone.

## **LIBRARY CLOSING & INCIDENT REPORT**

- If the Library is closing and the parent or legal guardian of an unattended child cannot be reached, the Library staff will call Las Cruces Police Department. A minimum of two staff will remain with the child until the police arrive and staff must document the situation with an incident report.

