

Unattended Child Policy

Elizabeth Jones Library Trustee Board adopted July 2013

The Elizabeth Jones Library offers a welcoming, educational, and safe place for you and your child. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of their children at **all** times in the Library and on Library property. Children, like all library users, are required to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library.

Basic Rules and Regulations:

- Children ages **12 and under** must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver age 16 or older at all times and in all areas of the Library and its property except when participating in a Library sponsored program. In the event that a child aged 12 or below is left at the Library unattended as stated above and no one can be contacted to pick up the child, the staff will call the Police Department and/or Sheriff's Office for assistance.
- Older children and adolescents who come to the Library without a parent, guardian, or caregiver are welcome for appropriate use of the Library, such as homework or reading. Vandalism and/or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may serve as grounds for removal from Library property.
- Parents, guardians, and caregivers should be aware of Library opening and closing times. If a child (17 or younger) is left after Library hours and no one can be contacted to provide transportation, the staff will wait for 15 minutes and then call the Police Department and/or Sheriff's Office for assistance. Staff **will not** transport children home or to any other destination under any circumstances.

Group Visit Policy:

The Elizabeth Jones Library welcomes visits from groups, such as schools, daycare centers, and home-schooling groups. The following basic rules apply to groups:

- Groups of children must be accompanied by an adult. Groups of eight (8) or more children must be accompanied by at least two adults.
- Teachers or group leaders are responsible for group discipline and must remain with the group the entire visit.
- The behavior of the group should not disturb other Library patrons.

Philosophy behind Our Unattended Child Policy:

We are glad your children are here! We want our library to be a welcoming, educational and safe place for your child. Our library staff is here to serve you and has many duties to perform in order to help all of our patrons in the best way possible. As a result, they cannot monitor the whereabouts or behavior of our smallest patrons — your children. Staff cannot assume the responsibility of a child's care when they use the library.

A child could be lured away by a stranger or become ill. A child could wander outside and become lost or injured. An emergency could dictate that we evacuate the building. We are primarily concerned with your child's safety and feel this policy better assures his/her well-being.

Therefore, the behavior and welfare of children in the library are the responsibility of the parents or guardian accompanying the child to the library.