

## Unattended Child and Parental Responsibility Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the responsibilities of parents/guardians in regard to children who are using the Saluda County Public Library. This policy supports the Library Code of Conduct by establishing the standards for children's independent use of the Library and its services.

### Parental/Caregiver Responsibilities

The Saluda County Library provides a welcoming environment that encourages children to visit the library, attend programs, and use the Library collection and computers. Library staff is committed to assisting and supporting children using the Library. Library staff cannot provide childcare, supervise unattended children, or assume responsibility for the safety of the children left unattended on library grounds.

Parents and caregivers are responsible for the safety and behavior of their children on Library property. Repeated failures to comply will result in the loss of Library privileges. The Library expects parents, guardians, and caregivers to adhere to the following guidelines:

#### 1. Supervision Requirements:

- Children under the age of eleven (11) must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver at all times.
- A caregiver must be at least 15 years old and remain actively engaged and stay within close proximity to and able to maintain direct supervision of any child under the age of eleven (11). Caregiver must be capable of ensuring the child's safety and compliance with library's Code of Conduct.
- Children of any age with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities that affect decision making skills or render supervision necessary must be accompanied by parent/guardian or assigned caregiver at all times.

#### 2. Emergency Contact Information:

- Caregivers for children under eleven (11) must have emergency contact information readily available

#### 3. Unaccompanied Children (Ages 11 and Older):

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring their child is capable of independent and responsible use of the Library, including following the Library Board approved Code of Conduct. Library staff reserve the right to intervene if a child's behavior or inability to follow rules suggests otherwise and will use provided emergency contact information for an immediate pick-up.
- Children should have emergency contact information readily available and be capable of sharing it with Library staff if it is requested.
- Children must be able to leave the Library independently when instructed by the Library staff or at closing time.
- Children without transportation at closing time will be asked to provide contact information for someone who can pick them up. If transportation does not arrive within 15 minutes of closing, the police will be contacted to ensure the child's safety.