

**City of Salinas Library and Community Services Department**  
**Rules Governing the Use of The Library By Children**

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## **Policy Statement**

The Salinas Public Library welcomes children and employs library staff members trained to provide research assistance, readers' advisory service, and educational programs for children and teens. To protect the safety and well-being of children and promote equitable and comfortable Library use by all customers, the following rules should be observed.

## **Definitions**

An **unattended child** is any person 8 years of age or younger who is attending a Library program, in the Library building, on the Bookmobile, or on the Library premises without direct supervision by a parent, guardian, or other authorized caregiver who is 12 years of age or older. A **minor child**, over the age of 8 may be allowed to use the library without adult supervision if permitted to do so by a parent or legal guardian but they remain legally the responsibility of their parents or guardians and should have an emergency contact available.

## **Responsibilities of Parents or Caregivers and Children**

Responsibility for the safety and behavior of all children in the Library rests with parents, guardians or other authorized caregivers and not with Library staff. Library visitors of all ages are expected to follow the policies, rules, and procedures established in the Library's Rules of Conduct. Parents or caregivers are responsible for ensuring that children meet these expectations as needed.

## **General Guidelines:**

- ❖ Children under 8 years of age should be within visual contact of a parent or authorized caregiver at all times unless they are attending a Library-sponsored program, and a parent or authorized caregiver is available in the Library building. If a parent cannot be located, staff will notify the police to report an abandoned child.
- ❖ Disruptive minors (eight years of age or older) will be asked to leave the library. If the minor cannot safely leave the library to return home on his/her own, staff will permit the minor to call a parent or guardian.
- ❖ Parents or authorized caregivers are expected to give unsupervised children (over the age of 8): a) the parent or caregiver's location in or away from the library, and b) contact information for two parents or caregivers.
- ❖ Minors who have not been picked up at closing time will be given the opportunity to call a parent or guardian. Two library staff members or one library staff member and a security guard, if one is available, will be assigned to wait after closing time with the minor(s) until the situation is resolved and minor(s) are picked up.
- ❖ Fifteen minutes after closing, if the minor(s) is still waiting at the library, and staff has been unable to contact parents or a responsible adult, library staff will notify the police to report an abandoned child.