

# Children Alone in the Library

## Guidelines for Parents and Staff

The Aledo Public Library (“Library”) welcomes children of all ages. Library staff members are trained to help children with library materials and services. We want to provide a safe and appropriate environment for all Library users. However, our Library is a public building. The Library does not have facilities or staffing to provide childcare, and childcare is not the Library’s role.

Parents and caregivers are responsible for the safety, comfort, and behavior of their children while in the Library. Please make sure any child under the age of eleven (11) comes to the Library with a responsible person age sixteen (16) or older.

### **Library staff will take action in accordance with this Policy in these or similar situations:**

- A child is frightened or crying in the Library.
- A child is doing something dangerous, or another person in the Library seems to be a danger to the child.
- A child is bullying or harassing one or more other patrons.
- A child is not following Library rules.
- No person comes to pick up a child at closing time.
- Any child under the age of eleven (11) is alone in the Library (without a responsible person age sixteen (16) or older), even if none of the above situations apply.

Library staff may, at their sole discretion, contact the appropriate local law enforcement agency for assistance, including removing the child from the Library. If Library staff believe this assistance is not necessary, staff will work with the child’s onsite responsible party and/or contact the child’s offsite parent or guardian. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached within twenty (20) minutes, then Library staff will reevaluate the situation and determine whether to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency for assistance.