

## The Dr. Grace O. Doane Alden Public Library Unattended Child Policy

The Dr. Grace O. Doane Alden Public Library asks parents to join us as partners in ensuring the safety of our younger patrons. We want the library to be a welcoming and safe place for children; however, our staff members have many duties to perform in order to serve all patrons in the best way possible. The library is a busy public place, open to all, and our staff members cannot judge which members of the public present a possible danger to children. **The use of the library as a temporary baby-sitting service is strictly prohibited.** Library staff cannot assume responsibility for unattended, disruptive or abandoned children of any age. Parents, please make sure your children are with responsible caregivers at all times. Leaving children unattended may put them at risk.

The Dr. Grace O. Doane Alden Public Library welcomes all children to use our facility and services. However, responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or assigned chaperone. **Children are expected to behave in a manner conducive to maintaining an appropriate atmosphere in the building for all patrons.** For the safety and protection of our youth, the Alden Public Library Board of Trustees has developed the following rules:

- Children pre-school age and younger **MUST BE** accompanied and supervised by a responsible caregiver. This caregiver must be in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child at all times.
- Older unsupervised children are welcome to use the library as long as their behavior is not disruptive and they follow the code of conduct for the library.
- The library assumes no responsibility for an unattended child.
- Staff members cannot monitor everyone who enters the facility and all adult patrons are free to use any public area within the library. For safety's sake, parents should make sure that their children are sufficiently mature before allowing them to visit the library by themselves.
- Parents should be advised that if their children misbehave, they may be told to leave the library and the library grounds. **If a child is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone.**
- Occasionally the library may need to close without advance notice as a result of an emergency. Children should be advised about what action the parent/caregiver wishes them to take in the event of an unexpected library closure prior to be allowed to attend the library without a parent/guardian.**
- Parents/Guardians are legally responsible for their children's behavior whether present to supervise or not.
- Thirty minutes before closing time, any unattended children will be informed of the approaching closing time and asked when he or she will be picked up. Library staff is not allowed to give rides to children.
- If the library is closing and a parent or guardian of an unattended child cannot be located, the Sheriff's Department may be called to take the child.

*The Alden Public Library assumes no responsibility for children of any age left unattended in the library.*

Revised and Approved by the Alden Public Library Board of Trustees:

2009

2012

June 2016

December 2023