



# UNACCOMPANIED CHILD POLICY

*Approved by the Vista Grande Public Library  
Board of Directors – 18-Aug-2009*

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The Vista Grande Public Library (VGPL) seeks to provide a safe environment for children at the Library; however, library staff will not assume responsibility for any child left unaccompanied in the library or on library grounds.

Unless registered in a formal Library program, children too young to be left alone must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or caregiver while on Library property.

## **UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN**

Children 12 and under must be accompanied by the parent, guardian or caregiver at all times. A caregiver is an individual who is assuming responsibility for a younger child with the permission of the child’s parent or guardian. This may include an adult relative, babysitter, nanny or teacher.

The Library Director may make exceptions to these age-based rules. For example, a child aged 11 enrolled in the sixth grade or higher may be left unaccompanied with the approval of the Library Director; conversely, the Library Director may determine that a child age 12 or older cannot be unattended based upon their library behavior.

Children aged 12 and over may use the library unaccompanied for an amount of time appropriate for their age and maturity. Unaccompanied children must comply with all library policies.

If children are unaccompanied at VGPL and/or do not abide by library rules, parents/guardians will be called to pick them up and library privileges may be suspended.

It may be necessary for a Library to close, without prior notice, due to unusual or emergency situations. Unaccompanied children 18 years and younger who cannot transport themselves must be able to reach a parent or responsible caregiver for immediate pick-up in case of emergency.

### **CHILDREN LEFT AT THE LIBRARY AFTER CLOSING**

If a child has not been picked up before closing time, the Library Director will attempt to contact the parent or guardian. If unsuccessful, Santa Fe County officials will be called. Library staff or volunteers will *not* take a child home, leave a child outside of the building, or remain in the building alone with an unaccompanied child. At least one volunteer or Board Member should remain with the staff member until parent, guardian, caregiver, or authorities arrive.

### **LIBRARY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN**

Parents or guardians who register their children in formal Library programs must provide contact information including addresses and telephone numbers where the responsible adult may be contacted in case of emergency. The responsible adult will be informed of the requirements for child behavior while the child is participating in the program.

Parents, guardians, and caregivers are encouraged to attend and serve as volunteers.