

## **Unattended Child Policy:**

**Statement of Purpose:** To establish a policy around children unaccompanied in the library. The Plum Borough Community Library is concerned with the safety and well being of children in the library, particularly those who are at risk because of their vulnerability. A “vulnerable” child is defined as one who is unable to care for his or her physical and psychological needs or is too young to be safe alone inside and outside the facility.

The Plum Borough Community Library welcomes children of all ages to use its facilities and services. Visits to the Library should be positive, enjoyable experiences for children and all patrons. The safety and well-being of all is of the utmost importance to the Library. However, responsibility for the behavior and well-being of children using the Library rests with the parent/guardian, not with the Library’s staff. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for the conduct, safety and well-being of their minor children (under 11 years of age) in the Library or on Library grounds.

The Library is not responsible for the safety or well-being of any patron beyond the extent expected of a public facility. Library staff members are not expected to assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children in the library. The library staff cannot be responsible for preventing children from leaving with an adult who is not the proper chaperone.

Parents, guardians, and caregivers may not leave a child alone or in the care of other children who are unable or unwilling to provide adequate care. Supervising adults must be in the building.

As in all public places, “stranger danger” is a real concern. Library staff cannot prevent children from interacting with or leaving with people who are not their appropriate chaperone.

If the library is closed, at its regular time or in an emergency, and a parent or guardian of a child cannot be located in the building, the local police department will be called to care for the child.

The library will deal with children left at closing, or in the event of an emergency, who are too young to go home alone safely by calling the police if the parent or guardian cannot be located and by remaining with that child until the police arrive.

*Passed at Board of Trustees Meeting: November 14, 2023*

*Amended: March 19, 2024.*