Memorial Library
OF NAZARETH & VICINITY

UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

The Memorial Library of Nazareth welcomes children of all ages to use its facilities and services. Visits to the library should be positive, enjoyable experiences for children. Their safety and well-being is of the utmost importance. Responsibility for the behavior and well-being of children using the library rests with the parent/guardian, not with the Library's Staff. These rules and guidelines are for the protection of all who use the Memorial Library of Nazareth and Vicinity.

Definitions:

Unattended Child: An unattended child is any child under the age of 12 using the library facility unaccompanied by a responsible person, or left alone in one part of the library while the responsible person is in another.

Vulnerable Child: A vulnerable child is a child under the age of 12 whose safety or well-being could be endangered either in the building or under circumstances where the child leaves the building unaccompanied by a responsible person.

Responsible Person: A person 16 years or older (examples include: parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, a nanny, etc...).

Parents/Guardians –Remember:

- Children must be supervised at all times. Children must be in the sightline of the responsible person.
- Under no circumstances should parents assume that children are always safe in a library. Libraries are public buildings, open to any and all members of society.
- The library and its staff are not responsible for the safety, care, supervision, or entertainment of unattended children.

Staff Procedures with Unattended and/or Vulnerable Children

Library Staff will use their judgment and discretion in determining whether or not a child is unattended and/or vulnerable.

Library Staff will address an unattended child, inquire their age, and when appropriate the location of the accompanying responsible person.

The Library staff will educate patrons about the Unattended Child Policy if it is a patron's first offense violating this policy. The Library Staff will require a patron to leave the premises, summon the Nazareth Police Department, or ultimately suspend a patron's privilege to enter the library for non-compliance with this policy if the policy is violated a second time.

During the Library's Open Hours:

If a child is left unattended and/or vulnerable Library Staff will:

- Reassure the child;
- Attempt to locate the responsible person within the library;
- Caution the responsible person and/or parent about leaving children unsupervised in the library.

If a parent/guardian cannot be located in the library, the staff will attempt to contact them by phone, requesting immediate pick up of their child.

If there is no response, or if the child has not been picked up within 1 hour, staff will summon the Nazareth Police Department.

At Closing Time:

When a child who is 12 years old or older visits the library without an adult, they must have made arrangements to be picked up prior to closing time.

If a child is left unattended at closing, and a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the Nazareth Police Department will be summoned.

Two staff members will wait with the child until the Nazareth Police Department arrives. An incident report describing the situation will be filed and given to the Library Director.

Approved by Library Board on 6/19/18