

Unattended Minor Policy

June 9, 2025

Clackamas County's Oak Lodge and Gladstone Libraries welcome and encourages library use by children. Providing quality materials and services to young people is one of our primary responsibilities. Parents and guardians are advised, however, that the library is a busy, public place and that they are responsible for monitoring and regulating their children's behavior, safety, and welfare while on library premises. Although it is a library priority to provide a safe and appropriate environment for visitors of all ages, the library staff is not responsible for providing long- or short-term care for unattended children.

Unattended Minors During Opening Hours

Per Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 163.545, parents, legal guardians, and caregivers must adequately supervise children less than 10 years of age. Adequate supervision is defined as having a parent/guardian or assigned caregiver in the immediate vicinity (within sight and conversational distance). Children 10 and older may use the library unattended provided that they refrain from prohibited conduct in Ordinance No. 05-3013. Caregivers who choose to leave a child unattended must first ensure that the child is capable of proper library behavior and of observing library expectations for appropriate use of library materials. Caregivers who neglect to provide proper supervision of their child and regulate disruptive behavior may be asked to leave the library with their child. Parents/legal guardians will be held responsible for damage to library property caused by their children. Library staff members are mandatory reporters and are required by law to report suspected child abuse to state agencies or local law enforcement.

Truancy

Under Oregon law, generally children and teens between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend a full-time school. If a school aged child is at the library on a school day during regular school hours, the student may be asked to show written proof excusing the student from school on that day. Library staff reserves the right to report instances to parents and/or local schools.

Unattended Minors at Closing

If the building is closing and children have not been picked up, a reasonable attempt will be made to locate the responsible party. If no responsible party is found, the police shall be called to take custody of the child.

Access to the Children's Area and Programs

Adults in the Children's Room must be using the room's materials or be accompanied by a child. Adults and teens not fitting this description will be asked to leave the area. Children's programs are held for the instruction and enjoyment of children and their caregivers. Adults attending programs without children are not allowed without prior authorization from library staff.

Access to the Teen Area and Programs

Adults in the Teen Room can briefly browse the room's materials or enter to briefly visit with a teen or talk to library staff. All other adults or children may be asked to leave the area. Teen programs are held for the instruction and enjoyment of teens. Adults and younger children are not allowed at teen programs without prior authorization from library staff.