



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LIBRARY BOARD AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: 03/11/2026

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: March 11, 2026
TO: Library Board
FROM: Ryan Baker, Library Director
SUBJECT: Review Recommended Library Policy for Minors in the Library

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a motion to recommend the draft Minors in the Library policy

REMARKS:

The existing Minors in the Library policy was written and adopted by the Library Board in 2013, with only minor revisions adopted in 2018. Recent review of the policy has concluded that changes are needed to reflect current logistics and best practices.

The wording of the new draft policy as recommended as:

POLICY

Library staff cannot assume responsibility for the care or safety of unattended minors in the Library. Assistance provided by Library staff to minors, including helping a minor contact a Parent or Guardian or responding to an emergency situation, does not create or imply a supervisory, custodial, or guardianship role for Library staff. Parents and Guardians maintain ultimate responsibility for the behavior and safety of their children or minors while on the premises of the Los Gatos Library, regardless of the physical presence of the Parent or Guardian.

Library staff strive to ensure that all buildings are operated in a safe manner. However, because public libraries are open to all, libraries cannot be considered safe places for

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unattended minors. Minors under the age of 10 must never be left unaccompanied in the Library. The responsibility for the safety and behavior of minors in the Library rests with the parents, legal guardians, or other responsible adult caregivers (Parent or Guardian). A Parent or Guardian is defined as a person aged 18 or older who is the parent, the legally designated guardian, the assignee of the Parent or legal Guardian, or an adult caregiver assigned by or under the direction of the Parent or legal Guardian.

PROCEDURES

- Minors age 9 and under must be accompanied by a Parent or Guardian. A Parent or Guardian must remain with the child at all times.
- If a minor age 9 or younger is found to be unaccompanied in the Library, staff will try to locate the Parent or Guardian to remedy the situation. If a Parent or Guardian is unavailable, the Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Department will be called.
- Minors aged 10 through 17 may use the Library without a Parent or Guardian present, but must have the contact information of the Parent or Guardian on their person. Library phones may be used by minors aged 10-17 to contact their Parent or Guardian.
- All minors under the age of 17, regardless of whether they are accompanied or unaccompanied, must follow the Rules of Conduct/Patron Behavior Policy in the Library. Minors that do not follow these policies are subject to the same consequences as other library users, including being required to leave the Library or losing library privileges. Library staff may intervene when minors appear to be unattended, unsafe, or in violation of Library policies and may take appropriate action to ensure compliance with this policy and the Library's Rules of Conduct.

- Library staff are not responsible for an unattended minor in the Library when the Library closes. Parents or Guardians are responsible for ensuring that minors leave the Library before closing time. For minors under the age of 13, Library staff may make a reasonable effort to contact the Parent or Guardian for immediate pickup of the minor if there is no indication that a pickup is scheduled for the minor, however if immediate pickup does not occur prior to the Library's closing time, Library staff will contact the Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Department. Library staff are not permitted to wait with the minor after closing hours.
- Situations may arise when, due to unusual or emergency circumstances, it may be necessary for the Library to close without prior notice. In these cases, unaccompanied minors under the age of 17 who cannot transport themselves must be able to reach a Parent or Guardian for immediate pick-up.
- The Library may not observe the same schedule every day. Parents or guardians should be aware of exceptions to regular posted library operating hours. If a minor remains at the Library after or during a temporary or early closure, staff may make an attempt to contact a Parent or Guardian, but also may, immediately and without recourse, contact the Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Department.
- Staff will never transport a minor under any circumstances.
- The seating and common areas in the Children's area of the Library are reserved solely for minors and the Parents or Guardians that accompany them. Minors in grades 6 through 12 are permitted to use the seating and common areas of the children's area but may be asked to relocate to other areas of the Library depending on capacity in the room, or if the nature of their library use is not suited for an area that serves young children. Adults who are not accompanied by a child in the children's area of the Library

will be approached by staff and asked to move to another area of the Library. However, adults aged 18 and over are permitted temporary access to the book collections within the Children's room for the purpose of retrieving library materials from the shelves.

- The seating and common areas of the Teen Room are reserved exclusively for teens in grades 6-12 at all times, including during school hours and when schools are not in session. Exceptions are limited to library staff and/or attendees of special programs sponsored by the library and hosted in the Teen Room due to capacity issues, that are billed as either all-ages, or for adults and seniors. Adults who enter the Teen Room under other circumstances will be approached by staff and will be asked to move to another area of the Library. However, adults aged 18 and over are permitted temporary access to the book collections within the Teen Room for the purpose of retrieving library materials from the shelves.
- In the event of a fire alarm, evacuation order, or other emergency requiring the Library to evacuate or close immediately, all patrons, including minors, must leave the building and follow staff instructions to the designated safe area outside the building. Unaccompanied minors who are unable to leave safely on their own or who cannot transport themselves from the Library must be able to contact a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver for immediate pickup. Once patrons and staff have reached a safe location, Library staff may make a reasonable effort to help the minor contact a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver. Library staff will not transport a minor or allow a minor to ride in a staff vehicle. If a responsible adult cannot be reached promptly, or if conditions require immediate transfer of care, the Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Department or other appropriate emergency responders may be contacted to assume responsibility for the minor.

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- If a Parent or Guardian reports that a child is missing in the Library, staff will respond within reasonable capacity to assist in locating the child while maintaining the safety of all patrons. Staff will obtain a description of the child and the last known location and may check nearby areas of the Library and notify other staff members to assist in the search. If the child is located, staff will reunite the child with the Parent or Guardian as soon as possible. If the child cannot be located within a reasonable period of time, staff will contact the Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Department and will cooperate fully with law enforcement. Parents and Guardians remain responsible for the safety and supervision of minors while on Library premises.