

Wallingford Public Library Policy on Unattended Children in the Library

Service to children, parents, and adults working with children is an important part of the library's mission. The library is free and open to unaccompanied children who are independent enough to use the resources for recreation, information and education.

It is not the library's function or purpose to provide supervision or care for children while parents or other supervising adults are outside the Children's Department and/or the library. Parents should be aware that the library is a public building open to all individuals. The following policy has been designed to communicate the library's concern for the safety and welfare of the children it serves.

- Parents and guardians are, at all times, responsible for the conduct and safety of their children on library premises. They must provide appropriate supervision based on the ages, abilities and the levels of responsibility of their children.
- Children under age six should not be left unattended in the Children's Room at any time. If the adult in charge of a child under age 6 wishes to go to another area of the library for materials (or to check out materials) the child should accompany the adult.
- Children, like all library users, are required to respect library property, and act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the library (see Code of Conduct). Children who are not using the library appropriately, or who require excessive staff attention or supervision, may be asked to leave the library. The parents or guardians of these children may be notified, and if necessary, asked to stay with their children while visiting the library.
- Parents are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the library, bearing in mind that these can and do change. Power failures or other emergencies can occur and require unexpected evacuations of the building. Children left alone in the library, or on library grounds could be vulnerable. Every effort will be made to contact parents prior to closing. If a child is left at the library after closing time, the police will be called. Under no circumstances will a staff member offer to drive the child home.
- In accordance with Connecticut state law, children under the age of 12 should have a responsible family member or caregiver available in the building while the child is using the library.
- Adults are allowed in the Children's Library when they are accompanying a child or when they require access to the children's collection.

Adopted by Board of Managers June 20, 1994, revised September 28, 1998, September 24, 2001, March 28, 2005.