

Child Safety Policy

The Walpole Public Library strives to ensure that children of all ages will find the library a warm and inviting place. We hope that through their visits, children will develop a lifelong love of books, reading and libraries. We care for the safety and well-being of our young patrons. It is important to note that parents, guardians and caregivers must do their part to insure that this is so.

Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult when in the library or while participating in a program. The library staff cannot assume responsibility for the safety of an unattended child. The physical make-up of our building, with its over-sized stairway, separate rooms and many corners, makes it impossible to see patrons at all times. This is especially true of small children.

Should the situation arise that a child under the age of 10 is unattended in the library the following steps will be taken:

- Attempts to contact or locate a parent or legal guardian will be made.
- If no parent/guardian can be located or if the library is closing, a staff member will contact the police.
- Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the building or transport to another location.

School age children ages 10-18 may use the library unattended as long as their conduct is acceptable in a library setting. Parents/guardians are expected to be aware that their child is at the library. These unattended children may research an assignment, complete a homework task, attend a library program, use a computer, select books and read in the library. Children will be expected to display appropriate behavior conducive to maintaining a peaceful atmosphere in the building for all patrons. The child will be asked to leave the premises if proper behavior is not maintained. Children must know how to reach an adult in case of an emergency, and both child and adult should be aware of library hours. The police will be notified if a child is left waiting for more than ten minutes outside the library after hours.

Parents, guardians and caregivers, not the library staff, are ultimately responsible for the actions and safety of children visiting the library.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees April 9, 2013.