



SAFE CHILD POLICY

The Woburn Public Library welcomes children of all ages to enjoy programs and make use of its library collections and services. It is the first step in encouraging lifelong learning. While the library staff strives to create a safe and comfortable place for children, it is important to note that the library is a public building, and as such can be an unsafe place for children alone. The library staff is here strictly to assist children with their library needs; the staff is not licensed to perform child care. Library staff cannot take the place of parents/guardians, nor can they assume responsibility for unsupervised children. To ensure the protection and wellbeing of our young patrons, the following policies have been established.

1. Preschool children aged four and under must always be closely supervised (“within sight”) by a responsible adult.
2. Children between the ages of five and eight must be directly supervised (in the same room or area of the library) by a responsible adult. Caregivers must remain in the building while a child is attending a library program.
3. Children aged nine and older left unattended must be mature enough to follow the library’s Patron Behavior Policy. Consequences for violating this policy may include being asked to leave the library. As a general rule, if a parent or guardian feels a child is not mature enough to be left home alone without supervision, or to leave the library building alone, he or she is not mature enough to be left unattended in the library. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior by unattended children will not be tolerated. The disruptive child will be given one warning; and notice that a second warning will mean ejection from the library. If ejection should be necessary, a reasonable attempt will be made to notify a parent/guardian by phone.
4. Numerous unexpected events may occur, requiring that the library close without notice. Children should have an emergency phone number with them when using the library unattended.
5. Parents/guardians are expected to supervise and manage children’s behavior while using the library. Disruptive behavior, including running, shouting, screaming, throwing objects, pulling large numbers of books from shelves without intending to use them, jumping or climbing on library furniture, banging on computer keyboards, or otherwise interfering with other patrons’ use of the library, are not acceptable. If parents are unable to curb the child’s disruptive behavior, the family will be asked to leave the library.
6. At closing, if unattended children remain in the building they should have the means to contact a parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian is “on the way,” at least two staff members will wait for 10 minutes with the child outside the library. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, or doesn’t arrive within 10 minutes of the library’s closing time, the Woburn Police Department will be called to take custody of the child until the parent/guardian can be located. A copy of this “Safe Child Policy” will be given to the parent or to the police to give to the parent once he/she

arrives to pick up the child. Under no circumstances may staff transport children from the library to any location.

7. In an effort to keep the Children's Room a safe and comfortable place, the children's department is reserved for use by children, their parents/caretakers, teachers, and those using the collection. Adults not accompanied by a child who are not using the collection will be asked to move to the Adult Services section. Computers in the Children's Room are reserved for children; caregivers may borrow laptops to use in the Children's Area if necessary.

Approved by the Woburn Public Library Board of Trustees, September 11, 2018