

Unattended Children Policy

Statement of Purpose:

The Conant Public Library welcomes and encourages members of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections and programming offered by the library. The **library attempts to provide a safe environment for all members to select books and** other materials and to attend library programming.

However, young children are not safe when left unattended in the library. The library is not responsible for their care, or for their supervision. The Unattended Child Policy has been developed for the safety of minor children and the enjoyment of all patrons using the library. Library trustees and the Director of the Library have authority to enforce this policy.

Policy:

NO CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF 10 ARE TO BE LEFT UNATTENDED

Children under the age of 10 may not be left unattended at the library. A child is considered unattended if he/she is in the library without a responsible person over the age of 15. The responsible person over the age of 15 will monitor activities and manage behavior during the library visit.

For children under the age of ten participating in library programming, the responsible person over the age of fifteen must remain in the library during the program.

At the discretion of a parent/guardian or caregiver, a child aged ten to fourteen may be left unattended in the library for the period of time needed to select materials, complete a homework assignment, read, or attend a program. A parent or guardian must contact the library to let the staff know if a child will be at the library for longer than two hours. The parent or guardian should have contact information on file, such as a phone number and/or email. In addition, the child must know how to reach a parent/guardian or caregiver in case the need should arise.

Parents/guardians or caregivers are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with the child. If a child's behavior is inappropriate for the library, and he/she does not respond to appropriate guidance from library staff, the parent/guardian or caregiver will be contacted to remove the child from the library. If the parent/guardian or caregiver cannot be reached and the child's behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the Town of Winchester police department may be called.

Parents/guardians or caregivers are expected to be aware of the Library's hours and make arrangements to meet or transport their children.

If a child is left at the library without a way home one-half hour prior to closing time, library staff may call the child's home or parent/guardians or caregivers place of business. The contact information may be provided by the child, found in the patron database, or the telephone directory. If contacted, the parent/guardian or caregiver will be told that their child must be

picked up immediately. If a parent/guardian or caregiver cannot be located or if the child has not been picked up within one half-hour, the library staff may contact the Town of Winchester police department.

Library Staff are not responsible for any children who leave the property unattended.

Under no circumstances will a staff member give a child a ride home.

The Conant Public Library and its staff do not assume responsibility for any child left unattended in the library.

All library patrons regardless of age are subject to the "Patron Code of Conduct" concerning behavior.

Approved 05/10/2022