



8 Route 129 | Loudon, NH 03307 | MaxfieldLibrary.com | (603)798-5153

## **Safe Child Policy**

Maxfield Public Library (MPL) encourages children of all ages to visit the library. MPL provides an array of services to children and young adults including, but not limited to, educational and entertaining programs, reading materials, internet access, and study areas in which to complete projects, homework, and research.

MPL staff cannot provide child care or assume responsibility for children's safety. Parents and guardians, *not library staff*, are responsible for the behavior and safety of children visiting the library.

*Staff cannot be placed in the position of supervising unattended children.*

1. Children will be expected to display appropriate behavior that is conducive to maintaining a peaceful atmosphere in the building for all patrons. Disruptive behavior that is prohibited in the library includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Cursing, or using obscene or abusive language toward other patrons or MPL staff
  - b. Throwing objects of any kind
  - c. Vandalizing library property or facilities
  - d. Fighting or challenging others to fight
  - e. Threatening another patron or staff member verbally or with intimidating body language
  - f. Any misconduct or inappropriate behavior that disturbs others or hinders them in their use of the library or library materials
  - g. Having drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind

2. Children aged 6 and younger must be accompanied by a parent/guardian who will remain near the child at all times, including while they are in the children's library, attending a library program, and visiting the restroom.

3. Children between the ages of 7-11 who are engaged in a library-sponsored program may be left unattended for the duration of the program as long as the child's accompanying adult remains on library premises and the child follows the rules of behavior set in place by library management and/or the program host.

4. At the discretion of a parent/guardian, children between the ages of 12-17 may visit the library unattended. A parent/guardian is responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with the child. *However, if the adult feels it is unsafe for the child to leave the building without supervision, the child should not be in the library unattended. Library staff may not prevent anyone from leaving library premises.*

a. If a child's behavior is not appropriate, guidance on appropriate behavior will be given to the child by a staff member.

b. Children will be asked to leave the premises if proper behavior is not maintained.

c. If a child is asked to leave the library, they will not be allowed to come back without adult supervision until a parent/guardian has spoken with the Library Director and the parent/guardian and child must sign acknowledgement of this policy.

d. Children must know how to reach a parent/guardian in case of emergency, and both child and parent/guardian should be aware of library hours.

5. MPL staff are not responsible for the safety or well-being of children left unattended.

6. If children are attending library programs, the parent/guardian must be aware of the times of the programs so that their children do not have to wait unreasonable lengths of time to be picked up. *The parent/guardian should ask library staff if their presence is required during a program.*

7. If a child is left at the library without a safe way to get home, MPL staff may use information provided by the child, the patron database, or the telephone directory in an attempt to reach a parent/guardian on the child's behalf to find a safe way home. If a responsible adult cannot be located or if nobody has picked up the child before the library closes, MPL staff may contact the police department who will then assume responsibility for the child. Unattended children will not be left outside the library. Loudon Police Department can be reached at 603-798-5521.

8. MPL staff members will not transport children from the library to any other location, including Loudon Police Department.

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*Approved April 2021*

*Adapted from Boston Public Library, Elkins Public Library (Canterbury, NH), and Newmarket (NH) Public Library*