

Watertown Public Library Unattended Child Policy

May 2025

Purpose:

To ensure the safety and well being of children who visit the library and maintain an atmosphere of constructive library use.

The Watertown Public Library welcomes library use by children and library staff members are available to assist children with library materials or services. The library desires to provide a safe and appropriate environment for visitors of all ages.

The library is not equipped and it is not the library's role to provide long-term or short-term child care.

Sharing this environment with other people requires that all follow the Unacceptable Conduct Policy-Library Privileges, established by the Board of Library Trustees which are available on the Library website or by request.

Policy:

Responsibility for the welfare and behavior of children using the library rests with the parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver. Staff cannot assume responsibility for children's safety and comfort when they are unattended.

The Library Director has the authority to alter the policy of age limit supervision requirements to adapt to unforeseen circumstances

Supervision of children:

- A. Preschool children should be in sight of and supervised by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver. Parents or caregivers of preschool children are expected to remain in the library while children are attending library programs.
- B. Children able to maintain proper library behavior may use the library unattended, otherwise they should be adequately supervised by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver.
- C. The Watertown Public Library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended on library premises, including prior to or following all scheduled events.

Staff may, as needed:

- A. In all situations, children who are being disruptive will be asked to leave the Library building and property, even if parent/guardian is in the building. If necessary, staff will not hesitate to call the police.
- B. Notify parents, guardians, or responsible caregivers that children need additional supervision.

Library Closing

- A. Two staff members will remain in the library if a minor child is in the building at closing. If any child remains at the library 15 minutes after closing, staff will contact the Watertown Police Department. Under no circumstances will library staff provide a ride home to a child