



Watertown Public Library Unattended Child Policy

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 Rules for Patron Code of Conduct 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. Older 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. ~~Children who come to the library unattended on a regular basis (2 or more days weekly) may stay only two hours unattended each day.~~
- D. ~~Children may be considered unattended if causing disturbances, even if the parent/guardian is in the library building.~~
- E. 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 with disruptive behavior (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. if a situation is warranted.~~
- A. Notify parents, guardians, or responsible caregivers that children need additional supervision.
- B. ~~All children should have the name and telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency or if they have been directed to leave the building.~~
- C. ~~Teenagers are considered adult library patrons. Nonetheless, their parents or Guardians are still legally responsible for their behavior. Therefore, they should have emergency contact information available.~~
- D. ~~Contact authorities such as the Police to assist with the enforcement of discipline in the library or to ensure the safety of an unattended child.~~

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**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

~~You are being asked to read and sign the Unattended Children Policy for the Watertown Public Library because your child has either been unattended or using disruptive behavior in the library. If your child has been disruptive in the library, he/she has been given one (1) warning from staff. Your Child will not be allowed to stay in the library until this form is signed and returned.~~

~~Signing this form means you have read and agree to the Watertown Public Library policy. If your child is unattended or disruptive after you have signed this form your child may lose library privileges for a period of time.~~

Thank you,

Library Director
Watertown Public Library

Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Phone Number: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

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