

The East Longmeadow Public Library is committed to providing excellent programs, services and materials for children of all ages. Library Staff hope children using the Library will find it an inviting place to develop a love of books and reading, as well as a place to find materials which serve their informational, educational, and recreational needs.

Children of all ages are welcome in the Library. The Safe Child Policy is designed to address the Library's concern for the welfare of children and is not intended to restrict, discourage, or frustrate appropriate use of the Library. In order to create a safe environment, and maintain an atmosphere where study and play can be encouraged, the following policy has been created.

For the purposes of this policy, an unattended child refers to a child in the Library alone, or a child whose parent, legal guardian, or caregiver is in the Library but is not directly supervising that child. The latter situation may occur when the adult and child are in separate areas of the building, or when the adult is using Library materials or equipment and is not supervising the child. A caregiver must be at least 14 years of age, who acknowledges responsibility for the child during their entire stay at the Library.

The following guidelines will be followed concerning the care and behavior of children:

- It is the responsibility of parents, legal guardians, and other caregivers to ensure appropriate behavior, supervision, and safety of children in their care. The Library Staff is not responsible for the supervision of children left unattended by their parents, legal guardians, or caregivers.
- Children ten years old and under must be accompanied and directly supervised by a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver. Children eleven years old and older may use the Library unattended but are subject to the Library's Behavior Policy.
- All children, while in the Library, are subject to the rules and regulations in effect regarding proper behavior and conduct (see Behavior Policy). Children determined by the Staff to be disrupting normal Library activities will be given one warning and, if the behavior persists, will be asked to leave the Library.
- All patrons, including children, must leave the building at closing time. Parents, legal guardians, or caregivers are solely responsible for ensuring that children have transportation when the Library closes. Under no circumstances will Library Staff drive or transport a minor from the Library. If an unattended child is left in the Library when the Library closes, Staff will attempt to contact the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver.

**East Longmeadow Public Library
Safe Child Policy**

If the parent, legal guardian or caregiver cannot be located within a reasonable amount of time (15 minutes), the Library Staff will refer the unattended minor to the East Longmeadow Police Department.

The "Safe Child Policy" is subject to review and amendment by the Board of Library Trustees.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, December, 2005

Amended by the Board of Library Trustees, November, 2013, January 2021

Amended by the Board of Library Trustees, April, 2023