



TOWN OF MANSFIELD
MANSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY DEPARTMENTAL POLICY MEMORANDUM

Approved by: Leslie McDonough, Library Director
Effective Date: January 1, 2015
Subject: Mansfield Public Library Child Behavior and Supervision

Purpose:

1. To provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for library users of all ages who are appropriately using its services and facilities.

Policy:

Service to children is an important part of the Library's mission. The Library is free and open to unaccompanied children who are independent enough to use the resources for recreation, information and education.

Any children under the age of 12 should have a responsible family member or caregiver in the building while the child is using the Library.

Parents, guardians and caregivers are referred to **CT General Statutes Sec. 53-21a**, regarding leaving children unsupervised at the library; relevant text is included at the end of this document.

Parents should be aware that the Library is a public building open to all individuals. It is not the Library staff's function or purpose to provide supervision for children nor to care for children while parents or caregivers are outside the Library. The Library staff is not authorized to act in place of parents. Staff members are responsible for assisting all Library patrons and cannot monitor unattended children. Staff will not monitor children leaving the Library.

Unattended Children

1. At all times, caregivers are responsible for the conduct and safety of their children on Library premises. Caregivers must provide appropriate supervision based on the ages, the abilities and the levels of responsibility of their children.
2. Caregivers are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the Library, bearing in mind that these can and do change. Sudden emergencies may occur in the Library and in such cases the Library assumes no responsibility for unattended children. Power failures or other emergencies can occur and require unexpected closing of the building. Parents, guardians, or caregivers should be sure that their children know what to do or where to go when the Library closes.
3. If a child is left at the Library during open hours, staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian, or caregiver. If no one can be contacted, library staff will either allow the child to remain at the library under close supervision until a parent can be contacted or contact the police, depending on the nature of the situation.
4. If a child is left at the Library after closing time, or as the result of an emergency closing, staff will attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If no responsible person can be contacted, the police will be called. Under no circumstances will library staff escort a child off library

property or transport children to another location. A minimum of two library staff will remain with the child until a parent/guardian/caregiver or the police arrive.

CT General Statutes Sec. 53-21a. Leaving child unsupervised in place of public accommodation or motor vehicle. Failure to report disappearance of a child.

(a) Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of any child under the age of twelve years who knowingly leaves such child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or a motor vehicle for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

(c) Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of any child under the age of twelve years who knowingly leaves such child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or a motor vehicle between the hours of eight o'clock p.m. and six o'clock a.m. for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a class C felony.