



UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

The Newton Free Library welcomes children of all ages and strives to create a warm, inviting learning environment. The Library offers many programs and services that encourage children to develop a love of books and reading. However, the Library is a public building, and the wellbeing of young children left alone at the Library is a serious concern. Young children are not safe when left unattended in any public place, including a library. In addition, children left alone for too long can become bored, frightened or disruptive. The responsibility for children using the Library rests with the child's caregiver: a parent, guardian or otherwise designated caregiver.

The safety and wellbeing of every child is very important and to ensure their protection, the Newton Free Library has adopted the following policy:

- Children 8 years-old and younger must be accompanied and supervised by their caregiver at all times in the Children's Room and the Library, except when participating in scheduled library programs that do not require caregiver participation. If the caregiver of such a child cannot be located, the Newton Police Department will be contacted.
- Caregivers must remain in the Library while their children are attending a Library sponsored program, and take charge of their children as soon as the program is over if the child is 8 years old or younger.
- Children under the age of 12 may not act as caregivers for younger children.
- Closing time: if there is an unattended child of any age present near closing time, an effort will be made to contact the child's caregivers. If a caregiver does not arrive at the library by closing, the Newton Police Department will be contacted.
- Whenever staff must stay after closing to watch a child until the police arrive, the building senior on duty must be informed and that person will designate at least two staff-members to wait with the child for the police. A library incident report will be prepared in this case. The name and contact information of the caregiver should be included on the report if there is an opportunity to obtain it.
- Under no circumstances will a staff member transport a child to another location.

-Approved by the Board of Library Trustees on December 21, 2016.