

SAFE CHILDREN POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to inform parents and caretakers that the Library does not assume responsibility for their children as well as to provide guidelines to be utilized by staff when a child is left unattended in the Library.

The Islip Public Library Board of Trustees and staff strive to provide a warm, welcoming and enriching environment for children of all ages. However, the Library cannot guarantee the safety of children. A child could be approached by a stranger, become ill, wander outside, or become lost or injured. Children left alone in the building or on Library grounds are vulnerable and at risk. Children also tend to lack necessary awareness about social distancing and face covering protocols required in the building during times of public health concerns or infectious disease outbreak. We are concerned with children's safety, and we believe that this policy assists in assuring the well-being of children, and at times of public health concern, the well-being of other patrons and staff.

In the execution of their duties, staff cannot monitor the whereabouts or behavior of children. Parents and caretakers, not Library staff, are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children while using the Library. The Islip Public Library does not assume responsibility for children's safety or behavior when they are in the Library. The Library's services do not include "baby-sitting."

For the safety and comfort of children, the Islip Public Library has established a policy that all children who have not yet reached their eleventh (11th) birthday and any child, in the judgment of staff, whose health, safety or welfare is jeopardized or whose behavior reflects inappropriate conduct, be attended and supervised by a responsible parent, guardian or caretaker, sixteen years of age or older, at all times and in all areas of the Library.

With the exception of those times when a young child is attending a program without a parent/caretaker in the room, children under the age of eleven (11) years must be within

sight of the person responsible for their safety. During programming for children that does not require the participation of a parent or caretaker, parents and caretakers are required to remain on Library premises. Parents or caretakers must be present to pick-up their children under the age of eleven (11) promptly upon conclusion of Library programming. Library staff may not take phone numbers for the purposes of making calls to inform parents/caretakers that programs have concluded.

Unattended Child During Library Hours:

If it is determined that a child under the age of eleven (11) is unattended, a staff member will seek to identify and locate the parent/caretaker. If staff cannot ascertain the location of the parent/caretaker by searching the Library, the parent/caretaker will be paged over the intercom. Once the adult is located, he/she will be advised of the Library's policy. If the parent/caretaker is not located a staff member will accompany the child while an attempt is made to ascertain the phone number of the child's parent. If at the end of 20 additional minutes, the phone number is not ascertained or if phone calls go unanswered, the police will be contacted.

In the event an attending adult is present but not providing appropriate childcare, the Library reserves the right to contact the police if a verbal reminder from the staff does not elicit the appropriate supervision.

Unattended Child After Closing:

This provision pertains to all children under the age of eleven (11) and any child, in the judgment of the staff, whose health, safety or welfare is jeopardized by being left unattended after closing.

Parents, guardians, and designated adults are required to be familiar with the Library's hours and to make advanced arrangements to pick up or otherwise transport their children

before the Library closes. A child left unattended at closing time may be deemed at risk. If, at closing, no parent or caretaker is present or waiting outside, two staff members including the building supervisor will stay with the child in the building and will monitor public entrances. The child or the librarian in charge will call the parent or caretaker's home and/or cell phone, if available. Parents will be notified that the child must be picked-up immediately, and if not, that the police will be contacted. If at the end of 20 minutes, no parent or caretaker has arrived, the police will be contacted to take the child into custody. When dealing with a child who has a previous history of not being picked-up on time by a parent or caretaker, the staff may contact the police more quickly.

Under no circumstances will a staff member drive a child home, or drive a child to the police station. Under no circumstances will a staff member remove a child from the building in the absence of a parent, caretaker or law enforcement officer.

[Sick Children:](#)

Parents are expected to keep sick children at home and not bring them to the Library. Parents or caretakers of children obviously evidencing illness will be required to remove their sick children from the building.

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