

Unattended Children Policy

Hampton Bays Public Library's Children's Room welcomes all children from birth to 6th grade and their families to use its facilities, resources, and services. Responsibility for children using the Library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver. Although staff will always respond with care and concern, they cannot assume responsibility for the safety, behavior and comfort of unattended children. Staff will not be expected to monitor or prevent an unattended child from leaving the building/grounds.

Children from birth to 4th grade must be accompanied at all times by a parent/guardian or other responsible person age 16 or older. School age children attending programs are supervised by the staff only during the scheduled time of the program. The parent/guardian or caregiver must remain in the Library and immediately join the child at the end of the program.

Children in 5th and 6th grade may visit the Library unattended for a reasonable period provided they are able to maintain proper library behavior. Children are expected to follow the rules of conduct as outlined in the Public Behavior in the Library Policy. Unattended children must have with them the telephone numbers of a parent/guardian or caregiver who can be contacted to pick up the child in case of an emergency.

Every reasonable effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian or caregiver when a child's:

- health or safety is in doubt;
- behavior disturbs other library users
- parent/guardian or caregiver is not present at closing time
- actions violate any of the Rules of Conduct for Library Patrons

If no responsible adult is reached, or the child is not picked up within 15 minutes of Library closing, staff may notify the police.

If, in the judgment of the librarian/staff in charge, an unsupervised child's conduct, age/maturity level or the conduct or age of those with or responsible for the child, exposes the child or others to risk, disrupts the operation of the Library, violates any of the Rules of Conduct for Library Patrons or requires continual staff intervention, the staff will require that such child leave the Library.

If, in the judgment of the librarian/staff in charge, the child cannot safely leave the premises without adult supervision due to age, capacity, time of day, or other circumstance, the librarian/staff in charge will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or caregiver and request the child be picked up from the Library. If a parent/guardian or caregiver is unavailable then proper authorities may be notified.

If a child is asked to leave the library 3 times for reasons related to their behavior then they may be banned from the library for period of 1 - 4 weeks. Repeat offenses may be subject to longer suspensions.

If an unattended child, of any age, is at the library 30 minutes before closing the child will be asked to contact their parent/guardian to be picked up. If an unattended child has not been picked up by closing time two (2) staff members will remain with the child until they are picked up. If the child is not picked up in 15 minutes, a staff member can call the police to transport the child. A staff member should not drive a child home.

Public Space & Safety - Approved by the Board October 8, 2024