

## **Unattended Children/Child Safety Policy**

The West Tisbury Free Public Library has a responsibility to provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for every patron who is appropriately using its services and facilities. Please do not bring sick children to the library,

The library board and staff are eager for children to use the library and welcome those who do so. Service to children is an important part of the library's mission. The Library is free and open to unaccompanied children who are eight years of age and over and to younger children accompanied by an adult caregiver. If a child is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the Library without an adult.

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 or to care for children while parents or caregivers are using library services or outside the library. Staff will not monitor children leaving the library.

The following policy has been designed to implement the Library Board's concern for the safety and welfare of the children it serves.

### **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. Power failures or other emergencies can occur and require unexpected closing of the building. Children left alone in the library, or on library grounds, could be vulnerable. Every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardians prior to closing.
3. If a child is left at the library after closing time, or as the result of an emergency closing, the police will be called. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the building or transport children to another location. Two staff members will remain with the child until the police or parent or guardian arrive.
4. Children are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct expected of adults. All Library users are required to respect library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the library (see Library Behavior Policy and Procedures). Children who are not using the Library appropriately or who require excessive staff attention or supervision, will be asked to leave the library and, if necessary, the police will be contacted.

**Unaccompanied Adults**

Patrons 14 years of age and older who are not accompanied by children may not loiter in the Children's rooms.

Taking pictures of children in the library is prohibited. A parent, guardian, designated library staff or invited media may take photos when authorized by the Director.

*Adopted by the Library Board of Directors, \_\_\_\_\_*