

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

The Shrewsbury Public Library building, being a public facility, is by definition open to all people. Therefore, the public library can never be considered a completely safe place to leave children unattended. To ensure the safety and supervision of all children who use the library, the Board of Trustees sets the following standards for the supervision of children in the building.

- Children through grade six must be continually attended and supervised by a parent or parent's representative while in the library.

Definitions:

Supervised means accompanied by a parent or a parent's representative who is ensuring:

- that the child's behavior does not present a safety hazard to themselves or other users, or library property
- that the child acts in accordance with Library Rules
- that the child's behavior does not interfere with the use of the library by others

Parent's representative is another adult or teenager (15 years or older) who has been designated by a parent to ensure that their child is safe and acting in accordance with library rules.

- Children in grades seven and eight may be left unattended for a maximum of two hours.
- Children through grade six who are attending library programs must have a responsible person remain in the building throughout the program. Parents or caregivers are responsible for escorting the child to the program and meeting the child at the conclusion of each library program. Library staff cannot be responsible for supervising children before or after programs.
- All visitors to the library must conduct themselves in accordance with the Library's policy on Appropriate Library Use. Parents may be notified if older children using the library independently are not adhering to the guidelines of this policy.

Parents and caregivers should be familiar with the library's hours of operation and should not leave children before opening or after closing. Also, close attention must be paid to unexpected closings (storms, power outages, etc.) Prior arrangements and contingency plans for immediate pickup should be discussed with the child. Library staff is not responsible for supervising children left alone when the library is closed.

To ensure the safety of children who are visiting the library independently and are still in the building at closing time, library staff will act upon the following guidelines:

- Children thirteen years or younger will not be left on the library property unattended after library hours.
- Staff members will not drive or escort the child(ren) home.
- At least two staff members will remain with the child(ren) up to 15 minutes after closing. The staff person will make every attempt to contact the parent or a responsible adult during that period.
- If the child is not picked up 15 minutes after closing time, the staff members will contact the Police Department and request assistance. Once the child is under the supervision of a police officer staff members may leave.

*APPROVED: May 23, 2006*

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