

SAFE CHILD POLICY

(See also Library Conduct Policy)

The library is a public building and all patrons, including minors, are welcome. However, at no time will the Library assume the responsibility of surrogate care provider for children in the Library.

1. Using the Library

- a. All children under the age of 6 years of age must always have a parent or caregiver present in the library at all times. A caregiver is defined as someone 13 years of age or older who has the mental and physical capacity to care for the child should an emergency arise.
- b. Children between the ages of 6 and 8 years should not be left unattended for more than one hour.

2. Unattended Child

- a. In the event a child under 6 years of age is left unattended or a child between the ages of 6 and 8 years is left unattended for more than one hour, the staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian or other caregiver.
- b. If a parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be located within one half hour, or if the library is closing, the Mechanicsville Police Department will be called to assume responsibility for the child.

3. Attendance at Programs

- a. The library can suspend this policy for specific programs and outreach opportunities where library staff accepts a greater responsibility to monitor the safety and well-being of children. This action requires the approval of the Library Director or Assistant Director for these limited opportunities.
- b. It is strongly recommended for all children to be picked up inside the building at the end of all programs.

4. General Information

- a. For children using the library independently, failure to exhibit proper library behavior will result in a warning from the staff member. Staff members will inform accompanying responsible person for those children aged 8 and under.
- b. Following the same guidelines used for adult patrons using the Library, if problems continue after the warning they will be asked to leave the Library.

Adopted:--- | Revised: 11/8/17 | Revised 8/5/20