

Unattended Child Policy

Purpose:

The Library Board and staff view service to children as an important part of the Library's mission. Children are encouraged to use the Simsbury Public Library's facilities and services. However, parents and caregivers should be mindful that the Library is a public building open to all individuals, and that unattended children are vulnerable. This policy outlines the guidelines to keep children safe during their visits.

Guidelines:

- Parents and caregivers are responsible for the conduct and safety of their children in the Library and must provide reasonable supervision of their children, appropriate to the age and level of responsibility of each child.
 - Children under the age of twelve (12) years must be accompanied by an adult who is somewhere on the Library premises, including during library programs.
 - Children under the age of six (6) years must have an adult in the immediate vicinity at all times, including during programs.
 - Children aged twelve (12) years and older may use the Library unaccompanied by an adult, as long as they follow the guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behavior set out in the Rules of Behavior Policy.
- Library staff does not monitor children leaving the premises and are not responsible for children outside the building who await transportation or who are socializing.
- Parents and guardians should be aware of the Library's opening and closing times and must make arrangements to meet and/or transport children ages twelve (12) and up who have been using the library unaccompanied.
- Children remaining at the Library at closing time will be directed to call their parents. The Simsbury Police may be called if the parent has not come for the child by closing time.
- All children, young adults and adults are expected to respect Library property and other Library patrons. Disruptive, inappropriate, or unsafe behavior will result in the individual(s) being asked to leave, and parents and/or the Simsbury Police Department will be notified as deemed necessary by Library staff. In the case of younger children, parents/caregivers are expected to address problematic behaviors. If the behavior persists, both the child and parent will be asked to leave the premises.
- The judgment of the Library staff prevails when requesting the removal of a child from the building in the event of behavioral difficulties.

Reference Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 53-21a: "Leaving child unsupervised in place of public accommodation or motor vehicle.

(a)(1) Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of any child under the age of twelve years who knowingly leaves such child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or a motor vehicle for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor."

(2) In determining whether an action constitutes a violation of this subsection, (A) consideration shall be given to whether or not the parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of a child under the age of twelve years exercised judgment that a reasonable person would use in determining whether the child was of sufficient age, maturity, physical ability and mental ability to be unsupervised under the circumstances, and (B) no finding of substantial risk may be based solely on a parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of such child allowing such child's participation in independent activities, including, but not limited to, traveling to and from school, traveling to and from commercial or recreational facilities located near such child's home and unsupervised outdoor play, provided such child is of sufficient age, maturity, physical ability and mental ability to engage in such activities and the child's participation would not lead a reasonable person to believe that such participation creates an obvious danger to the child's safety.

~Approved by the Library Board of Trustees September 15, 2025