

Burnham Memorial Library
Colchester, VT

UNATTENDED CHILD POLICY

The Burnham Memorial Library welcomes children and youth of all ages to use the resources and services available at the library. While the library strives to maintain a safe and pleasant environment for all who visit, library staff cannot assume responsibility for the safety, well-being, or supervision of children. Due to staffing limitations there are times when the Youth Services Department is without staff supervision.

For the protection and well-being of all library patrons, the Burnham Library Board of Trustees has set these policy guidelines:

- The Burnham Memorial Library assumes no responsibility for children of any age left unattended at the library, except as specifically stated otherwise in this policy.
- Parents or adult caregivers assume all liability for damage done by their minor children to the library facility and/or its contents.
- Only adults accompanying children or those looking to use the youth collections will be allowed in the youth areas. Computers are reserved for children and teens—loitering is not permitted.

Children Ages Birth-7

Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult at all times while in the library. An adult is anyone, 15 years or older, who is responsible for the well-being of the child.

Children Age 8 and Older

Children age 8 and older may use the library unattended, subject to appropriate behavior and conduct. Parents and caregivers should be aware that there are times when the library's Youth Services Department does not have a staff member present.

Children Attending Library Programs

Parents or adult caregivers of children ages 5 and younger must remain in the library when their children are attending library-sponsored programs. Library staff assumes supervision responsibility for children who are participating in library-sponsored programs, unless otherwise noted. This responsibility covers only the time of the scheduled program and not the time directly prior to or following the program.

For programs occurring after normal business hours, parents must check in with library staff prior to dropping off any child younger than 13 years old. Library staff will provide them with a pick up time as well as obtain a phone number where an adult can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

Unattended Children

In the event that library staff cannot locate a parent or adult caregiver for an unattended child under the age of 8, the library may find it necessary to place the child in the custody of the local police. The library will make every effort to locate a parent or caregiver before contacting police.

If unattended minor children remain in the library building at the time the library closes, library staff may place the child in the custody of the local police department. Library staff will take into account the age of the child, time of day and weather conditions before making a decision to call the police.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees: October 17, 2002

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