

# SAFE CHILD POLICY

## Enriching Your Child's Library Experience Parent-Library Partnership

Dear Parent,

You have applied for library privileges for your child because you are interested in providing your child with a variety of educational and enriching activities. We want to be partners with you and provide an enjoyable experience that will help your child develop knowledge, reading ability, and cultural awareness.

Our role in this partnership is to select diverse, quality materials that will challenge, interest, and inform children. We will be glad to make recommendations for your child based on your personal criteria. Please remember, however, that we are a public library; we collect materials suitable and of interest to all segments of the public.

Your role in this partnership is to see that materials borrowed by your child are appropriate for that individual child. It is also your responsibility to make your child aware of the obligation to return materials in a timely manner and in good condition.

Please read through the following rules carefully. Please let us know if we can assist you or your child in any way.

*Wolcott Community Public Library Staff*

## Our Safe Child Rules

We want the Wolcott Community Public Library to be a welcoming, safe place for your children. Our staff has many duties to perform in order to serve all patrons in the best way possible. For this reason, the staff cannot monitor the whereabouts or behavior of our smallest patrons - your children. Staff cannot assume the responsibility of your children's care when they are in the library. No public place, including the library, can guarantee the safety of children. A child could be approached by a stranger, become ill, wander outside, or become lost or injured. We are concerned with your children's safety, and we believe that our policy helps assure their well-being.

- Parents/caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior in the library.
- Parents are responsible for understanding and explaining the library rules to their children. The rules and policies have been developed to safeguard the collection and ensure fairness for all library users.
- All children under the age of 9 are to be directly **supervised by an adult or an individual age 14 or older at all times**. The library in no way assumes responsibility for any child left unattended in the building.
- The library staff reserves the right to report suspected truancy to the appropriate authorities during school hours.

- Profanity and inappropriate behavior are prohibited in the library, on library grounds, and at library events.
- Parents are to set reasonable time limits for their children's library visits. Children may attend library programs without a parent if they are registered, but parents must immediately pick up children upon conclusion of the program.
- Parents are to let us know if they or their children are unable to find the type of material they seek. We welcome suggestions for materials that will broaden our collection and improve our services.
- Parents are responsible for the types of materials checked out by their children and their selection choices. The library staff does not limit choices or censor materials.
- Parents are responsible for all fines on a child's account. Parents are financially responsible for any damages to library materials, equipment, or property incurred by their children.
- Parents who attend children's programming with their children are to demonstrate good listening habits.
- Parents must keep sick children at home and not bring them to the library, especially during children's programming when illness may easily be spread to other children.

### **We Care about the Safety of Your Child**

If a child under the age of 9 is found unattended while the library is open, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, law enforcement officials will be called, and the child will be placed in their care.

If a child under the age of 14 has not been picked up by a parent/caregiver within 15 minutes of closing, library staff will attempt to contact their parents. If parents cannot be reached, law enforcement officials will be called, and the child will be placed in their care.

If a child under the age of 14 is found unattended when the library is open and the child has become ill or frightened, has become disruptive and will not respond to verbal warnings from library staff, is upset because of weather conditions, long hours out of contact with the parent/caregiver, or other special circumstances, library staff will attempt to contact their parents. If parents cannot be reached, law enforcement officials will be called, and the child will be placed in their care.

After a child has been placed in the care of law enforcement personnel, the staff will leave notes about the child's whereabouts at the front desk. Under no circumstances will a staff member give a child a ride home, take a child outside the building, or remain in the building alone with an unattended child.

Parents who disregard library policy regarding these matters may be reported to the appropriate social services agency and may lose all library privileges.

*Adopted for the Wolcott Community Public Library by the Board  
June 11, 2024*