

## ***Child/Teen Safety Policy***

The Warren-Trumbull County Public Library strives to provide a positive, safe, non-disruptive environment for all its customers, especially families and children.

It is recognized that unattended or disruptive children/teens at the library can represent a serious concern.

An unattended child/teen is one without an apparent parent/guardian/caregiver to monitor behaviors.

A “child” is defined for the W-TCPL as birth through 12 years; teens are defined as ages 13-17.

Responsibility for behavior and well-being of children/teens using the library rests with the parent/guardian/ caregiver, not with library staff. Constant supervision is not provided in any public area of the library.

### ***At a Glance***

<u>Age of Child</u>	<u>Alone in Department/Library?</u>
0-6	NO!
7-9	Yes, with parent/caregiver in building.
10-12	Yes

### ***Specifics***

#### **Children from birth through age 6**

- Must remain in the company of a parent/guardian/caregiver at all times.
- Caregivers must be at least 13 years old and have emergency contact information available.
- Disruptive children or those not coping adequately with the library experience may intrude upon the business or activities of other library customers. Such situations will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

#### Procedures

- If children age 6 or under are found without a parent/guardian/caregiver, the staff will attempt to locate such and reunite them with the children.

- If those persons cannot be located either within the library building or at home via phone call within one hour’s time, or if the building is closing, staff will contact the local police department to pick up the children.

#### **Children from ages 7-9**

- A parent/guardian/caregiver must be in the library building with the children.
- Caregivers must be at least 13 years old and have emergency contact information available.
- Disruptive children or those not coping adequately with the library experience may intrude upon the business or activities of other library customers. Such situations will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

#### Procedures

- If children ages 7-9 are found without a parent/guardian/caregiver in the building, the staff will attempt to contact such and reunite them with the children.
- If those persons cannot be located either within the library building or at home via phone call within one hour’s time, or if the building is closing, staff will contact the local police department to pick up the children.

#### **Children from ages 10-12**

- Children ages 10-12 may use the library on their own without a parent/ guardian/ caregiver present in the building.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers not present in the building are still responsible for the actions of their children.
- Disruptive children or those not coping adequately with the library experience may intrude upon the business or activities of other library customers. Such situations will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.
- All children should have emergency contact information available.

#### Procedures

- If a child’s actions warrant removal from the library, staff will attempt to locate parent/guardian/caregiver within the library building or at home via phone call during the course of one hour. If unsuccessful, or if the building is closing, staff will contact the local police department to pick up the children.

#### **Teen ages 13-17**

- Young people from 13-17 years are treated as adult library users as far as expectations for appropriate conduct. (See **Code of Conduct.**)
- Parents/guardians/caregivers are still legally responsible for the actions of these individuals.
- All young people should have emergency contact information available.

#### **Rides at closing time/unexpected emergencies**

All library visitors must have a definite arrangement for leaving the premises at closing time. Due to liability concerns, staff members will not offer rides to customers.

#### Procedures

- In the event of an unforeseen circumstance such as unanticipated closing due to power outage or bad weather, children/teens will be encouraged to use the telephone to arrange transportation as soon as possible.
- If the library is closing and a child age 12 and younger does not have a verified ride, staff will contact the local police to pick up the child. Once the building is closed, two staff members must remain with the child until transportation arrives.
- Two or more children over the age of 13 may be left together outside the building if they are waiting for the same ride, unless weather conditions are dangerous.

### **Suggestions for Parents/Caregivers**

*We hope you will implement these suggestions and make library time with your family a happy, valuable experience. The library staff and parents are partners in helping children grow into lifelong library users.*

1. If you expect to be busy in the library selecting materials, **using library computers**, copiers, or attending a program or meeting, plan to leave your small children at home with a responsible caregiver or bring the caregiver to the library with you. You can then take care of your business with a minimum of fuss, and your children will be supervised.

2. Visit the library with your small children when you are free to point out things that might interest them. Introduce them to the library staff, stressing that if they should ever feel frightened or lost in the library, they should go to a staff member.

3. At home, practice “what if . . .” situations with your children. *What if you lost track of mom or dad in the library - what would you do? What if another child started hitting you - what would you do?* To boost your child’s confidence, make certain it’s understood that you will not leave children alone in any part of the library.

4. Help your children learn “good library behavior” by speaking in a soft voice and reminding them to do the same. We try to make the library an exciting place for activities and discovery, while respecting the right of other customers. Please keep a close eye on the use of puzzles, books and other materials - they are for all to share.

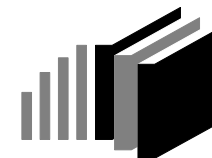
5. Remember that the library closes promptly. For the safety of all children, arrange to pick them up prior to closing. If you will be detained, arrange for a friend or family member to meet the child. At closing, the building is locked and no one is available to supervise outside areas.

### **Call Us with Questions**

- Main Library in Warren  
(330) 399-8807
- Brookfield Branch  
(330) 448-8134
- Cortland Branch  
(330) 638-6335
- Howland Branch  
(330) 856-2011
- Liberty Branch  
(330) 759-2589
- Lordstown Branch  
(330) 824-2094

**Hours vary at many library locations.  
Before dropping off children, be sure of  
opening and closing times.**

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**WARREN-TRUMBULL COUNTY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

[www.wtcpl.org](http://www.wtcpl.org)

Visit our website at  
[www.wtcpl.org](http://www.wtcpl.org) for more  
information on programs  
and services for all ages.

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