

# Rules for Unattended Children in the Library

**Policy Statement:** The Washington Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. However, the responsibility for the care, safety and behavior of children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or caregiver. Library Staff members have many duties and cannot supervise children nor act as a substitute for daycare.

## **UNATTENDED CHILDREN**

Parents/guardians or caregivers may not leave their children or legal wards 10 years of age and younger unattended in the library, including outside on the library property ("Library premises"), at any time. Parents/guardians or caregivers who supervise their children must be at least 18 years of age and should understand the responsibilities associated with caring for a young child.

- Parents/guardians and caregivers should not view the library as an alternative to childcare. Staff members are required to speak to parents/guardians or caregivers who abuse this privilege. If the parent/guardian or caregiver continues to disregard this policy, the authorities may be notified.
- The library works in conjunction with schools to discourage truancy. In accordance with the New Jersey Truancy Laws, NJ Statutes Titles 18A: 38-25, 18A: 38-26, no child(ren) of school age is allowed in the library while school is in

session. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian(s) or caregiver(s) to notify the library staff with evidence that a child(ren) is out of school.

Parents/guardians or caregivers who wish to accompany their child(ren) to the library during a regularly scheduled school day may do so, but must stay with the child at all times.

- Closing times for the library are posted for everyone to see. Staff members are required to tell everyone to leave at closing time. Parents/guardians or caregivers should be aware of library hours and make arrangements for their children. A parent/guardian or caregiver must be at the library at least 15 minutes before closing to pick up their child(ren).
- Staff members are not permitted to escort a child home. In the event a child is not picked up by a parent/guardian or caregiver when the library closes, the Washington Police Dept. will be called to take custody of the child. If the child is in the care of the police, leave a note on the library front and back door stating: "Unattended child is in custody of the Washington Police."

**\*\*\* PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHILDREN IN OR ABOUT THE LIBRARY PREMISES AND SHALL BE HELD LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGE THEY CAUSE.**