

## Unattended Children Policy

The Welles-Turner Memorial Library (from now on referred to as “the Library”) wishes to maintain a safe, comfortable environment for all users. To achieve this end, we expect that all users adhere to the following guidelines when in the Library building, attending Library programs at the Library, or participating in Library events off-site:

### Safety of Children

- Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision (caregiver), as defined by CT General Statutes Sec. 53-21a, of any child is responsible for the behavior, safety and supervision of their children at all times in the Library or on Library grounds. Refer to CT General Statutes Sec. 53-21a regarding leaving children unsupervised at the library; relevant text is included at the end of this document.

Caregivers must provide appropriate supervision based on the ages, the abilities and the levels of responsibility of their children. Caregivers should be mindful that the Library is a public building open to all individuals, and that unattended children may be vulnerable. Responsibility for children using the Library rests with their caregivers and not with Library staff.

- **Children under the age of 12:** All children under the age of 12 must have a responsible caregiver in the building while the child is using the Library. It is expected that caregivers of young children be in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with all children under their care. Exceptions may be made during Library programs when the presence of an adult is not required, but the person responsible for the child's supervision must remain in the Library building.
- **Children age 12 and older:** Children 12 years and older may use the Library unaccompanied by an adult provided they are able to comply with the Library’s Code of Conduct and do not require excessive staff attention.
- Caregivers should be aware of Library opening and closing times and make suitable arrangements to meet and transport their children home.
- Sudden emergencies may occur in the Library and in such cases the Library assumes no responsibility for unattended children. Power failures or other emergencies can occur and require unexpected closing of the building. Caregivers should be sure that their children know what to do or where to go when the Library closes.
- Children should know how and where to reach a caregiver. If a problem arises with children of any age and the staff is unable to locate a caregiver, or if the Library is closing and the staff cannot locate a caregiver, the Glastonbury police will be called.
- Library staff members are not permitted to transport children from the Library to their homes or to any other destination under any circumstances. No staff member will be left alone with a child, teen, or adult patron after the Library has closed.

**CT General Statutes Sec. 53-21a. Leaving child unsupervised in place of public accommodation or motor vehicle. Failure to report disappearance of a child.**

(a) 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.

(c) 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 between the hours of eight o'clock p.m. and six o'clock a.m. for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a class C felony.



*Approved by the WTML Library Board - 06/12/2023*

*Note: This policy replaces the Customer Behavior Policy (most recently approved 12/2022)*