

Morrill Memorial Library - Children in the Library

Policy

This policy has been established for the protection and well-being of children using the Morrill Memorial Library ("Library") and the Town of Norwood, Library, and their employees cannot be held responsible for incidents, accidents or other liabilities arising from the actions of unattended or unsupervised children, which are the responsibility of parents, legal guardians or caregivers.

Children's Room Staff

The Children's Department is managed and led by professional librarians. The Children's Room is staffed whenever the Library is open and provides a collection of books, magazines, and audio visual material for children and their parents. Story times and other programs are offered year round, with special programs at other times of the year, especially during the summer and school vacations. A schedule of events is available at the Children's Desk and most events are posted on the Library webpage or calendar.

Responsibility for Safety of Children in the Library

The Library is open to a wide cross-section of the public, similar to a shopping mall or supermarket. Library staff is concerned about your child's safety but staff cannot substitute for parents or teachers, and they are not babysitters. The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the Library rests solely with the parents, legal guardians, or other responsible caregivers of the child, who are deemed to assume the risks arising from the use of the Library. Library staff is not responsible for the care and safety of unsupervised or unattended children in the Library, or children who are demonstrating inappropriate behavior.

Children Using the Library

All children in the Library (whether attended or unattended, ages 0 to 18) must follow the [Morrill Memorial Library Rules of Conduct](#) and use the Library appropriately. Children who do not follow these rules and/or who exhibit inappropriate behavior are subject to the same consequences as other Library users, including but not limited to being required to leave the Library and/or the loss of Library privileges. The Library assumes no responsibility for the whereabouts of an unattended child who has been asked to leave Library property.

Supervision of Children Under 10 Years of Age

See [Responsibility for Safety of Children in the Library](#) above. Massachusetts General Law 119, Section 39, states, in part, that children under the age of ten (10) years old may not be left unattended within or without any building. Accordingly, children under the age of ten (10) must be supervised in the Library by a responsible parent or legal guardian, or caregiver over fourteen (14) years of age, including but not limited to in the Children's Room, and shall be in the immediate vicinity of (and in visual contact with) such person. Children left unsupervised in the Library, including but not limited to while a parent, legal guardian or caregiver is in another area of the Library building, will be considered unattended and may be reported to an appropriate governmental authority. The Library cannot assume responsibility for children while a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver is participating in a Library program or other activity in the Library.

Unsupervised Children 10 Years of Age and Over

The length of time that any child is left unattended in the Library should not exceed the child's comfort level with that situation. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian/caregiver to be aware of the

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Library's hours of operation. At the close of business hours or if the Library closes in an emergency, including but not limited to a snow closing, Library staff will make an attempt to contact the parent/legal guardian/caregiver. If there is no response or the parent/legal guardian/caregiver cannot be located, the Norwood Police Department will be contacted; in such circumstances, the child will be left in the custody of the Norwood Police Department. The Library suggests that children carry their parent/legal guardian/caregiver contact information, including the name(s) and telephone number(s).

Use of the Children's Room and Young Adult Room

The Children's area of the Library (including the Young Adult Room) is reserved for children and young adults and their parents, legal guardians, or responsible caregivers. Adults interested in children's literature, such as teachers and college students taking children's literature classes, are also welcome. Out of concern for the safety of our younger patrons, adults who are unaccompanied by a child or children in the children's area of the Library may be questioned by staff, and may be asked to move to another area of the Library and denied access to the Children's area of the Library.

Computers and Technology Equipment in the Children's and Young Adult Room

Public computers and other technology (*e.g.*, iPads, etc.) in the Children's Room and Young Adult Room are for the use of children and adults who are accompanying children or for young adults. **Children have priority over adult users.** All other users are asked to use public computers in the adult areas of the Library.

Internet Use in the Children's and Young Adult Room

Parents, legal guardians, and responsible caregivers must assume responsibility for deciding which Library resources are appropriate for their own children, including but not limited to Internet and computer resources. Parents, legal guardians, and responsible caregivers should guide their children in the use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use; the Library is not responsible for the content of Internet resources and other materials that may be accessed by children. Parents, legal guardians, and responsible caregivers who wish to limit or restrict the access of their own children should supervise their children's Internet sessions.

The Children in the Library policy of the Morrill Memorial Library was rewritten and adopted on March 8, 2016.