

**Dover Plains Library**  
**Unattended Child Policy**  
**This Policy Exists for the Safety of Your Children**

The Unattended Child Policy has been adopted by the Library Board of Trustees to help ensure the safety of each child while using the Dover Plains Library. Since the library is a public facility that anyone may enter and use, young children left alone in the building can be vulnerable and at risk.

While the Library staff is always concerned of any children left alone in the library, they have many duties to perform in order to assist all patrons that use the Dover Plains Library. Therefore, the following policies will be enforced:

- The safety and behavior of all children in the Library is always the responsibility of the Parent/Guardian and not the Library staff.
- Children 10 years old or younger must be supervised at all times by a Designated Adult (parent, guardian, or other caregiver 18 years or older). Children must be accompanied by that person while in any area of the library, which includes the rest room and front lobby.
- If a child age 5 and under is attending a library program, the Designated Adult must be with them at all times throughout the program. For a child between the ages of 6-10 attending a library program, the Designated Adult must remain in the building and be aware of the location and behavior of his/her child.
- Children ages 11-17 may use the Library unattended provided that they are able to maintain proper Library behavior and comply with all Library rules and the Patron Code of Conduct. Children must have the telephone numbers of the Designated Adult that will be available immediately when contacted to come and pick up the child in case of an emergency, unexpected closing, or if the child cannot abide to the above behavior requirements.

**Unattended Children After Closing Time**

When leaving a child between the ages of 11-17 at the library, the Designated Adult is also responsible for being aware of the Library's hours of operation. The Designated Adult must also keep in mind that the Library may close unexpectedly for reasons such as inclement weather, a power outage, loss of heat, or other reasons beyond the control of the Library staff. The Library staff is not responsible for children without a ride home and cannot give rides to any child. To ensure the safety of unattended children when the Library is closing, the Library staff will:

- 1) Make every reasonable effort to assist the child in contacting the Designated Adult.
- 2) If no Designated Adult is reached and the child is not picked up within 15 minutes after closing time, the staff may notify the police to assume custody of the child. Two Library staff will wait with the child until a Designated Adult, or the police, pick up the child.
- 3) Staff will record the child's name and Parent/ Guardian information and record that they have been given a copy of the Unattended Child Policy. If the child is picked up by the police, a copy of the Policy will be mailed certified to the Parent/ Guardian. Additional incidents will be referred to the Police Department.

**Violation of this Policy may result in suspension of Library privileges for the family.**

Approved by Dover Plains Library Board on 5/6/09