

Duxbury Free Library Policy: Safe Child

The staff of the Duxbury Free Library strives to create a welcoming environment for children and offers many programs and services to encourage a love of books, reading, and learning. While the library staff strives to create a safe and comfortable place for children, it is important to recognize that the library is a public building, and as such it can be a dangerous place for children alone. The library is large with numerous areas, many out of sight of library staff. Library staff is not responsible for supervising children and cannot know if children are leaving the building by themselves, with parents, or with strangers.

The responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent, guardian, or child's caregiver, not with library personnel. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are accountable for monitoring their children's safety, activities, and behavior during a library visit. Library staff does not take the place of a parent/guardian/caregiver, nor does it assume responsibility for unsupervised children. This policy has been established for the protection and well-being of children using the library.

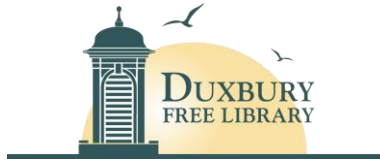
Guidelines for implementing the policy:

Grade 3 and Under:

1. Children in kindergarten and under must always be directly supervised by a responsible person who is within sight of the child.
2. Children in Grades 1 to 3 must be supervised in the same room or area of the library by a responsible person. The child must be able to behave appropriately.
3. A responsible person is an adult or mature teenager who has responsibility for the child.
4. If a child in Grade 3 or under is left unattended, the person responsible for the child should be located, and the need for their presence should be explained. Staff may call police to assist with an unattended child if the person responsible for the child cannot be located.

Grade 4 and Over:

1. Children in grade 4 and older, who use the library unsupervised by a responsible person, are subject to the same rules and regulations governing behavior and use of the facility as adults. The child must be able to behave appropriately while unattended.
 - a. The length of time that any child is left unattended should not exceed the child's comfort level with the situation. A child left unattended who has become anxious may be reassured by a staff member. The person responsible for the child should be located, if possible, and the need for their presence should be explained.
 - b. Children using the library unattended who have become disruptive will be asked to stop the behavior. If the behavior continues the child may be asked to leave the library. Please refer to Policy for Use of Library.
 - c. Children who are unattended 15 minutes before closing time may be reminded of the time by a staff member and asked if they need to call for a ride. The Library suggests that children carry with them parent/caregiver contact information.
 - d. If a child is left unattended at the close of business hours, two staff members will remain with the child after calling the Duxbury Police to come to the library and monitor the child. Staff may leave when the police arrive.



This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Library Trustees and ratified or amended at that time.

Adopted: Library Board of Trustees, 2/3/2009

Last Revised: 9/12/2023