

The Old Lyme-Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy its facilities, collections, and programs. Parents/caregivers should be mindful that the Library is a public building open to all individuals. Responsibility for children using the Library rests with the parent/caregiver, not with library staff. The staff does not monitor children leaving the premises, nor is it their responsibility to know with whom a child is leaving. By Connecticut State Law, children under the age of 12 may not be left unsupervised in a place of public accommodation for a period of time that may represent substantial risk to the child's health or safety ([CGS 53-21a](#)). To best ensure the safety and well-being of children using the Library, the following policy has been established:

Infants, Toddlers, & Preschoolers

Children in this group must be accompanied by, and remain within sight of, a responsible caregiver at all times while on Library property. The caregiver must be at least 15 years old and have emergency contact information for the child's parent/guardian.

Elementary School-Aged Children

Children in this group must be accompanied by a responsible caregiver while on Library property. The caregiver must be at least 15 years old and have emergency contact information for the child's parent/guardian. Children in this age range may attend certain programs without a caregiver, but the caregiver must remain on Library property and immediately join the child at the end of the program.

Middle School & High School-Aged Young Adults

Children and young adults in this group may use the Library unaccompanied by a caregiver. Children and young adults in this group must have emergency contact information for their parent/guardian.

Closing Procedures

Parents/guardians are expected to know the Library's regular hours of closing and must keep in mind that the Library may close unexpectedly for reasons such as a power outage, inclement weather, etc.

Staff members will use their judgment when dealing with unattended youth at closing. If an unattended minor appears distraught or is not coping well at closing, two library staff will stay with the child and call the responsible guardian. If the unattended minor is not picked up within 15 minutes, staff may call the Connecticut State Police to assume responsibility of the minor. Under no circumstances will a staff member or volunteer accompany a minor off Library property.

Behavioral Issue Procedures

Parents/caregivers are responsible for the conduct of their children (any minor under 18) in the Library. Children, like all patrons, are required to respect Library property and act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library (see the Patron Behavior Policy). Children who are not using the Library appropriately, or who require excessive staff attention or intervention, may be asked to leave. The parents/guardians of these children may be notified, and if necessary, asked to stay with their children while visiting the Library. When contact is made with the parent/caregiver, Library Policy will be explained to the parent/caregiver and a copy of the Policy will be given to them.

Unaccompanied Minors Procedures

Staff members will use their judgment when dealing with unattended children under 12. Library staff may attempt to contact the parent/guardian to discuss the Library's Policy and State Law regarding unattended children and may request that the child be picked up. Staff may call the Connecticut State Police to assume responsibility of the minor if a parent/guardian cannot be reached in a timely manner.

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on April 10, 2018