

Ridgefield Library Unattended Child Policy

The Library encourages children and families to use the Library facilities and services and encourages the independence of its child patrons; however, the Library is a public space welcoming of all individuals and unattended children are particularly vulnerable without supervision.

Conn. Public Act No. 23-176 states that "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."

Parents/Guardians assume all responsibility for the conduct, well-being and safety of their children in the Library regardless of their physical presence in the Library. Library staff are not responsible for the supervision, safety or well-being of unaccompanied child patrons. As such,

- Parents or guardians are required to ensure that children between the ages of six and twelve are able to comply with the Library's Appropriate Use Policy and remain responsible for the child's safety consistent with Conn. Public Act No. 23-176 noted above.
- Children under the age of six years old must be within sight lines of the accompanying parent/guardian or responsible party.
- Parents/caregivers are expected to be aware of the Library's opening and closing times and that the operating hours might change unexpectedly. The staff cannot monitor children leaving the premises, nor is it the staff's responsibility to know with whom a child is leaving. If a child appears to be lost or left, or remains on the Library premises at closing time, the police may be called if a parent or guardian cannot be reached. Under no circumstances can a Library staff member or volunteer drive a child home.

The Ridgefield Library Board of Directors is responsible for establishing rules of conduct to protect the rights and safety of library patrons, volunteers, and staff, and for preserving and protecting the Library's materials, equipment, facilities, and grounds.

Policy Updated, February 26, 2024, Ridgefield Library Board of Directors