Child Safety Policy

Overview

The Gleason Library strives to provide a safe, respectful, warm, inviting and fun environment for children of all ages. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of children at the Library, the Trustees have implemented the following rules:

The Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. The Library is a very busy place and staff members cannot supervise children or guarantee their safety on Library property. Library staff are not responsible for providing childcare or supervision and cannot assume responsibility for the safety or behavior of children using the Library. Responsibility for the behavior, adherence to Library policy, safety, and well-being of children rests with the child's caregiver. Parents and guardians are responsible for determining whether their child has the maturity and ability to use the Library independently, subject to the requirements of this policy. Nothing in this policy prevents Library staff from taking reasonable action when necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of a child or other person.

For purposes of this policy, a "caregiver" means a parent, guardian, or other responsible person, including a babysitter or older sibling, who is responsible for supervising the child and is capable of providing appropriate supervision.

Children Age 8 and Under

Children age 8 and under need to be accompanied by a caregiver on Library property. Except as otherwise provided for a Library program, the caregiver must remain sufficiently near the child to provide appropriate supervision and must be available to respond to the child's needs and to Library staff.

A caregiver needs to attend children's programs with children up to age 5. For ages 6 to 8, some programs do not require adult attendance as noted in the program description. A caregiver who does not attend programs with a child ages 6 to 8, must remain in the building, be available to Library staff, and meet the child at the end of the program.

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Children Age 9 and Older

Children age 9 and older may use the Library on their own provided that they comply with the Library Expectations Policy. Children in this age group should have the phone number of a caregiver who can be contacted in case of an emergency or if the child is asked to leave the building for violating the Library Expectations Policy.

Appropriate Use of Children's and Teen Spaces

The Children's Room and the Teen Section of the Library are specifically designed to serve the needs of youth visitors.

In the Children's Room, adults and teenagers must be accompanied by a child (under age 13) or be actively using the children's library materials, services, or programs.

In the Teen Section, during non-school hours, adults must be accompanied by a child or teen (ages 10-18) actively using teen library materials, services, or programs. During school hours on days when the Carlisle Public School and Concord Carlisle High School are in session, adults may use the Teen Section spaces.

Adults who are not accompanying a child or teen and who are not actively using or accessing youth materials, services, or programs, may be asked to relocate to another area of the Library. Caregivers waiting for their child in a program or tutoring are welcome to wait in other areas of the Library.

Unattended Child Policy

For purposes of this section of the policy, an "unattended child" is a child under the age of 14.

Regular Library Hours:

- If a child age 8 and under is found without a caregiver during regular Library hours, staff will attempt to locate or contact the child's caregiver. If the child's caregiver cannot be located in the building or contacted within approximately 15 minutes, or sooner if circumstances indicate that the child's health, safety, or well-being requires more immediate assistance, the Carlisle police will be contacted for assistance.

- If Library staff reasonably determines that any unattended child requires the assistance of a caregiver due to illness, injury, or emotional distress, or if an unattended minor repeatedly violates Library policy, staff will attempt to contact a caregiver to pick up the child. If the caregiver cannot be contacted within 15 minutes, or sooner if circumstances warrant, the Carlisle police will be contacted for assistance.

Closing Time:

- An unattended child will not be left alone at or outside the Library after closing. If an unattended child remains at the Library at closing without a caregiver present, Library staff will attempt to contact the child's caregiver. When reasonably practicable, at least two Library staff members will remain with the unattended child. If staff are unable to contact a caregiver within approximately 15 minutes after closing, or if caregiver is unable to arrive within approximately 15 minutes after closing, staff will contact the Carlisle police for assistance. Staff may contact the police sooner when circumstances indicate that immediate assistance is appropriate. If an unattended child is released to law enforcement after closing, staff may leave a non-identifying notice on the door directing the caregiver to contact the Town police. The child's name or other identifying information shall not be posted publicly.

- Staff will not drive children home or otherwise transport children in personal or vehicles.

Emergencies and Child-Safety

Nothing in this policy prevents Library staff from contacting 911, the Carlisle police, emergency medical services, or another appropriate public safety agency when staff reasonably believe that immediate assistance is necessary to protect the health or safety of a child or another person.