

POLICY # 3-5

UNATTENDED/DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN POLICY

All patrons are entitled to a pleasant and safe library environment. Behavior conducive to this environment is expected of every library user. To ensure that children who use the library are properly attended, both for their own safety and for the comfort of other library users, the Board of Trustees has established the following policy regarding children's use of library facilities.

Parents, not library staff members, are responsible for the behavior of their children while in the library. The parent or caregiver of a child ten-years-old or under *must* remain in the building whenever the child comes to the library, including during story times and other supervised programs. Children eleven years-old and older are permitted to be in the library on their own. Parents, however, should not regularly leave a child unattended at the library for long intervals of time or leave a child unattended for a longer period than the child can reasonably occupy his or her time with appropriate library pursuits.

If a child becomes distraught or disruptive or otherwise behaves inappropriately while in the library, a library staff member will request that the child behave appropriately and/or ask the child's parent or caregiver to supervise the child. If the child continues to behave in an upset or disruptive manner, and the parent cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, a library staff member may ask the police to take charge of the child.

Since "appropriate" and "inappropriate" are subjective terms, please use the following guidelines to define appropriate and inappropriate library behavior:

Appropriate behavior includes: reading, researching personal interests or homework, writing, using computers, participating in library sponsored programs, sitting quietly, or talking to another library user in a low tone of voice.

Inappropriate behavior includes: loud or abusive talking, fighting, running, throwing anything, moving or abusing equipment or furniture, eating, or any behavior that hinders normal use of the library by patrons and staff or that endangers the safety of patrons or staff. In the case of vandalism or other illegal activities, the police will be summoned immediately.

Parents should understand that library staff members are not allowed to transport a child anywhere or to stay alone with a child after the library closes. If a child remains in the library or on its grounds when the library is about to close, two staff members will remain with the child long enough for the police to take charge of the child.

The Library Board and staff want children to have positive and enjoyable experiences using New Providence Library and encourage parents to teach children how to use their library properly.

Approved May 20, 2008