

Charlton Public Library Child Safety Policy

The Charlton Public Library is a public facility, open to all people. Therefore, the Library must never be considered a safe place to leave children unattended. Staff will work with children and their caregivers to ensure the Charlton Public Library is a welcoming and safe environment for all.

Definitions: Children means youth under the age of 12. Caregiver means an adult or teenager age 15 or older designated by the parent/guardian to ensure that their child is safe and acting in accordance with library rules. Staff means Library staff.

To ensure the safety and supervision of children in the library, the Board of Trustees sets the following standards:

1. Caregivers are responsible for the safety and supervision of children at all times.
2. Staff members are not responsible for the supervision of any children.
3. Children and caregivers are expected to uphold a respectful and safe environment in the Library.
4. Caregivers must be present and directly supervise children and provide for their care. Staff will notify caregivers of the Library's Child Safety Policy if children are left unattended.
5. Children ages 12 and older may be left unattended for the time needed to utilize library services (attend a program, use a computer, complete homework, check out materials).
6. Unattended children ages 12 and older must know how to reach a caregiver if the Library closes unexpectedly due to storms, power outages, etc. Charlton Police will be called if a caregiver cannot be located by the Library's closing time.
7. If staff deem an unattended child to be at risk or not following standards set by the Library Use/Patron Behavior Policy, they will attempt to contact the caregiver. If the caregiver cannot be reached, the child will be referred to Charlton Police.
8. Staff may not transport unattended children from the Library to another location.
9. Staff cannot monitor whether children leave the library premises with or without caregivers.
10. In a medical emergency, staff will call an ambulance and attempt to contact the child's caregiver.
11. Children must not be left on the Library premises unattended before or after Library open hours.
12. If children are left unattended after Library open hours, at least two staff members will remain with the child(ren) up to 15 minutes after closing. A staff member will make every attempt to contact the parent or a responsible adult during that period.
13. If the child is not picked up within 15 minutes, a staff member will contact Charlton Police. Once the child is under the supervision of a police officer, the staff members may leave.

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on October 17, 2024.