

## LIBRARY USE BY MINORS

### **Library Use by Minors:**

The Cheshire Public Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming and safe environment for patrons of all ages. However, parents and legal guardians should be mindful that the library is a public building open to all individuals. In order to maintain the safety of minors and ensure a positive experience for all our patrons, we have set these requirements.

### **Minors under the age of 12**

The responsibility for the safety and behavior of minors while on library premises rests with the parents/legal guardians and not the library staff. Parents/legal guardians must provide appropriate supervision based on the ages, the abilities, and the levels of responsibility of their children. The following policy has been designed to communicate the Cheshire Public Library's concern for the safety and welfare of the children and teens it serves.

1. Children under the age of 12 may not be left unsupervised in the library. This includes when children under 12 are in a program. Parents/legal guardians must remain inside the library building for the duration of the program.
2. Children under the age of 12 who are not accompanied by a parent/legal guardian can be at the library under the care of an older sibling or babysitter. The older sibling or babysitter must be 16 years of age or older.
3. If a minor under the age of 12 is found to be unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/legal guardian in the library and inform him/her of the Unattended Minors Policy. If the parent/legal guardian cannot be located in the library or reached by telephone, library staff will contact the Cheshire Police Department to assist the minor. The Cheshire Police Department will assume responsibility for the minor.

### **Minors: (Children ages 12-17)**

Minors between the ages of 12-17 are allowed to be at the library without a guardian provided they use the library properly and follow the policies set forth in the Library's code of conduct.

1. Parents/legal guardians are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the library. Unattended minors still at the library at closing time will be directed to call their parent or guardian. The Cheshire Police Department may be called if the parent/legal guardian has not come for the minor by closing time. The Cheshire Police Department will assume responsibility for the minor.
2. Sudden emergencies or safety issues, such as power failures, etc. may occur in the library and require unexpected closing of the building. In such cases, the library assumes no responsibility for unattended minors. With the exception of family members, library employees are not permitted to transport library patrons to or from the library for any reason. It is the responsibility of parents/legal guardians to let their children know what they should do if they must leave the library. Parents should not direct their children to the library in the event of emergency school closings, since these same conditions may also affect Library operations.
3. Minors are not permitted to leave their personal items unattended in the library. This includes leaving the library grounds without their personal items. The library is not responsible for any belongings left unattended.

Library staff will not remain after closing to wait for minors to retrieve their items. Instead, these items will be placed behind the circulation desk for pick up when the library's regular operating hours resume.