



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF BROOKLINE

Parental Responsibility Policy

Purpose

The Public Library of Brookline is a public facility with spaces designed for families and children. The Library supports parents or guardians in their efforts to determine how their children utilize our facilities, collections, and services. This policy outlines the responsibilities of parents and the role of Library Staff in ensuring the well-being of children visiting the Library, and a positive and secure library experience for all patrons. This policy applies to anyone who has authority or responsibility over a child, including parents, legal guardians, babysitters, or any designated caregiver.

Parental Expectations and Responsibilities

The Library strongly encourages parents to accompany children younger than nine to the Library. It is the responsibility of parents to determine the supervisory needs of their children and to provide accordingly. The safety and behavior of a child continues to be the responsibility of the parent even when a child is alone or unattended at the Library.

Staff Role

Library Staff are available to assist parents and their children in the use of the Library. However, Staff are never responsible for the conduct, safety, or supervision of children while visiting the Library.

When Staff provide assistance, they do not:

- Assume any of the duties and obligations of a parent or legal guardian toward the child
- Take over the position of parent or legal guardian

If a child who is younger than nine years old engages in behavior that violates Library policies, or is in distress, Staff will attempt to locate or contact a parent or legal guardian. If a child cannot provide contact information for their parent, Staff may use library account information to contact the parent. A child who is older than nine years

Amanda Hirst

361 Washington Street

Tel: (617) 730-2360

Library Director

Brookline, MA 02445-6810

Fax: (617) 730-2160

or a teen of any age (along with their parents) may be asked to leave the building if in violation of Library policies.

In instances where a child's conduct raises concerns about the potential for significant self-harm, or poses a substantial risk of physical harm to others, and/or displays a pronounced risk of physical impairment due to impaired judgment, Staff will notify the Public Safety Dispatch Center to activate an emergency response.

Closing Time

Additional actions taken by Staff when the Library closes, at its regular time or in an emergency, include:

- Requesting that a parent pick up the child within 15 minutes
- If a parent cannot be reached or cannot pick the child up within 15 minutes, the Brookline Police Department will be contacted in order to assist in the location of a parent / guardian

—

Voted by the Board of Library Trustees 10 January 2006

Amended by the Board of Library Trustees 12 July 2011

Amended by the Board of Library Trustees 11 June 2019

Amended by the Board of Library Trustees 12 December 2023

Amanda Hirst

361 Washington Street

Tel: (617) 730-2360

Library Director

Brookline, MA 02445-6810

Fax: (617) 730-2160