



SPOTSWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

548 Main Street
Spotswood, NJ 08884
732-251-1515

www.spotslibrary.org
To read. To learn. To discover.

Policy on Unattended Children & Vulnerable Adults

The Spotswood Public Library is dedicated to providing an environment that is inviting, pleasant, and safe for people of all ages. The Library sincerely encourages children and vulnerable adults to use and enjoy library facilities and services. However the Library is a public building open to all and therefore cannot be considered a safe place for unattended children and vulnerable adults.

Parents and caregivers must be advised that libraries are public places. In libraries, as in all public places, “stranger danger” is a real concern. Library staff cannot prevent children or vulnerable adults from interacting with or leaving the library with persons who are not appropriate caregivers.

1. An unattended child is any child under the age of twelve who is in the library unaccompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver (age eighteen or over).
2. A vulnerable adult is an individual over the age of 18 who is mentally or physically challenged to a degree that significantly impairs the individual's ability to provide adequately for his/her own care or manage his/her own behavior without assistance. A parent/guardian or caregiver 18 years of age or older must be responsible for monitoring the activities and managing the behavior of vulnerable adults during their Library visits.
3. Children under the age of twelve years must be accompanied by a caregiver at all times while in the library. If a child under the age of 12 is attending a library program, the parent/caregiver must not leave the building for any reason.
4. Children twelve and over may be in the library without an adult. However, should disciplinary problems arise; the library may ask the child to leave. In the event that such child does not comply, the Police Department will be requested to assist. In that event, the library assumes no further responsibility for the child.
5. If problems arise while younger children are using the library or if they are left alone, the library staff will attempt to contact the parents. If the library staff is unable to reach the parents, the Police Department will be contacted for assistance.

6. If a child under the age of 17 is waiting for a ride home from the library, and the ride has not arrived within 10 minutes of closing time, the staff will call the Spotswood Police to ensure the safety of the child once the library closes.
7. Under no circumstances will the library assume custodial responsibility for any child left unattended.
8. Parents and/or guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the behavior of their children using the library and their respective parents and/or guardians may be held liable for any damage they cause.

Adopted by the Spotswood Public Library Board of Trustees. 19 October 2000. Revised November 16, 2000. Addendum adopted by the Spotswood Public Library Board of Trustees. 17 January 2002. Revised September 18, 2014. This policy was reviewed and revised by The Spotswood Library Board of Trustees at a regular meeting on July 16, 2015.