



Supervision of Children Policy

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library encourages all children to visit the Library and use its resources. The MAPL Standards of Acceptable Behavior apply to library users of all ages, and are in place to create a safe environment for all.

Parents need to be aware that the Library is a public facility and that it is open to all individuals. It is not the function or purpose of library personnel to supervise or care for children while parents, guardians, or caregivers are outside the Library, or while the adult is occupied elsewhere in the Library. Children visiting the Library should be supervised for their own safety and the consideration of other patrons.

The following guidelines have been established to insure the safety and well-being of children visiting the Library:

- No child under the age of 10 may be left alone in the Library or on the Library premises for any reason. Children 9 years of age or younger must be supervised by a caregiver aged 14 or over at all times.
- If a child attends a Library program without a parent/caregiver in the room, the parent/caregiver is expected to remain in the Library building and immediately join the child at the end of the program.
- If a parent of a child under 10 years of age cannot be located within the Library building, and is not reachable by phone, the police will be called.
- Children aged 10 and older may be left alone in the Library for reasonable periods of time. This time may vary with the child's maturity. Parents are still responsible for the actions and well-being of their child. Children behaving inappropriately may be asked to leave the Library, in accordance with the Standards of Acceptable Behavior. Should problems arise, the Library will attempt to contact a parent or guardian.
- If a child requires close supervision or constant individual attention, regardless of age, the child should not use the library on their own.
- If a child is not allowed to leave the Library without an adult, the child should not be in the Library alone. This is a particular concern in inclement weather and after dark.

- All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.
- Teenagers (ages 13-18) are treated as adult users. However, they are still legally the responsibility of their parents.
- Parents/caregivers must be aware of the opening and closing times of the Library. All children should be picked up or have arrangements to leave the Library at or before closing time.
- If a child has not been picked up within 15 minutes after closing time, the police will be called.

As a public agency, the Library serves in the best interest of the welfare of all children. The Library is required by law to notify the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) in the event of suspected abuse or neglect of any child. This includes, but is not limited to:

- mistreatment of a child
- lack of proper supervision of a child or
- repeatedly leaving a child unattended at the Library.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, March 14, 2012. Updated April 12, 2023.