



Stephenson Memorial Library

761 Forest Road
Greenfield, NH 03047
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SML-POL-09: Unattended Children Policy and Permission

Purpose

The Stephenson Memorial Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collection, and programming offered by the library. The library attempts to provide a safe environment for children to select books and other materials, and to attend library programming. However, young children are not safe when left unattended at the library. The staff cannot know if children are leaving the building with their parents or with strangers. For the safety of minor children and the enjoyment of all patrons using the library, please observe the following rules regarding unattended children:

1. The Stephenson Memorial Library and its staff do not assume responsibility for any child left unattended in the library.
2. As used in this policy, the term “parent” may include legal guardian or other persons having custody or control of a minor.
3. Children who come to the library under the age of *nine* must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver over the age of sixteen at all times including the attendance of a library program. During the duration of a library program the parent or caregiver may choose to be in another area of the library, but must be available to meet the child at the conclusion of the library program.
4. At the discretion of a responsible adult, a child age nine and older may be left unattended for the period of time needed to select materials, complete a homework assignment, read, or attend a program. The child must know how to reach the adult in case the need should arise. Children should not be left longer than two hours; the library does not provide child care services.
5. All library patrons, including children, are subject to the library’s Patron Use Policy and the Code of Conduct Policy concerning disruptive behavior. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with the child. **Library staff does not serve in loco parentis, in place of the parent.** If a child’s behavior is inappropriate for the library, and he/she does not respond to appropriate guidance from library staff, the parent will be contacted to remove the child from the library. If the parent cannot be reached and the child’s behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the Greenfield Police may be called.
6. If a parent of an unattended child cannot be contacted or if a parent has not picked up a child within one half hour after being contacted, the library staff may call the Greenfield Police Department to take custody of the child.

Adopted date unknown by SML Board of Trustees
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7. If a child is left at the library without a way home at closing time, two library staff must stay with the child in the library. Staff must contact a parent to pick up the child. If a parent is reached, staff will wait with the child for one half hour. If a parent cannot be reached, or library staff has waited more than one half hour for a parent to pick up a child, staff must call the Greenfield Police Department to take custody of the child. Under no circumstances is one staff member to ever be alone in the library or on library property with a child after closing.

**Permission to Attend Stephenson Memorial Library Programs
(Children Aged 9 and Older)**

My child(ren) is/are nine or older and has (have) my permission to attend the following library program(s):

Name of Program	Date and Time of Program

I have received, read and understand a copy of the Stephenson Memorial Library “Unattended Children Policy” and understand it is my responsibility to pick up my child promptly at the announced end time for the program.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Child(ren) Name(s): _____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

Any known medical problems/allergies that staff should be aware of:

Home Address:

Home Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone: _____

Alternate emergency phone contact (Name/Phone Number):

**Please print the name of the person picking up your child(ren) if it is not yourself.
(A photo ID will be required)**

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____