



**MAYWOOD
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY

In an effort to provide a library environment that allows all patrons to utilize library materials and information sources in a safe, relaxed manner, the Maywood Public Library Board of Trustees has adopted a policy concerning children in the library.

NJSA 9:6-8.21 prohibits parents from endangering the welfare of their children.

NJSA 30:5B-1 prohibits the library from functioning as a child-care center unless licensed by the State of New Jersey.

The safety of children cannot be guaranteed in any public place, including inside the Maywood Public Library (“Library”) and also including outside on the Library property (“Library premises”). A parent/guardian/responsible caregiver (“Caregiver”) may not leave children under the age of nine (9) years at the Library and shall be responsible for their child’s behavior while anywhere in/on the Library premises. Children and young people who are disruptive in the Library or on Library premises interfere with the Library’s service to all patrons. The Library is not a child care provider but is a public institution where all patrons have an equal right to quality library services in a safe and relaxed environment.

Therefore:

1. Children under the age of 9 may not be in the Library or on its premises unless accompanied by an adult Caregiver at all times, including without limitation, during story time or during other children’s programs.
2. If a Caregiver wishes to leave a child 8 or under for a short period of time in the Children’s Room, the Caregiver must inform the Children’s Room staff. The Caregiver must never leave the Library premises at all without taking the child under 9 years of age with them.
3. Children ages 9 – 14 may be in the Library without a Caregiver for a reasonable period of time, particularly after school, but a Caregiver will remain responsible for their behavior. (Reasonable period of time may vary with a child’s maturity, but generally one to two hours, but no longer than 3 hours is an acceptable period of time.) Children ages 9 – 14 are expected to be quiet and well behaved while in the Library (See Code of Conduct). If a problem arises with a child while on the Library premises and the child is

not accompanied by a Caregiver, the Library staff may ask the child to leave and may attempt to contact a Caregiver but shall not be required to do so. If the Library staff is unable to reach a Caregiver, the Library staff may contact the Maywood Police Department (“Police”) to take custody of the children but shall not be required to do so.

4. Children age 14 and over are old enough to use the Library responsibly and for extended periods of time unaccompanied by a Caregiver. If a problem arises, the child may be asked to leave the Library premises or a Caregiver or the Police may be contacted. The Library shall be under no obligation to contact a Caregiver or the Police should a child be asked to leave the Library premises.

5. A Caregiver must be at the Library at least fifteen (15) minutes before closing to pick up their child (ren). All patrons must leave the Library promptly at closing time. At closing, if an unattended child is still in the Library, the Library shall ask the child to leave and may, but shall not be required to, call the Police to take custody of the child. **Under no circumstances will staff transport children in a vehicle or accompany them home.**

Caregivers are responsible for the behavior of their children in or about the Library premises and shall be held liable for any damage they cause.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on November 19, 2014

Reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees on June 17, 2015

Updated and approved by the Board of Trustees on April 13, 2022