

Child Safety Policy

The Dunkirk Public Library welcomes and encourages children to use its facilities and services. However, the Library cannot provide long or short-term care for children of any age. Parents/guardians/caregivers should remember that the Library is a public building, open to all, and must use the same precautions for ensuring their child's safety as one would in any other public location. While our staff is concerned about the well-being of our patrons, the Library is not responsible for keeping children safe from harm.

- Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are responsible for the care, safety, supervision, and behavior of children of any age while the child is using the Library.
- **Children 7 years old or under must be directly supervised by a parent, guardian, or caregiver while on the Library grounds or while participating in an offsite Library program.**
- A caregiver must:
 - Be at least 12 years of age;
 - Be attentive to and provide direct supervision of the child in his/her care;
 - Not be using the Children's Room computers during the time he/she is supervising the child.
- Parents, guardians, or caregivers who do not attend a Children's Room program with their child must remain in the Library if the child is 7 years old or under in the event that the child needs assistance or must leave the activity.
- Children 8 years old or older may use the Library unattended for an amount of time appropriate to their age, maturity, and behavior.
- All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.
- **The Library is not responsible if children choose to leave Library property unattended.**

Inappropriate behavior:

- Inappropriate behavior by children will be noted by the staff. Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to not treating other patrons and library staff with courtesy and dignity, rough play and excessive running, inappropriate use of library property, and other behaviors as per the Library's Patron Conduct Policy and Behavior Consequence Chart. The child and parent, guardian or caregiver, if present, will be informed that his/her behavior is inappropriate and will be asked to stop the activity.
- If inappropriate behavior continues, the child and/or parent, guardian, or caregiver will be asked to leave the Library. If the child and/or parent, guardian, or caregiver refuses to leave after being told to do so, the police will be called to escort them from the building.

At Library Closing Time:

- Children must leave the building before the closing time of the library.
- Unattended children will be asked to contact their parent, guardian, or caregiver 30 minutes before closing time. If a parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive by closing time, the child will be placed in the care of the Dunkirk Police Department.

After closing time, Library staff will leave a note on the Library door stating *"Unattended child is in the custody of the Dunkirk Police, 342 Central Avenue, Dunkirk, NY 14048; Phone no. 366-2266"* once the child is in the care of the police. The child's name will not be listed on the sign.