

**Prosser Public Library
Bloomfield, Connecticut**

Policy Concerning Unattended Children in the Library

The Prosser Public Library has a responsibility to provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for every patron who is appropriately using its services and facilities.

The Board and Library staff are eager for children to use the Library and welcome those who do so. Service to children is an important part of the Library's mission. The Library is free and open to unaccompanied children who are independent enough to use the resources for recreation, information and education.

It is not the Library's function or purpose to be a care center for young children while parents or other supervising adults are outside the Children's Department and/or outside the Library.

In order to maintain a safe, orderly, and proper environment for Library use and to protect Library property, the following constitutes Library policy concerning the supervision of children.

1. At all times, caregivers are responsible for the conduct and safety of their children on Library premises. Caregivers must provide appropriate supervision based on the ages, the abilities and the levels of responsibility of their children.
2. Caregivers are expected to be aware of the opening and closing times of the Library, bearing in mind that these can and do change. Sudden emergencies may occur in the Library and in such cases the Library assumes no responsibility for unattended children. Power failures or other emergencies can occur and require unexpected closing of Library buildings. Parents, guardians or caregivers should be sure that their children know what to do or where to go when the Library closes.
3. The Library is not responsible for the care and supervision of unaccompanied children prior to opening, during hours of operation, and after closing.

If a child is unaccompanied in a Library building 15 minutes before closing time, staff will assist the child in calling to arrange for transportation. Another call will be made at closing time. If the child is not picked up within 10 minutes of closing, Library staff will call for police assistance. If the police are called when a parent or guardian fails to pick up the child, it is considered "risk of injury to a minor" and is a criminal offense. *See CT State Statute Sec. 53-21a

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4. Children, like all other Library users, are required to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library.
 - a. Inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to hitting, running, spitting, yelling, throwing objects, and profanity will not be tolerated.
 - b. Older children and young adults will be asked to leave the Library if their conduct is disruptive and/or inappropriate. (See Rules of Conduct for Persons Using Public Libraries in the Town of Bloomfield.) Police assistance will be requested if necessary, and parents will be notified. In the case of younger children, an attempt will be made to resolve the problem with the child's parent or guardian. Library staff may request that the parent or guardian remove the child from the Library until the problem behavior is resolved.

*Relevant sections from Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 53-21a Leaving children unsupervised in place of public accommodation or motor vehicle

- (a) Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of any child under the age of twelve years who knowingly leaves such child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or a motor vehicle for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor.
- (b) Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of any child under the age of twelve years who knowingly leaves such child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or a motor vehicle between the hours of eight o'clock p.m. and six o'clock a.m. for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a class C felony.