

## Unattended Children Policy

The Russell Library welcomes children. The staff endeavors to create a comfortable environment so that time spent in the Library fosters a positive attitude toward reading and libraries in general. However, the Library is a public area, and staff cannot guarantee the safety of unattended children. **Responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children using the Library rests with the parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver (“caregiver”).**

1. For the purposes of this policy, “children” fall within one of three categories:
  - a. Under 12: a caregiver must be present to supervise;
  - b. 12-14: may use the Library unattended, but may not serve as a caregiver; or
  - c. 15 and older: may use the Library unattended and may serve as a caregiver.
2. In accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-21a, an adult or a responsible person who is 15 years of age or older must at all times directly supervise children under the age of 12. If a child under 12 is found unsupervised, Library staff will attempt to contact a caregiver. If there is no contact with a caregiver after 30 minutes, Library staff shall notify the police.
3. Children 12 years and older may use the Library unattended, subject to appropriate behavior as defined in the Library’s Code of Conduct. Even in the caregiver’s absence, the caregiver is responsible for their children’s behavior and safety.
4. Russell Library and its staff do not act *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent).

### FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

**Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-21a(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.

Adopted 6/21/22