

West Hartford Public Library POLICY MANUAL

Title: Vulnerable Child Policy

Revised by the West Hartford Library Board, April 25, 2016.

The West Hartford Public Library encourages children of all ages to enjoy the facilities, programs and collections offered at the Noah Webster, Faxon Branch and Bishops Corner Branch Libraries.

The Library is dedicated to providing a safe and comfortable environment for users of all ages. For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible caregiver must accompany children while they are using the Library.

Caregivers must provide appropriate supervision based upon the ages, abilities and levels of responsibility of their children.

Children under the age of twelve must not be left unattended by a caregiver in any part of the Library building at any time. The assigned caregiver must be responsible for, in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent/caregiver and not with the library staff.

The safety of children left alone in a library building is a serious concern. If children are found to be unattended by a caregiver, the Library staff will attempt to locate that person within the building. If this is unsuccessful, the police department will be contacted.

- If, at closing time, children under the age of twelve are found to be without a caregiver present, library staff will attempt to locate the person responsible for the child. If no one is located, the police department will be contacted.
- During story time or other programs when the child attends a program with a library staff member, caregivers must remain on the same floor of the building during that program and be responsible for reuniting with the child at the conclusion of the program.

Caregivers should be aware of the content of the Connecticut General Statute 939, section 53- 21a. regarding "leaving a child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation," upon which this policy is based.