

## **LIBRARY CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Board of Trustees has adopted a Library Code of Conduct to ensure a comfortable, clean and safe environment for all library patrons. This policy is intended to provide clear and reasonable rules to guide patron behavior while in the library or on the library premises.

Unacceptable behavior includes actions in the library or on the library premises that interfere with the use of the library by other patrons, creates a risk of injury or a health risk to other patrons or library staff, inhibit the work of library staff, disrupt a peaceful enjoyment of the library or create a risk of damage to library, patron or staff property.

For these reasons, the Library Code of Conduct is to be observed by all the library patrons.

Unacceptable behavior in the library or on the library premises includes but not limited to:

1. Any activity that constitutes a violation of federal, state or local criminal statutes or ordinances;
2. Damage, defacement or theft of any library, staff or patron property or material;
3. Possession, distribution or use of alcohol;
4. Possession, distribution or use of dangerous controlled substances;
5. Use of marijuana, tobacco, and other products or electronic smoking devices;
6. Engaging in disruptive behavior, including staring at another person with the intent to annoy or intimidate that person, or following another person around the library's building;
7. Carrying concealed or unconcealed weapon, unless authorized by law;
8. Carrying or using a toy gun or water squirt gun;
9. Sexual activity, contact or assault or any act of lewdness prohibited by New Jersey Statutes Annotated 2C: 14-1 through 2C: 14-8 and any other sexual activity which is inappropriate in a public place;
10. Use of profanity, abusive or threatening language or threatening gestures, or abusive or threatening physical contact.
11. Unreasonable noise levels including, but not limited to, loud talking and/or disruptive conversations, uncontrolled or repeated ringing of cell phones or wireless devices, loud cell phone conversations, and disruptions created by young children or crying babies.
12. Use of any electronic equipment that disturbs others;
13. Any activity not in compliance with Library Policy Section 309, Internet Acceptable Use Policy;
14. Solicitations, petitions or canvassing in the library or on the library premises, except as specified in Library Policy Section 705, Solicitations;
15. Obstructing the entrances and exits of the library, lobby, aisles and passageways;
16. Leaving bicycles unattended at the library entrance rather than in the bicycles rack;

17. Library patrons need to remain mindful of the fact that the library is a public building and that nothing of value should be left unattended, even for just a few minutes, , including such items as musical instruments, backpacks, coats, jackets and electronic items, including laptops, tablets, cell phones, and other devices. Under no circumstances will staff members take responsibility for overseeing patrons' belongings.
18. Patrons bringing baby strollers into the library should be careful not to park strollers in areas that impede walking inside the library or that impede access to library materials or facilities. If a baby sleeping in a stroller is brought into the library, the stroller must be located within arm's reach of the adult who is in charge of supervising the child.
19. Rollerblading, roller skating, skateboarding or wheeled shoe use in the library, or bringing bicycles, skateboards, scooters or similar equipment into the library;
20. Running is not permitted. All adults, teens and children are expected to walk when inside the library.
21. Appropriate attire includes shirts and footwear that will not damage the library's carpeting or flooring. Wet swimwear is also not permitted.
22. Consumption of food and beverages other than water in a closed container except at authorized library events;
23. Bringing animals inside the library with the exception of service animals or those allowed at an authorized library event;
24. Lack of personal hygiene that interferes with the use and enjoyment of the library by other patrons or interferes with the work of the library staff;
25. Use of the library restrooms for bathing, shaving, washing hair or other personal grooming.
26. Photographing or videotaping without prior permission of the Library Director or those being photographed
27. Moving, defacing or otherwise damaging furniture or equipment, including standing on tables or chairs or putting feet on tables.
28. Diapering or changing the clothing of a baby or toddler in any part of the library other than one of the public restrooms;
29. Aside from babies and small children in carriages or strollers, sleeping is not permitted inside the library.
30. Leaving unattended children or adults who are in need of supervision;

### **ENFORCEMENT**

Any library patron who violates the Library Code of Conduct or other rules or regulations of the library will be told by the library staff to leave the library and its premises, and may be denied the privilege of access to the library and its premises. The Springfield Police will be called when appropriate. The decision to suspend the library privileges of a patron may be made only by the Library Director or her/his designee- in the Director's absence.

An appeal to the Library Director's decision to suspend a patron's library privileges may be made in writing to the Library Board of Trustees within five (5) business days of the start of suspension period. The Library Board of Trustees shall provide a written response within ten (10) business

days of their receipt of the written appeal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 1, 2015

APPROVED: March 19, 2015

## UNATTENDED CHILDREN

Children of all ages are welcome at the Springfield Public Library, and are encouraged to use library's materials and services and attend programs. However, the library is an open, public building, and the well-being of children left alone is a serious concern. The library staff cannot guarantee absolute safety to everyone using the library. They cannot prevent children from interacting with or leaving the library with persons who are not appropriate caregivers. Unlike school personnel, the library staff does not act *in loco parentis*. Therefore, while in the library, parents/caregivers are responsible for the safety and behavior of the children in their care. Library staff members cannot be responsible for close and extended supervision of any individual child while they are inside the library.

The Board of Trustees has established the following guidelines to ensure that children are safe while in the library:

1. Children under the age of ten (10) must be under direct supervision of a responsible guardian/caregiver aged sixteen (16) or older.  
Effective September 1, 2019
2. Children aged ten (10) and older may be left unattended for a reasonable period of time provided they observe proper conduct during the entirety of such time. In the event an unattended child violates Library Policy Section [702. LIBRARY CODE OF CONDUCT](#) in a manner that requires expulsion from the library, library staff will attempt to contact parent/guardian or caregiver to apprise them of the situation. The parent/guardian or caregiver will be required to come to the library at that time to remove the child from the premises. After the parent/guardian or caregiver has been contacted, the child must be picked up within thirty (30) minutes. If a parent/guardian or caregiver cannot be located within thirty minutes, the staff will call Springfield Police Department to take charge of the child.
3. Children of any age with mental, physical or emotional problems that necessitate supervision must be continually accompanied by parent/guardian or caregiver.
4. A staff member who discovers an unattended child under the age of ten (10) will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or caregiver of the child. After the parent/guardian or caregiver has been contacted, the child must be picked up within fifteen (15) minutes. If a parent/guardian or caregiver cannot be located within fifteen (15) minutes, the staff will call Springfield Police Department to take charge of the child.
5. Parents and caregivers must be aware of the library's scheduled opening and closing times and make suitable arrangements to meet and/or transport their children. Library staff members are not responsible for any child after the library closes.

### Expectations of Appropriate Behavior in the Children's Room

1. Parents or caregivers must provide direct supervision of the children in their charge, as appropriate by age. Children under the age of five must be within arm's length of their caregiver at all times. Children under the age of 10 may not be left in the children's room unsupervised while their caregiver goes into another part of the library. Library staff reserves the right to remind caregivers to observe the rules described in the library's policy manual and code of conduct.

2. Caregivers of children who are crying loudly for more than a minute or two may be asked to take the child outside until the child has stopped crying.
3. Children or adults using any form of physical or verbal aggression, including profanity, toward library staff members or other library patrons, will be told to leave the library immediately.
4. Other forms of disruptive behaviors that are not permitted include:
  - a. Standing or jumping on chairs, tables, shelves, or other library furnishings.
  - b. Horseplay, including shoving, hitting, and throwing things is not permitted at any time.
5. Children or adults who are knowingly and willfully destroying or otherwise damaging library property or the property of other patrons may be reported to the police, depending on the severity of the incident.
6. Children or adults who knowingly and willfully steal library property will be reported to the police.
7. Children or adults committing serious and/or continuous misconduct that is disturbing to other patrons or library staff will be told to leave the library.
8. In order to accommodate as many children as possible, the six computers with internet access located in the children's room will be limited to 30 minute sessions when other children are waiting to use them. Only one child may sit at a single computer at one time and no standing behind the users is permitted. With adult supervision, one or two children may use each of the AWE computers at one time. Anyone banging on or otherwise misusing a library computer will be told to leave the computer, regardless of the user's age.
9. No food or drinks are permitted anywhere within the children's room.
10. The two restrooms in the children's room are single use occupancy. With the exception of a caregiver changing a baby or assisting a young child, only one person at a time will be allowed inside the youth services restrooms. Under no circumstances is filming or picture taking permitted inside any of the library's restrooms.
11. With the exception of caregivers filming the children who are in their charge, patrons are not permitted to film or take pictures of other children without the express consent of the child's caregiver.
12. Coats, jackets, backpacks, musical instrument cases and personal items must be placed where they will not cause a tripping hazard for other library patrons and library staff.
13. For the safety of all patrons, unless specifically permitted by a member of the library staff as part of a program or activity, children and teens are not permitted to sit on the floor, especially in locations where they are blocking other patrons' access to library resources.
14. Inappropriate and/or excessive public displays of affection are not permitted anywhere inside the library, including the children's room.
15. Items may not be taken from the librarians' desk; caregivers of preschool children must direct their charges away from these areas.
16. Caregivers who register their children for library programs and are unable to attend must notify one of the children's librarians before the start of the program. A failure to notify the library may result in a temporary suspension of ability to register for library programs.
17. In order to maintain a safe and orderly children's department, caregivers must supervisor their children when browsing books; children should not be permitted to remove bookends or large sections of books.
18. Patrons utilizing library iPads and Chromebooks agree to acceptable use of the devices. Patrons may not visit pornographic or otherwise inappropriate websites, engage in horseplay with devices or tamper with the background or any settings of the device. Utilizing iPads and Chromebooks that belong to the library is a privilege that can be revoked for improper use, at the discretion of library staff.
19. Toys, games, puzzles, and other play items are made available in the children's room at the discretion of the librarian who is in charge of the children's room at any given time. Caregivers are responsible for returning any toys that have been used by the children in their care. The librarian in charge of the children's room at any given time has the authority to remove from the children's room any toys that are not being put away or played with properly.
20. The library reserves the right to temporarily or – in extreme cases – refuse entry to an individual, based on the severity and frequency of past misconduct.

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