

Worth-Pinkham Memorial Library

Unattended Children & Dependent Persons Policy

The Worth-Pinkham Memorial Library (hereinafter “Library”) is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for visitors of all ages.

1. Caregivers are responsible to remain available for the personal and/or special needs of those entrusted to their care. The Library cannot be responsible for any consequences of caregivers forfeiting their responsibilities. The Library is not a child care center and cannot legally function as such (N.J.S.A. 30:5B-1-15).¹
2. Caregivers or legal guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the behavior of their children using the library and may be held liable for any damage they cause.
3. Community groups who utilize the Library for scheduled meetings or programs are the responsible caregivers for any children participating in the activity.
4. Children under age 10 and dependent persons² of any age must be accompanied by a responsible adult or caregiver (age 14 or older) at all times while on Library property.
5. If a child under age 10 or a dependent person of any age is attending a library program for which a caregiver is not expected to attend, the caregiver must remain in the Library building for the duration of the event and be immediately visible when their child is finished.
6. Children and dependent persons of any age are expected to behave in accordance with the Library’s Code of Conduct.
 - a. While using the Library, these individuals must know how to contact at least two adults in case of an emergency.
 - b. It is the responsibility of a legal guardian or caregiver to be accessible, at any time, to pick up their child or dependent person if they become anxious or if they are not following the Code of Conduct.
7. Library visitors are typically reminded the library is closing at least 30 minutes in advance. Children and dependent persons in need of transportation home will be reminded to contact a caregiver at that time. Caregivers should be aware of the potential for early closings, either scheduled or due to emergencies, such as inclement weather or building issues.
8. In the case that the above stipulations are not being met and caregivers or legal guardians cannot be reached within 15 minutes, Ho-Ho-Kus Police will be notified, as the child or dependent person will be considered abandoned (N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.21).³

¹ N.J.S.A. 30:5B-1-15 prohibits the library from functioning as a childcare center unless licensed by the State of NJ.

² “Dependent persons” is defined as individuals of any age who are unable to make decisions about their own safety and well-being.

³ N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.21 prohibits parents from endangering the welfare of children.