



Hollis Social Library • 2 Monument Square • Hollis, NH 03049
Phone: (603) 465-7721 • Fax: (603) 465-3507 • hollislibrary.org

Hollis Social Library: Unattended Children Policy

For the particular safety of minor children and the enjoyment of all visitors using the Library we have developed a specific policy regarding unattended children. Parents are reminded, however, that they or their designated caregivers, not Library staff, are responsible for the actions and safety of the children in their care while visiting the Library.

I. Policy

1. The Hollis Social Library and its staff do not assume responsibility for any child left unattended in the Library. Library staff cannot monitor the location, safety, or behavior of children at all times and should not be expected to know whether a child has entered or left the building.
2. The Library adheres to the below:

Children Ages 0-10	May <u>not</u> be left unattended in the Library. A parent, legal guardian, or designated caregiver over the age of 16 must be present with the child at all times.
Children Ages 11+	May be on their own in the Library and are treated as adult users. However, they are legally the responsibility of their parents and must know how to reach a parent or legal guardian should the need arise.

3. Attendance at a Library program does not alter the requirements of this policy. Parents, guardians, and caregivers must remain on Library premises when required by the child's age, even if the child is participating in a Library-sponsored program.
4. All Library visitors are subject to the Library Use and Behavior Policy concerning disruptive behavior. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the Library with the child. Library staff does not serve *in loco parentis*, i.e. in place of the parent or legal guardian.
 - a. Any child age 10 or younger who is being disruptive will be asked by Library staff to behave. If the child's behavior continues, the parents will be told that their child is disturbing others and will be asked to control the child. If they refuse, or are unable to control the child, the family may be asked to leave.

- b. Disruptive children over age 10 will be given only one warning and informed that they will be asked to leave if the disruptive behavior continues. Staff will follow through to ensure that the child does leave the building. If the child's behavior is deemed dangerous or they refuse to leave, the Hollis Police Department will be called.
5. If a child age 10 or younger is unattended at any time, or if any minor remains at the Library at closing time without transportation or a responsible adult available, Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, legal guardian, or designated caregiver using available contact information. If contacted, the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver will be instructed to pick up the child immediately. If no responsible adult can be reached by closing time, or if the child is not picked up promptly after being contacted, Library staff may contact the Hollis Police Department.
6. In the event of an emergency, evacuation, medical incident, severe weather event, or building closure, Library staff will make reasonable efforts to assist children present but cannot assume responsibility for unattended children.
7. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the Library or provide any transportation. No individual staff person is to be left alone in the Library or on Library property with a child after closing.
8. Repeated violations of this policy may result in restrictions on Library use.

II. Policy Review

1. This policy shall be reviewed every year by the Library Director and Board of Trustees to ensure accuracy and relevance. It may also be reviewed at any time should the need arise.

Approved: January 6, 2003

Reviewed/Revised: October 12, 2004, October 4, 2011; February 4, 2014; March 4, 2014; May 14, 2019, September 12, 2022, March 10, 2025, June 9, 2026

Reviewed by Legal Counsel: August 2022