

**West Caldwell Public Library**  
**Policy for Children and Certain Persons**

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WHEREAS, providing excellent services to children is among the important purposes of the mission of the West Caldwell Public Library located at 30 Clinton Road, West Caldwell, New Jersey 07006 (the “Library”); and

WHEREAS, the Library is committed to providing a welcoming and safe environment for all persons who visit the Library including, but not limited to, providing a welcoming and safe environment for children of all ages and for any person of any age who may be in need of special care or attention to ensure his or her safety and well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Library facility is a public building open to all persons in accordance with applicable laws of the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, in conjunction with the aforementioned mission, it is reasonable for the Library to establish a policy that promotes the mission of the Library and to establish a policy and guidelines for the staff of the Library with regard to the interaction with and supervision of children and other persons; and

WHEREAS, among other things, applicable laws of the State of New Jersey prohibit the Library from in any way functioning and/or providing any services as a child care center or adult care facility licensed by the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the primary responsibility for the safety and the actions of children or adults in need of special care or supervision rests with the parent, guardian, or caregiver of such child or person; and

WHEREAS, the staff of the Library is not authorized, is not responsible for, and is not otherwise lawfully empowered to care for children or other persons instead of a parent, guardian, or caregiver; and

WHEREAS, after consultation with the staff of the Library and at the recommendation of the staff of the Library, the Board of Trustees of the Library (the “Board of Trustees”) has reviewed the matter and has reasonably determined that the following policy is established and is instituted effective immediately.

1. Children 11 Year of Age and Younger.

(a) At all times when visiting the Library<sup>1</sup>, children who are eleven (11) years of age or younger must be accompanied and supervised by an adult or a responsible and mature caregiver who is sixteen (16) years of age and older during the entire duration of their visit.

(b) Except as specifically set forth in Section 1.(c) below, at all times when visiting the Library, children who are six (6) years of age or younger must be directly supervised by a parent, guardian or a responsible and mature caregiver who is sixteen (16) years of age or older, which direct supervision requires that the child be within the eyesight of such parent, guardian and responsible mature caregiver at all times.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this policy, any reference hereinafter to the Library means the Library building and the Library grounds.

(c) In conjunction with Section 1. (b) above, when a child is participating in a program of the Library that requires that the child attend the program on his or her own, then during the time when the child is participating in such a program, the child need not be directly supervised by a parent, guardian or responsible mature caregiver; however, the parent, guardian or responsible mature caregiver must be present in the Library.

2. Children 12 Years of Age to 17 Years of Age.

(a) Subject to the terms and conditions of this policy, children who are twelve (12) years of age to seventeen (17) years of age are permitted to visit the Library without the supervision of a parent, guardian or responsible mature caregiver.

(b) Notwithstanding the foregoing, any and all persons who visit the Library are subject to the Library's Code of Conduct as set forth in the Library Conduct policy. If the behavior of any child or other person of any age is in violation of the Library Conduct policy, the Library staff may request that such child or person leave the Library and the Library privileges of such child or person may be suspended or revoked.

3. Program Registration. Any and all Library programs for children who are eleven (11) years and younger require that the child must be signed into the program and out of the program by a parent, guardian, or responsible mature caregiver. Any and all Library programs for children twelve (12) years of age to seventeen (17) years of age require that such child must sign himself or herself into the program and must also sign himself or herself out of the program.

4. Library Closing.

(a) The hours of operation for the Library are made public and are posted for the public to review.

(b) If, for any reason, any child or any other person who requires direct supervision pursuant to the terms of this policy, remains at the Library at or after a scheduled closing time, as a courtesy, the Library staff will reasonably attempt to contact a parent, guardian or responsible mature caregiver by telephone. It is understood that the effort by the Library staff in such regard is not and will not be construed to be an undertaking or obligation of the Library or the Library staff to care for or transport such child or person.

(c) If a child or other person who requires direct supervision is not picked up from the Library by a parent, guardian or responsible mature care giver within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled closing time, the Library staff will contact the West Caldwell Police Department at the non-emergency number (973-226-4114), and arrange for such child or person to be entrusted to the care of the West Caldwell Police Department. In accordance with Library policy, the Library staff will complete an incident report following same.

(d) If a child or person who requires direct supervision is reasonably determined by the Library staff to repeatedly fail to leave the Library at or before the scheduled closing time, the Library privileges of such child or person may be suspended or revoked.

5. General Supervision – Adult or Child. Any person of any age who visits the Library and is in need of direct supervision in the reasonable determination of the staff of the Library to ensure that the safety and welfare of such person and/or the safety and protection of other persons at the Library requires that such person be directly supervised, must be directly supervised during such time that the person is at the Library, by a parent, guardian or responsible mature caregiver. Such direct supervision requires that the person be accompanied by such parent, guardian or responsible mature caregiver and must be within the eyesight of such parent, guardian and responsible mature caregiver at all times.

*Approved December 9, 2015*

[End of Policy – Nothing Follows]