

North Hampton Public Library Youth Policy

I. Children Policy

North Hampton Public Library welcomes children (here defined from birth through ten years of age) to use and enjoy the facilities, collections, and programming offered by the library. The library attempts to provide a safe environment for children while in the library. However, young children may not be safe when left unattended in the library. For the safety of children and the enjoyment of all patrons using the library, please observe the following rules:

- The North Hampton Public Library and its staff do not assume responsibility for any child left unattended in the library.
- As used in this policy, the term “parent” also includes legal guardians or other responsible adults (16 years of age or older).
- Children under the age of eleven (11) may not be left unattended at the library unless that child is attending a library program that specifically states that participating children do not have to have a parent in attendance with them. A child is unattended if a parent is not present with the child at all times while in the library.
- If a parent of an unattended child cannot be contacted or if a parent has not picked up a child within one half hour after being contacted, the library staff may call the North Hampton Police Department to take custody of the child. If an unattended child remains at the library at closing time and a parent cannot be contacted or a parent fails to pick-up the child within one half hour of being requested to do so, the

North Hampton Police Department will be contacted to take custody of the child.

- All library patrons, including children, are subject to the library's **Patron Conduct Policy** prohibiting disruptive behavior. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with their children. If a child's behavior is inappropriate for the library, and the child does not respond to appropriate guidance from library staff, the parent will be requested to remove the child from the library. If the parent refuses to remove the child or cannot be reached, and the child's behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the North Hampton Police may be called.
- If a child is left at the library without a way home at closing time, two library staff must stay with the child in the library. Staff must contact a parent to pick up the child. If a parent is reached, staff will wait with the child for one half hour. If a parent cannot be reached, or library staff have waited more than one half hour for a parent to pick up a child, staff must call the North Hampton Police Department to take custody of the child. Under no circumstances is one staff member to ever be alone in the library or on library property with a child after closing.

II. Teen Policy

This policy shall apply to patrons between the ages of 11 and 18 years old.

Our genuine hope is that we will be able to welcome all teens, with the understanding that the library is a place to learn and relax, but also a space that requires respectful behavior.

All library patrons, including teens, are subject to the library's **Patron Conduct**

Policy prohibiting disruptive behavior. Teens who are eleven years of age are allowed to be unaccompanied by an adult at the Library. Teens will be held to a similar standard as adults and must follow the rules of conduct if they choose to use library services.

- Although we do hold teens to the same standards as adults in terms of behavior, we accept that they are still minors who are experiencing many changes physically, mentally, and emotionally. The following rules take this into consideration when teens display various disruptive behaviors at the library:
 - At the discretion of the library staff, teen patrons may be issued up to three verbal warnings to cease common/minor disruptive behavior (such as loud voices and running through the library) before advising disruptive teens to leave the library.
 - Teens who are yelling, threatening, using inappropriate/hateful language, bullying, or displaying any other type of extreme behavior, will be told immediately to leave Library property. No prior verbal warning is required under such circumstances.
 - The Library Director shall be immediately notified of such behavior by staff or through a patron incident report.
 - Each behavior incident will be reviewed by the Library Director and if necessary, the Library Board of Trustees
 - Parents/guardians of these teens shall be notified, preferably through email or letter. Issuing a one-day and up to a seven-day ban is appropriate for teens displaying various extreme behavior or ignoring prior warnings for lesser disruptive behaviors.
 - Extreme behavior by patrons by patrons which places library staff, and/or other patrons in fear of bodily injury or property

damage should be reported to the North Hampton police.

- Previously banned teens returning from a seven-day ban who continue to engage in inappropriate behavior, shall require imposition of a longer ban. Subsequent bans will start at thirty days and be increased up to three months if unacceptable behavior continues. Teens, during the time of bans, may pick up holds from the library only when accompanied by their parent/guardian and then will be required to immediately leave the Library property. The parents or guardian of a banned teen shall be notified, preferably by email or mail.
- Continued disruptive conduct by a teen may result in the issuance of a no trespass order by the North Hampton Police.
- Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children - which includes teenage patrons - at all times. If a teen's behavior is inappropriate for the library, and the teen does not respond to warnings from library staff, the parent will be requested to immediately remove the teen from the library. If the parent refuses to remove the teen or cannot be reached and/or the teen's behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the North Hampton Police may be called.

III. Internet Policy

Parents should also be aware that the Library does not filter or block internet sites on public computers in accordance with The American Library Association's recommendation. ("Internet Filtering: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 13, 2015.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/internet-filtering> (Accessed May 31, 2022.)

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