



Westport Free Public Library  
408 Old County Road  
Westport, MA 02790



## **WESTPORT FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY AFTER SCHOOL BEHAVIOR POLICY**

The Westport Free Public Library is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all ages. Staff members are available to assist children with Library materials and services. However, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure their child's appropriate behavior.

Children ten (10) years of age and younger shall not be left unattended in the Library under any circumstances. They must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or caregiver at least 16 years of age.

Parents/guardians are responsible for being aware of the Library's hours of operation if leaving a child unaccompanied at the Library. Library staff will not physically prevent a child from leaving the Library or assume responsibility for a child.

In the event a child is left without transportation at closing time, reasonable attempts to contact a parent/guardian will be made. If the parent/guardian is unable to be contacted or arrive at the Library by closing time, staff will contact the Westport Police to take custody. Library staff will remain no longer than 15 minutes after closing.

In case of a medical emergency involving an unattended child, the staff will call 911 for emergency assistance and attempt to contact the parent/guardian, in that order.

Children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other patrons, must follow the Library's Patron Behavior Policy, and are subject to the same consequences, including but not limited to removal from the premises.

In addition to the Library's Patron Behavior Policy, unaccompanied children must abide by the following rules and regulations:

1. Children/patrons shall use the Library solely for its designated purposes. Anyone not using the Library for its designated purposes will be told to leave for the day. Designated activities include studying, doing homework, reading a book or magazine, using a computer, attending a library program, or working quietly on group projects.
2. Food is not permitted in the Library. Covered drinks are allowed but must be properly disposed of when finished.
3. Public computers may only be used for educational purposes; videogames are not allowed. To access a public computer, a parent/guardian must come to the Library to get their child a library card. Only one person is permitted at each computer.
4. Inappropriate behavior at/on the computers (being too loud, looking at inappropriate materials, harassing others, etc.) may result in loss of computer privileges or dismissal from the building.
5. Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operations of the Library, or disturbs Library staff or patrons including but not limited to teasing, bullying, conduct that involves the use of lewd, profane, or abusive language or gestures, conduct that creates unreasonable or offensive noise, and/or loud or boisterous physical behavior will not be tolerated. Running, throwing, jumping, or harassing other students and/or Library patrons or staff will not be tolerated.
6. The Library is not responsible for anyone's belongings; they should not be left unattended. If you leave the building, you are expected to take all of your belongings with you.
7. With the exception of adaptive technology, cell phone and mobile device usage

including taking photo/videos for social media, voice-to-text, and speakerphone are not permitted in the building. Please make all phone calls outside.

8. Everyone must enter and exit the Library through the front entrance. Emergency exits must remain closed for the safety of patrons and staff.
9. Loitering in the Library building, entryway, or on Library property thereby creating a nuisance to those who are trying to enter or exit the building or to use the Library is prohibited. No one may restrict others' access to the building. Be considerate of all Library patrons.
10. Defacing or damaging Library property is prohibited.

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their child(ren) to the age of 18 years even when the child is in the Library without them. A child behaving badly will be given a verbal warning or asked to leave the Library immediately, per the discretion of the Library staff. No more than 2 verbal warnings will be given. When the child is asked to leave the Library, they will not be allowed back inside the building until a parent/guardian speaks to the Library Director or Assistant Director.

If a child is not able to safely leave the Library without an adult, he/she should not be in the Library without an adult.

The Westport Free Public Library strives to provide a safe and comfortable library environment for all ages. Behavior that infringes on library usage by others will not be tolerated. Any patron not abiding by these or other regulations of the Library may be required to leave the Library premises and may forfeit his or her Library privileges as the Library staff deems appropriate. Library employees will contact the police if deemed advisable.

Approved August 28, 2024 by the Board of Library Trustees.