

Safe Child Policy

The Merrimac Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections and programs offered by the library. The library attempts to provide a safe environment for children to select books and other materials, and participate in library programs.

To enable the library staff to promote use and access while insuring the safety of Children's Room users, the library has established the following policies:

1. All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver if they are not attending a program. Parents, guardians, teachers and caregivers, are responsible for the behavior and safety of children visiting the library. Staff cannot be placed in the position of supervising unattended children.
2. At the discretion of a parent or caregiver, and agreed upon by library staff a child age nine or older may be left unattended for the period time while attending a library sponsored program.
3. Children must know how to reach an adult in case of an emergency, and both children and adults need to be aware of library hours.
4. The parent/guardian is responsible for insuring appropriate behavior of their children in the library. We will ask disrespectful children to leave the building. In the case of unaccompanied children under 12 years old, a parent/guardian will be called to pick them up. If a family member or caregiver cannot be reached, the Merrimac Police Department may be contacted at the discretion of library staff.
5. Food and beverages are not to be consumed in the library. The exception is when food is served as part of a library program.
6. Children should dress appropriately in the library. In addition to basic clothing (top and bottom) shoes must be worn.
7. Library computers, laptops and printers are not intended for use by children age 5 or under. It is the responsibility of a parent or caregivers' responsibility to actively supervise use of computers, laptops and printers while in the library.
8. For any cardholder age 12-17 the library offers laptops that can be used while in the library.
9. All library visitors are subject to the "Circulation Policy" concerning materials selection. Parents who wish to limit their own children's materials should accompany the children to the library and supervise the borrowing process. Parents

cannot rely on the library staff for such supervision. The library and its staff do not assume responsibility for the materials chosen by unattended children.

10. 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 library property with a child after closing.

Reference Chart:

Children ages up to 12 years old	Needs to be attended by parent or caregiver.
Children ages 9–12	May be left unattended while attending a library program.
Children 12+	May be on their own in the library.

Amended and Approved 6/8/2005

Revised and approved by the Library Board of Trustees 1/8/2025