

**Burlington Public Library**  
**22 Sears Street, Burlington, MA 01803**

Child Safety Policy(approved 9/8/05)

**Safety of Children in the Library**

The staff of the Burlington Public Library strives to create a warm and inviting environment for children in order to encourage a love of books, reading and learning. However the safety and well-being of children at the library is a matter of serious concern. Parents must be aware that responsibility for children using the library rests at all times with the parent(s) or assigned caregiver(s) and NOT the library staff. Parents/caregivers may not leave children under the age of 12 unattended in the library.

Parents should familiarize themselves with library hours, which are posted within the Library and on the library website, and should not leave children at the Library before opening or after closing.

Children old enough to be alone in the library should know how to contact a parent or caregiver in case of emergency.

Parents of young children need to be particularly aware of the layout of the building: there is an open stairway near the Youth Services Department, and there are automatic doors at the entrance and exit of the library which may pose a hazard to children.

**Child left unattended during library hours**

**Unattended child:** a young person under age 12 using public library resources and facilities unaccompanied by a person 12 years of age or older.

**Vulnerable Child:** An unattended child or adolescent whose safety or well-being would be endangered if she/he were sent out of the building. Examples of vulnerability include the child being too young to be on his or her own, the child being sent into an unsafe area, or the child being left alone in the dark outside the library after business hours.

**Inappropriate use of Children's services**

If an adult in Children's Services is not accompanied by a child or is not involved in appropriate use of children's library materials and is observed by staff to be spending an unnecessary and unusual amount of time in Children's Services, such person shall be asked to use other areas of the library.

**Child left unattended after library hours**

If a child is alone at closing time and appears to be vulnerable, the library staff will contact the Police Department and ensure the child is in their custody.