



Patron Behavior Policy
Use of the Library by Children Policy
Adopted April 9, 2024

The Westhampton Public Library, a department of the Town of Westhampton, is a shared space available for use by people of all ages. While all people have the right to use the library, no person has the right to hinder the enjoyment of the library by others. For the comfort and safety of patrons, volunteers, and staff, and the protection of Library property, the following are expectations of behavior for anyone using the library:

1. Engaging in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local, or other applicable law or library policy is prohibited.
2. Carrying firearms or dangerous weapons of any kind is prohibited (except by law enforcement officers). Any object that is not generally considered to be a weapon may be deemed a weapon by the library staff due to the patron's use of that item.
3. No smoking or using smokeless tobacco inside of the library (such as vaping or use of electronic cigarettes).
4. Patrons are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children. (Please see "Use of Library by Children Policy" on page 2).
5. Patrons and staff are expected to treat all persons with respect. Verbal or physical harassment or intimidation of other library users or of library staff is forbidden.
6. No disruptive or destructive behavior that infringes on other patrons' rights to use the library.
7. Using alcohol and other drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or and other drugs is prohibited.
8. Stealing, damaging, or inappropriate use of library property in library facilities is prohibited. All materials must be checked out before they are taken out of the building.
9. Patrons are responsible for their own personal property and the library will have no liability if the property is damaged or lost.
10. Filming in the library is by appointment only with 24 hours notice from the appointment time. Filming of other library patrons is prohibited without their written permission.

Interpretation of what constitutes problem behaviors is at the discretion of the library staff. Whenever possible, library staff may give persons determined to be engaging in inappropriate behavior the opportunity to refrain from the behavior. If the person does not refrain from the

inappropriate behavior, library staff may ask them to leave the premises or contact the police at their discretion.

Use of Library by Children Policy

Children of all ages are welcome to visit the library, and to take advantage of its resources. The library staff does not regulate any materials or spaces children may access in the library. The Board of Trustees recognizes its obligation to consider the safety and welfare of children while they are in the library. This policy is designed to address the Board's concern for the welfare of children, and is not intended to restrict, discourage or frustrate appropriate use of the library.

The library staff is not responsible for the supervision of children left unattended by their parent/guardian or caregiver. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or caregiver to ensure the child's appropriate behavior. For the purposes of this policy, an unattended child refers to a child in the library alone, or a child whose parent/guardian or caregiver is in the library but is not adequately supervising that child. The latter situation may occur when the chaperone and child are in separate areas of the building, or when the chaperone is using library materials or equipment and is not supervising their child. Responsibility for the welfare and behavior of children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver.

Young children should be attended and adequately supervised by a parent, guardian or caregiver who is a responsible person of at least twelve years of age. Children aged twelve years or older may use the library unattended provided they are able to maintain proper library behavior. If a child is left unattended in the library, and is exhibiting inappropriate behavior, the staff will inform the parent/guardian of library policy prohibiting this. If the child is repeatedly left unsupervised, a parent/guardian will be notified that their child is no longer permitted to use the library unattended. Westhampton Public Library assumes no responsibility for children of any age left unattended in the library.