**UNATTENDED CHILD & CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

In an effort to provide a library environment that allows all patrons to use library materials in a safe, relaxed manner the Board of Library Trustees for the Colebrook Public Library has adopted a policy statement concerning unattended or disruptive children.

The Library Staff views service to children as an important part of their job. Children are encouraged to read, study, do research, and attend programs. Children should be supervised at all times and taught and reminded that the materials in the library must be respected and treated with care.

Parents/caregivers need to remember that the Library is a public building; open to any and all individuals, and that children’s safety is the responsibility of parents and caregivers not Library Staff. Although staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children, the Library Staff cannot supervise children in the library nor can they monitor whether children are leaving the library.

Parents are responsible for their children’s behavior while in the library. Children and young adults who are disruptive in the library or on library property interfere with library service to all patrons. It is a public institution where all patrons have an equal right to quality library services in a friendly and peaceful environment.

Children under the age of four (4) must be within visual and physical contact of a parent or adult guardian at all times when using the library, including the Children’s Room.

Children under the age of ten (10) must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or a young adult/sibling at least 16 years of age who acknowledges responsibility of the child during their entire stay in the library. Exceptions to this rule may be discussed with the Library Director.

Children may be left unattended in the library for a period of time deemed necessary to research an assignment, complete homework, participate in a library program or select books and read.

Violations of this policy will result in increasing levels of action; starting with asking a library user to leave the library. The level of action will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be within the discretion of a staff member, the Library Director, or Board of Trustees. A library user may appeal any such decision to the Board, who will review any appeals at their next scheduled meeting.

This policy shall be posted in the library and filed at workstations and verbal reminders shall be part of normal procedures.

Approved: June 6, 2013

Revised and approved: Sept. 1, 2020