

# The Brookfield Library

## Policy 110: Patron Behavior / Code of Conduct

### *Section 1: Purpose*

The purpose of The Brookfield Library is to provide materials, services, and programs for all members of the community with which to satisfy their informational, cultural, educational, and recreational-reading needs. In addition, the library administration works to provide appropriate, attractive, and comfortable facilities within which the public may use its materials and services. The Library strives to provide an atmosphere in which library patrons, employees, and volunteers can:

- use library materials and services without being disturbed or impeded by other library patrons
- be secure and comfortable
- have access to materials and facilities that are readily available and in good condition.

To help attain these goals, the Library Board of Trustees has established this Code of Conduct policy. It is intended to identify the standards and rules of appropriate behavior to which all users of the library will be asked to conform, to point out behaviors that are considered inappropriate and unacceptable, and to define the steps library personnel are authorized to pursue when dealing with disruptive patrons

### *Section 2: Patron Behavior Standards And Rules*

1. "Appropriate use" of the library is defined by the Library Board of Trustees. Appropriate use includes:
  - A. Borrowing, returning, renewing, and reserving library materials
  - B. Attending programs
  - C. Photocopying, faxing, scanning, and printing
  - D. Reading
  - E. Researching
  - F. Studying
  - G. Talking quietly so as not to disturb others
  - H. Tutoring
  - I. Using library materials and services in-house
  - J. Using public computers to access the Internet or to use software installed by Library staff
  - K. Viewing microforms, displays, exhibits, and public notices
  - L. Using the library's wireless network or equivalent technology with the patron's own computer
2. "Inappropriate use" of the library also is defined by the Library Board of Trustees. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:
  - A. Bringing animals into the library (except service animals as defined in Connecticut General Statute 46a and 46a-64). Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered and remain on the floor while in the library.
  - B. Damaging, defacing, or stealing library or personal property
  - C. Use of food or drink, unless provided at a library approved or sponsored event. Covered cups may be used with care in the library.
  - D. Fighting
  - E. Interfering with library personnel in the performance of their duties
  - F. Littering
  - G. Loud talking or other excessive noise
  - H. Pushing
  - I. Running
  - J. Sleeping
  - K. Smoking or using tobacco in any form
  - L. Using or selling alcohol or illegal controlled substances
  - M. Soliciting goods, services, memberships, or signatures
  - N. Stalking
  - O. Staring

- P. Violating the library's Internet Use Policy (Policy 250)
  - Q. Threatening or harassing anyone (staff members, volunteers, or patrons, or others) either by words or actions
  - R. any other behavior determined by the staff, in its sole discretion, to be inappropriate and/or disruptive
  - S. Carrying weapons of any kind (this provision does not apply to law enforcement officers)
3. Appropriate attire, including shirts and shoes, must be worn in the library at all times.
  4. Library staff are not responsible for a patron's personal belongings. Personal belongings should not be left unattended.
  5. Library personnel are not responsible for the care and safety of patrons who use the library or who are left there, regardless of age or physical or mental condition.
  6. Any sound-producing equipment with headphones may be used in the library, as long as the use of such equipment is not disruptive to others. Patrons should be considerate of others in the library when using cell phones; cell phones should be set to vibrate rather than ring. Patrons whose phone conversations are loud, disruptive, profane, or abusive will be asked to leave the library.
  7. Parents, guardians, or caregivers are responsible for the conduct of children under their care at all times while children are on library premises.

Preschool children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. During storytimes adults are asked to remain in the building. Children aged newborn through age 2 MUST be accompanied by adults in storytime groups. Parents, guardians, or caregivers not sitting in a group with an older child must still remain in the children's area or in the area where the program or storytime is being held.

**No child under age 12 may be left alone in the library for any reason.** (Reference Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 53-21 a: "Leaving a child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or motor vehicle: Any parent, guardian or person having custody or control, or providing supervision, of any child under the age of twelve years who knowingly leaves such child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or a motor vehicle for a period of time that presents a risk to the child's health or safety, shall be guilty of a Class A Misdemeanor.")

Parents, guardians, or caregivers should be aware of library opening and closing times (including emergency closings) and make arrangements to meet and transport children ages 12 and up who have been left unattended at the library.

Children must make arrangements to be picked up at least fifteen (15) minutes before the library closes. Children still at the library at closing time will be directed to call their parents, guardians, or caregivers from the library's telephone. If the child is not picked up within 15 minutes after closing, the Brookfield Police may be called to take responsibility for the child. At least two staff members will wait with the child until an officer arrives and assumes responsibility for the child. Library staff may not transport a child home or to any other location.

The library is not responsible for children outside the building who await transportation or who are socializing.

All children, teens and adults are expected to respect library property and other library patrons. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior will result in the individual(s) being asked to leave, and parents and/or the Brookfield Police Department will be notified as deemed necessary by the staff. In the case of younger children, parents, guardians, or caregivers are expected to remove the child from the building until the problem is resolved. If the parent, guardian, or caregiver does not remove the child, both the child and adult will be asked to leave the premises.

The judgment of the library staff prevails when requesting the removal of a child from the building in the event of behavioral difficulties.

***Section 3: Staff Response To Inappropriate Patron Behavior***

Whenever a patron fails to conform with the standards of appropriate behavior defined in this policy, engages in any of the inappropriate behaviors defined in this policy, or violates any section or provision of this policy, the staff member in charge is authorized to pursue the following progressive steps:

- A. Issue a verbal warning, with a statement that the person(s) will be asked to leave if the behavior in question does not cease.
- B. Request that the person(s) leave the library.
- C. Call the police to have the person(s) removed from the library.
- D. The library staff reserves the right to suspend or revoke any individual's borrowing privileges for cause.

Whenever any provisions of this policy are violated, the staff member in charge is authorized to speak to the responsible party. If this fails to remedy the problem, the staff member in charge is authorized to contact the appropriate civil authorities, including, but not limited to, the Police or the Social Services departments of the Town of Brookfield.

If an unattended child is causing a disruption that interferes with patrons or staff members, staff may elect to call the parent, guardian, or caregiver, or to bar the child from the library in the future, unless accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver.

A staff member may intervene with a child in order to prevent injury or property damage.

Whenever a staff member feels that a patron's behavior threatens the safety of himself, other persons, or property, the staff member in charge is authorized to call the police immediately.

Any patron committing an illegal act will be reported to the police.

*Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees, October 20, 1997*

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