

Appropriate Behavior on Library Premises

BEHAVIOR

The New Buffalo Township Library encourages people of all ages to visit the library. Those using the library and its resources have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports appropriate library services. The New Buffalo Township Library seeks to foster a welcoming and orderly environment that is conducive to reading, acquiring information, and study.

Voice levels will vary in certain areas of the Library. Patrons working closely together (example: internet computers, work tables) are expected to respect each other and maintain a quieter voice level. Respect for other patron's privacy while using the Library is also expected.

People entering the library are expected to respect the rights of other patrons to use the library. No person shall harass or annoy others by being noisy or boisterous, by playing audio equipment so that others can hear it, or by behaving in a manner that reasonably can be expected to disturb other persons.

People demonstrating disruptive behavior will be required to leave the library after one warning from library staff. Disruptive behaviors include:

- Loud or boisterous conduct
- Inappropriate language or harassment of others
- Allowing cell phones to ring aloud and having loud conversations on cell phones
- Rollerblading, skating or bike riding on library property
- Actions that deliberately annoy others or prevent the legitimate use of the library and its resources
- Sexual harassment
- Inappropriate dress/clothing: Patrons must wear shoes, shirt, and pants/dress at all times while in the library. Attire must not be obscene or offensive. Staff will have authority to address clothing issues with patrons and ask them to leave if they do not comply with the library policy
- Disregard of guidelines and procedures contained in this policy

People demonstrating aggressive, abusive behaviors will be asked without warning to leave the library. Local law enforcement may be asked to intervene if needed. These behaviors may be cause for loss of library privileges. These behaviors include:

- Assaulting another person

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- Abusive language and behavior toward staff
- Damaging library property both inside and outside of the library
- Theft of library property or another patron's personal property
- Possession of weapons
- Smoking or being intoxicated
- Sexual Misconduct

Patrons committing any of the above violations or other acts deemed inappropriate by Staff will be handled in one of the following ways:

Minor violations will result in a warning and if not heeded the patron will be asked to leave.

Major violations will result in losing library privileges for at least 6 months and the local police will be informed. Violation forms, signed by the Director will be completed and if the patron is a minor the form will be mailed to the parents or guardians. Violation forms will be kept on file for up to 2 years. The person may appeal the violation in writing within 6 months of the date of the offense.

Personal appliances, such as computers, audio devices, and calculators, may be used if the noise level is low and use does not interfere with others. Cell phones and pagers should be turned on vibrate or silent and should be answered in an area that does not bother other patrons. Patrons are expected to take care of their personal belongings while using the Library. The Library will not be responsible personal items left in the library.

Patrons should not leave personal belongings unattended while at the library. Patrons may not sleep in the library. Eating in the library is prohibited, unless given permission in specified areas. There is absolutely no eating at computer stations. Those who violate this policy will have their computer shut down by staff. Non-alcoholic beverages are permitted with a top or lid on the container.

Patrons must leave the library by the time the library closes. Staff will lock doors and turn off computers 5 minutes prior to closing the library. Patrons should complete their work and expect to leave the building at closing. Staff will not be expected to wait for a patron beyond closing time. Library staff may not offer rides to patrons or wait with patrons for rides to come. Patrons must provide their own transportation to and from the library. Patrons should be respectful of library staff and the library's hours of operation.

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Children's Safety Policy

We welcome children in the Library and hope that children who use the Library will perceive it as a fun place to be.

Children 13 and under may never be left unattended on library property.

The New Buffalo Township Library staff members are available to assist children with Library materials or services. The Library is not equipped, and it is not the Library's role to provide long or short-term child care.

Adults, persons over 18 years old, who are not accompanied by a child, or without a valid reason, will be asked to use the adult section of the library. Any individual may be questioned by the staff and may be required to leave the Youth Services area.

Our top priority is the provision of a safe environment for all children. However, the responsibility and for the safety and well-being of children is the responsibility of parents or guardians.

This parental responsibility extends to their children's use of Library computers with access to the Internet. Programming offered for children at the library is not intended to take the place of care by a parent or other caregiver. The Library respects the privacy of parents and children who use the library; however, Library staff will take appropriate action if a child visiting a library appears to be "at risk":

- Children **Thirteen (13)** and under left unattended. "Unattended" means that the parent or caregiver is not in close proximity to the child. The caregiver must be actively supervising the child.
- Children of any age who become disruptive or appear to be frightened when left alone or in the care of other children at a library.
- Children who appear to be subjected to physical or emotional abuse while using library facilities.
- Children who appear to be subjected to uninvited interactions.
- Any child left without transportation at closing.

If one of the above situations occurs, staff shall follow established procedures, which may include an attempt to contact the parent or guardian of an unattended child, or notification of law enforcement, as appropriate.

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For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible adult or adult caregiver over the age of twelve should accompany a child while using the Library and assist the child when using library resources. While in the Library, parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring and regulating the behavior of their children. Please be mindful of the following: noise level, running, pulling items off the shelves, tantrums, bathroom needs, and social interaction with other children.

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers* responsibilities:

- Persons 17 years old or younger are defined as 'children' for the purposes of this Policy.
- Parents or legal guardians, whether present in the library or not, are responsible for their children's behavior at all time.
- Parents or legal guardians are responsible for any damages to library property caused, in whole or in part, by their children, regardless of the children's age.
- Children **eight years** or younger must be accompanied by a parent, a guardian, or a Caregiver*, at all times
- Parents, guardians or Caregivers* are responsible for maintaining control over their child's behavior in the library, at all times
- Parents, guardians or Caregivers accompanying children **eight years** or younger must stay within a reasonable distance and be actively involved with the child at all times.
- *(If a parent designates a 'Caregiver' to accompany a child eight years or younger to the library in the parent's absence, the Caregiver must be at least 12 years of age and must demonstrate maturity and competence to care for and control the children left in their care, while in the library.) The caregiver must be actively supervising the child and not engaged in other activities.

*** Age 12 is based on the minimum age requirement for attending Red Cross Babysitter Training.

***The library staff retains the right to search all personal bags or backpacks.

***Patron library privileges may be limited at the discretion of the Library Director.

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Materials Used in Library

Patrons must get prior approval before bringing craft supplies from home. Any paint, chemicals, hammers or any media deemed inappropriate or disruptive by the staff is prohibited.

Elevator Etiquette

Our elevator is provided for patron accessibility and for convenience. Patrons are expected to respect both other patrons and library equipment. Any vandalism or misuse of the elevator will result in losing elevator privileges. Children under 8 years old may use the elevator when accompanied by an adult.

Security Cameras

Security cameras are used where needed to provide peace of mind to library users and staff by discouraging violations of the Library's Rules of Conduct, to assist library staff in preventing the occurrence of any violations, and when necessary, to provide law enforcement assistance in prosecuting criminal activity.

Cameras are located at various places, both inside and outside the library.