



THOMAS
MEMORIAL
LIBRARY

Dear Cape Families and Educators:

As the daylight fades and colder weather arrives, the library is seeing more and more groups of young visitors after school. It's great to see a return to in-person learning and have kids visiting their public library on a daily basis!

We want to revisit the new *Safe Child Policy* and remind parents that the Thomas Memorial Library aims to provide excellent library services and engaging resources for all visitors during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. We do so by following current health guidelines from the CDC, Maine CDC, and Town directives. These have all resulted in changes to how we offer library services and what services we can currently offer. In addition, the library has worked with staff, the TML Committee, and the Town Council to craft new policies to reinforce the safe and appropriate use of the library in general.

Most importantly, if you have depended on the library as a location for your child to spend time after school before going home or waiting for a ride, please make sure you are aware of the policies and expectations around use of the library from 2:30 - 5:00 p.m., particularly as afternoons become dark and cold during the winter months! The new policy states:

Children 10 and under must have a parent or caregiver present in the building

Children 11-12 may visit the library unattended for **up to an hour**

Children 13+ may visit the library unattended as long as they are able to follow the *General Use Policy*

Before You Send Your Child to the Library

Before you send your child to the library, we ask that you read through our policies, and also ensure your child is aware and able to:

- Have and properly wear a mask inside the building at all times when a mandate is in place
- Enjoy food and beverages outside of the building (none are allowed when a mask mandate is in place)
- Have a way to contact you
- Know when they are being picked up or where they need to be
- Identify themselves using their real names when asked by staff
- Keep their belongings with them (backpacks, sports equipment, etc.)
- Know what appropriate use of the library means (for help, refer to our *General Use Policy*)
- Have a plan in place if they are asked to leave the library

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Please Help Us and Other Library Users

When after school crowds visit the library, it can be overwhelming for everyone involved; we ask for your help in making this a positive experience for your children. Appropriate after school use of the library includes reading, studying, checking out books or DVDs, picking up crafts, attending an age-appropriate program, and quiet socializing in small groups. As noted in our *Safe Child Policy*, “The library is not equipped—nor is it the library’s role—to provide long-term or short-term childcare. The responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of children lies with their parents or caregivers, both within the library building and on library grounds.”

Our policies exist to create a safe and respectful environment for all, conducive to engagement with library staff and resources, and will be consistently implemented with that in mind. We look forward to an active partnership in helping your child(ren) navigate after school expectations at the library.

Staying Informed

We will do our very best to stay in communication with the schools to keep you updated on information regarding the library. Our policies and details about our services are always available for you to view on our website at thomasmemoriamlibrary.org. Our Facebook is updated as new programs are planned. Sign up for our newsletter if you haven’t already! If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me by email or by phone.

Stay safe and healthy!

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