

POLICY CONCERNING USE OF CHILDREN'S DEPT. BY ADULT PATRONS

The Children's Department of the Shepherdstown Public Library is located on the second floor of the building, currently accessible only by an enclosed stairway at the rear of the first floor. The Children's library is staffed as much as possible during the 46 hours the library is open each week, but it is sometimes necessary for the children's librarians to help at the main circulation desk downstairs, leaving the children's area unsupervised.

Space for computer use and reading by adults is seriously limited at the present time. It is a primary goal for a planned expansion of the library to provide additional space for these activities, but currently the area available is very restricted.

The overriding mission of the Children's Dept. is to provide a wide range of materials for pre-school and elementary students, a friendly and knowledgeable staff to help children and their families, and, not least, an environment where children alone or with other children or adult family members can feel safe and comfortable when they use the library. Because of the unique design and layout of the SPL, it is not possible to provide such an environment and also allow adults who are not accompanying children or searching for books for children, to use the upstairs space for computer use or simply as a reading room.

The Board of Trustees and staff regret any inconvenience this may cause our adult patrons or visitors to the library, but it is clear that the interest of the Shepherdstown Public Library must rest primarily in the assurance of a comfortable and safe place for our young patrons.