

## **AMENIA FREE LIBRARY**

3309 RT 343, P.O. Box 27

Amenia, NY 12501

845-373-8273

[www.amenialibrary.org](http://www.amenialibrary.org)



### Children & Vulnerable Adult Policy

The Library welcomes individuals of all ages to use our services in a secure, friendly and safe environment. The Library encourages children and vulnerable adults to use its facilities and services. However, the Library is not responsible for these individuals while they are in the building or on the library premises.

#### Supervision:

Parents and guardians, not the Library Staff, are responsible for the care, behavior, and supervision of their children while using the Amenia Free Library and on its property. As the Amenia Free Library is a public place, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following policies:

1. Children who are 9 years old or younger, who are using the Library's resources or who are participating in a Library program, shall at all times be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult. A responsible adult is defined as a parent, guardian, teacher, or assigned caregiver over the age of 16. That person must remain with the child in the Library for the duration of the visit.
2. Children 10 to 13 years of age may use the Library on their own for a reasonable period of time, provided they are able to maintain proper Library behavior. Parents are always responsible for the actions of their children. Children who behave inappropriately may be asked to leave the Library. Unattended children must have the phone number of a parent, guardian or caregiver to contact in case of an emergency or any other circumstance where the child must leave the Library.
3. Children/young adults aged 14 to 17 are treated as adults. Parents are advised that even in their absence, they are legally responsible for their child's behavior.

#### Disruptive Behavior:

1. If a child behaves in a disruptive manner, even if he or she is accompanied by a responsible adult, he/she will be given a verbal warning, in which he/she must correct his/her behavior or leave the Library.
2. If the child continues to be disruptive after this verbal warning, then the Library Staff may:

**For children 9 and under:** ask the parent to remove the child from the library.

**For children 10 and over:** ask the child to leave the library and, if necessary, contact the responsible adult.

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### Unattended Children After Closing Time – Regular Scheduled:

The Amenia Free Library will exercise appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of unattended children when the Library is closing.

Parents must be aware of the Library's hours. It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements to pick up their children or make advance arrangements to have their children picked up by a responsible adult by closing time. If an unattended child is still in the Library at closing time, then the Library Staff will act according to the following procedure:

1. Every effort will be made by the Library Staff to assist the child in contacting a parent, guardian or caregiver.
2. Library personnel will NOT transport or escort the child to any location off the premises under any circumstances.
3. Staff members will wait with the child, as necessary, until the parent or responsible adult come to the Library to pick up the child. If a parent, guardian or caregiver of the child cannot be contacted or located within 30 minutes, the New York State Police or Dutchess County Sheriff's Office will be contacted to take custody of the child and continue efforts to contact a responsible adult.

Unattended Children – Emergency Closing Emergencies and inclement weather may force the Library to close without warning. Children should know what to do if the Library closes unexpectedly. Parents are responsible for their children and must make arrangements to pick them up. If a child is left unattended during an emergency closing, the same guidelines outlined above under regularly scheduled closings will apply.

Employees must file an Incident Report within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence to the Library Director, who must immediately forward such report to the Board of Trustees.

### Vulnerable Adults:

A vulnerable adult is an individual who is over the age of 18 who is mentally or physically challenged to a degree that may significantly impair that person's ability to provide adequately for his/her personal needs and manage his/her behavior without assistance.

Vulnerable adults must have a parent/guardian or caregiver, 18 years of age or older, with them while they are in the Library who can manage their behavior and provide adequately for their personal needs. Physically challenged adults who are capable of providing for their own needs are welcome to remain in the library without supervision so long as a contact person is available in the event that the adult's health or safety is in doubt.

The rules for vulnerable adults at closing time shall be the same as the rules for an unattended child. Violations of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy may result in suspension of library privileges for the family.