



## UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

The Town of Esopus Library welcomes patrons of all ages to use its facilities, services, and resources. Children and their safety are of great concern to the library.

Children, like all library patrons, are expected to behave appropriately. Parents and caregivers, not library staff, are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children in the library. An unattended child is a child of any age who is apparently unaccompanied by a parent or caregiver. Children who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves may not be left alone in the library, and must have adequate supervision from a caregiver.

Libraries are public places. In libraries, as in all public places, physical and personal dangers are a real concern. Library staff cannot prevent children from interacting with or leaving the library with persons who are not appropriate caregivers. The library is not be responsible for any consequences of caregivers forfeiting their responsibilities. Library staff may refer to appropriate authorities those children who are left unattended in the library.

### When a child without a guardian wants/needs to leave the library:

- Staff should not transport any child from the Library to another location.
- Staff should encourage an unattended child to contact the parent/guardian.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached or does not arrive 15 minutes after closing, Library Staff are directed to contact the **Ulster County Sheriff Substation at 845-338-3640** to pick up the child.
- Two staff members should remain with the child until the parent/guardian or Sherriff arrives. Staff will be compensated for this time.
- If a child is taken by the Sherriff, staff will leave a note on the door stating "Unattended child is in the custody of the Ulster County Sheriff, Esopus Substation, 845-338-3640." Do not include any names.
- Staff will fill out an Incident form, and contact the Director to inform him/her of the situation.

**Responsibilities:** Children are the responsibility of their parents or guardians, not of the Library. The Library takes no responsibility for the safety or welfare of children left unattended at the Library, in violation of this policy.

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees: March 26, 2008

Revised by the Library Board of Trustees: December 7, 2011

Revised by the Board of Trustees: November 20, 2013

Revised by the Board of Trustees: March 24, 2021