

Cattaraugus Free Library

Cattaraugus, NY

INTERNET & COMPUTER ACCESS POLICY

PURPOSE

The Cattaraugus Free Library provides computers and Internet access as one means of fulfilling its mission to "address the informational, educational, recreational and cultural needs of all individuals. All Internet resources accessible through the library are provided equally to all users, with the understanding that it is the individual user's responsibility to demonstrate judgment, respect for others, and appropriate conduct while using Public Library resources and facilities.

Internet computers will not be used by anyone, including minors, for illegal activity or to access illegal materials. Library employees are authorized to take prompt and appropriate actions to enforce the Rules of Conduct, and/or to prohibit use by individuals who fail to comply with the Internet Safety Policy as stated or implied herein. Parents are responsible for their minor children's use of the library's resources and facilities. Parents who believe that their minor children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use.

DISCLAIMER

The library cannot control the content of resources available on the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. The Internet offers open access to information, ideas and commentary from around the world in an unregulated medium. As such, it offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, but also enables access to some material that some may find offensive, disturbing and/or illegal, inaccurate or incomplete. The availability of information does not constitute endorsement of the content by the library. The Internet, as an information resource, enables the library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. Library users use it at their own risk. Use of Internet resources carries with it a responsibility to evaluate the quality of the information accessed. **The library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, of loss of privacy, arising from use of its Internet and computer workstations. The library is also not responsible for any loss of liability that may occur as a result**

of the disclosure of financial or other personal information over the library's public computer services, including the Internet and electronic mail use. Users should be aware that use of public computers is not a private or secure medium, and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding the user's activities.

The public library, unlike schools, does not serve in place of a parent or guardian. Librarians cannot act in the place of parents or guardians in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. As with private usage of all other library materials, monitoring a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

PRIVACY

The library seeks to protect the First Amendment rights of its customers and their individual right to privacy. However, Internet users must be sensitive to the fact that workstations are in public areas and, therefore, images on the screen are subject to view by a wide audience. **In order to protect the privacy of the user and the interests of other library users, the library will manage access to the Internet by the use of privacy screens.** Users are urged to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing information that may reasonably be offensive to someone else. However, absolute privacy for individuals using electronic resources in the library cannot be guaranteed. There exists a possibility of inadvertent viewing by others, either by watching the user's screen, or because a user may leave the screen unattended. The "Rules of Conduct" applies to the behavior of individuals using electronic equipment and resources. Failure to follow this policy could result in the loss of computer privileges.

Users are cautioned that the Internet is not a secure environment. Personal information included in all transactions, files and communications may be subject to unauthorized access by third parties.

The library respects the confidentiality of those using its electronic resources and will only release library records as required by law or for the Library's operations.

ACCEPTABLE USE

- 1) Internet access computers **may be used to access a variety of electronic communication resources including email and chat rooms. Although the Library does not provide email accounts to users, Internet access computers may be used to access free email accounts available from a variety of sources.** Users, including minors, are warned that other individuals may obtain unauthorized access to personal information and/or may misrepresent themselves. Users, including minors, are advised not to share personal identification information to unknown or otherwise unverified sources via electronic communication.
- 2) **Internet access computers may be used to access games.** Game sessions will be limited to one hour per day.
- 3) The Library's Internet access computers may not be used by ANY user, including minors, to access inappropriate or illegal materials, including but not limited to material of an obscene nature or child pornography. In addition, minors are prohibited from accessing materials considered to be "harmful to minors".
- 4) The Library's Internet access computers may be used to access information, except as otherwise specified as unacceptable, from a variety of sources such as educational or commercial. The user is the selector of the material accessed and is therefore the responsible party. The user is responsible for complying with all restrictions governing access to specific sites. Any fees are the responsibility of the user, not the library. In the case of minors, fees are the fiscal responsibility of the parent or guardian. In no event shall the library have any liability for lost profits or for any direct or indirect special, punitive or consequential damages, or any liability to any third party.

RULES OF CONDUCT

- 1) Internet computers will not be used for illegal activity or to access illegal materials. (Illegal materials include, but are not limited to, obscenity and child pornography as defined in U.S. Code Title 18 and State Penal Code Chapters 42 and 43.) Access by minors to materials deemed "harmful to minors" is prohibited. Library Administration reserves the right to determine, based on community standards, materials considered to be "harmful to minors".

- 2) **Installation, downloading, or modification of software to the library's computer is prohibited.** Users may only download information to a thumb drive that they own.
- 3) Users will respect copyright laws and licensing agreements. Materials obtained or copied on the Internet may be subject to laws that govern making reproductions of copyrighted works. A work protected by copyright may not be copied without permission of the copyright owner unless the proposed use falls within the definition of "Fair Use." Customers are responsible for compliance with all international, national and state laws governing copyrighted materials.
- 4) Users, including minors, will not make any attempt to misuse the computer. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, using the computer for illegal activities; hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system; damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software; interfering with systems operations, integrity or security; gaining unauthorized access to another person's files; sending harassing messages to other computer users; altering or attempting to alter the library computer's settings; and violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements. Misuse of the computer may result in the loss of computer privileges, potential loss of library privileges and possible prosecution. Damages resulting from the misuse are the responsibility of the user or in the case of minors, the parent or guardian.
- 5) **Prompt payment is required by users who incur charges for printing or other authorized fees.**
- 6) **The Internet and computer workstations are available on a first-come, first-serve basis and must be used within the confines of currently installed software and hardware. Computers will not be reserved.**
- 7) **Access sessions will be limited to sixty minutes, if more time is needed you must arrange it with the director or the staff member manning the desk.**
- 8) Users will end their session and leave the computer when asked to do so by authorized Library staff, even if they have not completed their access session.

- 9) Users will respect the privacy of other library users, and will refrain from attempting to view or read material being used by others. Users are prohibited from the unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information of others. Users are prohibited from misrepresenting oneself to others. Users, including minors, are warned that other individuals may obtain unauthorized access to personal information and/or may misrepresent themselves.
- 10) **By mutual agreement, two or more persons may share one access session as long as their behavior or conversation does not disturb other users or Library staff.**
- 11) Library staff may provide LIMITED assistance, as knowledge and time allow. Staff take no responsibility in assisting patrons on any site.
- 12) Food and drink are not allowed near the library computers.
- 13) **Patrons are not to utilize the computers for the commercial purpose of selling goods or services.**
- 14) A library card is not required to use the library's computers.
- 15) The library reserves the right to modify these policies at any time.

USE OF A TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE (Compliance with Children's Internet Protection Act)

Installation of filtering software

As a recipient of federal funds through the government's E-Rate program, the library's computers are filtered in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). CIPA Link: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/47/54.520>. **The installation of such a product is the library's means to comply with specific federal legislation. The library uses federal funds in a manner identified in Title XVII: The Children's Internet Protection Act requiring compliance with regulations specified in that legislation. Compliance includes the installation and enforcement of a technology protection measure to prohibit access by ANY user to graphic depictions of illegal materials as defined by U.S. Code Title 18. The legislation also includes**

specific language prohibiting access by minors to materials considered to be "harmful to minors". The filtering software product (which is not under the control of the library) may restrict access to sites that could be deemed objectionable, but may also limit access to sites that have legitimate research value. **The library cannot guarantee that the filtering software will work 100% of the time nor that it will deny access to sites that parents may find objectionable.**

TERMINATION OR PROHIBITION OF USER ACCESS

Failure to abide by the above rules may result in the forfeiture of you privileges to use the computer equipment in the library.

When Library employees believe that the user has failed to comply with the Internet Safety Policy and/or the Rules of Conduct, they are authorized to issue a verbal or written warning or terminate any user's access session or to prohibit a user from subsequent access sessions for up to two weeks from the date of informing the user of that action. After a review by the library's board, a Library user may lose privileges for a longer term up to and including being permanently barred from Internet access from the Library. Users are advised that due process will be used to handle violations of an illegal nature, including criminal prosecution, if necessary.

Internet users whose access session has been terminated or prohibited will be given information concerning the process to protest the action and/or request that Internet access privileges be reinstated.

DEFINITIONS:

- Library cardholder - eligible resident of the Cattaraugus School District with an active Library card.
- Non-resident - individual that does not reside in the Cattaraugus School District and therefore unable to obtain a Library card.
- Adult - any individual that has reached the age of 17.
- Minor - any individual that has not yet reached the age of 17.
- Staff - any library employee designated by Library Administration to perform the daily functions involved in the operation of the library.

- Filtering Technology – consists of software that screens out some content while allowing other material to flow through to its intended destination.

GUIDANCE FOR SUPERVISING CHILDREN'S USE:

The public library, unlike schools, does not serve in place of a parent or guardian. Library staff cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians. Children 7 and under are not allowed to use the computers without the supervision of a parent or guardian present in the library.

Internet technology affords children access to vast amounts of valuable information and endless sources of entertainment. However, it also exposes children to certain dangers. For example, children may come into contact with demeaning, racist, sexist, violent, hateful or false information. They may also view pornographic web sites, SPAM (unsolicited emails) containing obscene material, file swapping programs with inappropriate and sometimes mislabeled content, and other types of material potentially inappropriate for a child. Most worrisome, children may encounter actual predators that use the internet to identify and lure victims through chat rooms, instant messaging facilities, and social networking sites.

Parents may understandably feel the urge to eliminate these risks by prohibiting their children from using the internet. However, this decision would deprive them of access to an amazing resource for legitimate information and communication. Furthermore, parents might find it impractical to enforce such strict prohibition. For example, many schools require students to take internet training classes, or use online databases in the classroom. In addition, motivated children and teens could circumvent their parents' prohibition by getting online in public establishments with internet access or by using mobile or wireless devices. For these reasons, it is important for parents to strike a balance between the benefits and risks that the internet poses to children. Parents can achieve such a balance by implementing strategies and protective steps like those discussed below.

The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences, whether at home or in the library.

- Use the Internet as a family. Parents have to get involved. Join your children in Internet exploration, playing copilot to your child is the best way to make sure she/he gets a smooth ride. By the time your child is 8, you won't need to be glued to them but you should be somewhere in the room or checking in frequently.
- Communicating with children about the risks that they can encounter online is the most important and most effective strategy to keep children safe while they surf the web.
- Stay in kid friendly zones. Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
- Encourage children to use sites recommended on the library's homepage and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
- Provide guidelines for your children on the amount of time they spend online, decide how much time you're comfortable with your child being on line and which sites they may go to. So, there's no confusion, talk about the rules and the consequences for breaking them.
- Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information. While they won't fully understand the consequences for revealing personal information on line, you should still make sure your children know:
 - * Never to give their name, phone number, e-mail address, social security number, password, postal address, or school
 - * Not to post their picture on public sites of any kind
 - * Not to open e-mail from people they do not know
 - * Not to respond to hurtful or disturbing messages
 - * Not to get together with anyone they "meet" online
 - * NOT to chat with strangers on line
- * Instruct you child to come straight to you when he/she sees anything that makes them uncomfortable, and assure them that you won't overreact, blame them, or immediately rescind their online privileges.
 - Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.
 - Discuss privacy settings with your child. Encourage them to adjust these settings so only people they have approved can see what they post.
 - Be aware of location tags. Some phones and apps use GPS to keep track of users' locations. Consider disabling location tags in their settings, especially on photos.

- Teach children how to create strong passwords. Explain that passwords should be more than 8 characters long and contain a combination of numbers, letters and symbols.
- Help children and teens avoid online scams. Explain that scams often target children promising money or prizes. Tell them never to provide personal information on a website or pop-up without checking with an adult.
- adult trusted adult first.

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