Internet Policy

The Internet and the Library's mission

The Highland Park Public Library offers access to the Internet, a world-wide electronic information network. It is offered in support of the Library's mission to provide materials, resources and services to help community residents obtain information to meet their educational, professional, cultural, and social needs. The Internet presents the Library with an unprecedented opportunity to fulfill its mission by expanding the scope of information available to community residents.

Global nature of the network

As Internet resources are "global" in nature, the Library does not, and can not, control the information available.

The Library encourages patrons to evaluate carefully the information obtained via the Internet. While there are many highly dependable and useful sources, other sources may be unreliable, inaccurate, or out-of-date. Some sources may be offensive or controversial. Library staff is available to assist users in making judgments about the reliability or currency of certain types of information and sources, but cannot provide definitive analyses of particular sources.

As with all materials, Library staff will help patrons locate sources of useful information, as well as recommend age appropriate materials for children.

The Library is not responsible for any direct or indirect damages which may arise in connection with a patron's use of the Internet.

Patron responsibilities

It is the Library's view that patrons should be free to select the sites which they deem appropriate to their needs.

Internet content is protected by the First Amendment which guarantees the freedom of speech. The Library does not use filtering software for information content. Individual users have the right to define what material or information is consistent with their personal beliefs.

The Library does not deny access to electronic information networks based solely on age. Parents are encouraged to monitor and supervise their children's use of the Internet and to discuss with their children issues of appropriate use and network safety.

Patrons are prohibited from: damaging or altering computer equipment or software or connecting their own hardware to the library's data network; violating system security; violating licensing agreements; using the network to harass other users; violating a Federal or State law including, but not limited to, accessing material that is obscene or child pornography as defined by the Illinois Criminal Code, 720 ILCS 5/11-20 & 720 ILCS 5/11-20.1.

The use of the Internet falls under the Library Behavior Policy.

Library procedures

The Library may set procedures to assist staff and patrons in the use of electronic resources. Such procedures include, but are not limited to, the following: time limits for access; limits on use of e-mail and chat rooms; cost recovery for printouts; specific instructions for downloading; restrictions on the use of personal software on Library computer equipment; restrictions on the use of the workstations for other purposes.

Use of the Internet in the Youth Services Department is limited to children age 14 or younger.

Breach of policy

Violation of any aspect of this policy (or of established Library procedures) may result in loss of Library privileges.

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