

Internet Use & Safety Policy, Adopted June 2012

The Internet is a global electronic information network used by students, educators, businesses, the government, the military and other organizations and individuals. It offers access to ideas, information and commentary from around the globe, enabling libraries to enhance and supplement their existing collections.

Kershaw County Library provides access to the Internet for the purpose of searching for information relevant to academic, business or personal interests. While much of the information on the Internet is professionally and culturally enriching, there will inevitably be material that is controversial, offensive or disturbing to some individuals, or material that may be illegal. There may also be information that is neither accurate nor current.

The library provides *access* to the Internet, and does not monitor any information on the Internet for accuracy. The individual user is the ultimate judge of the usefulness and value of all material accessed via the Internet.

Material entering the Library via the Internet circumvents library collection policies. The staff may occasionally find that a user has accessed material that is not in keeping with the departmental collection policy and which has a negative effect on other patrons in the building. Because this medium is not a private one, the staff may occasionally find it necessary to request that a patron terminate access to a particular site.

ACCESS BY MINORS

In the case of minors, parents or legal guardians must assume the responsibility for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their own children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use or view. While the Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet, the Library has installed filtering software on all public Internet stations to assist in with safety.

To address the issue of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet, including material that is harmful to minors, the Library:

- Provides filtering software on all public access Internet computers
- Encourages staff to guide minors away from materials that may be inappropriate
- Distributes Internet safety publications for parents and children
- Provides individual guidance on safe and effective Internet use

To address the issue of safety and security of minors, as well as the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, the Library urges minors and caregivers of minors to keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number. When you post messages on line use a nickname.
- Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without a parent or guardian's approval.
- Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or make one uncomfortable.
- Have parents or guardians report an incident to the national Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678 if one becomes aware of the transmission of child pornography.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Remember that everything one reads may not be true.

To address the issue of unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", and other unlawful activities by minors online, minors and all other Library users are hereby advised that use of the Library's computers for hacking or any other unlawful activity is strictly prohibited.

The Library reserves the right to limit the amount of time an individual user can devote to a single session. The public must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including laws governing the transmission and dissemination of information while accessing the Internet. Users may not:

- Use the network to make unauthorized entry into other computational, informational or communication services or resources.
- Distribute unsolicited advertising
- Invade the privacy of others
- Make any attempt to damage or corrupt computer equipment or software
- Engage in any activity that is harassing or defamatory
- Download information onto the computer hard drive
- Change system or browser settings
- Use the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other rights of third parties, or in a manner inconsistent with the Library's proper operation.

Violation may result in loss of access. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

PUBLIC USERS' SECURITY

Users should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding users' activities. However, the library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the Library.