



Internet Safety Policy

Gates Public Library

Introduction

Internet access enables Gates Public Library to provide electronic information beyond the confines of our library's collection. It allows access to ideas, information and commentary from around the globe. Therefore Internet access considerably enhances the library's existing print and electronic resources.

Internet is an unregulated medium. Thus, while offering access to a wealth of excellent material, it also offers access to materials that may be offensive, disturbing or illegal.

Our library is limited in the ability to control or monitor material accessible via Internet. Therefore all Gates Public Library users are advised that Gates Public Library and its agents cannot be held responsible for what may be accessed via the library's online computers.

Gates Public Library upholds and affirms the right of each individual to access constitutionally protected material.

Gates Public Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/legal guardians to monitor their minor children's use of library materials and resources, including Internet access.

Accordingly, computers providing Internet access, full or limited, will be clearly identified.

All parents or legal guardians are made aware of Internet availability in the library as part of Gates' library card registration. Parents or legal guardians are strongly encouraged to assist their minor children in using Internet resources.

Definitions

Filtering apply to all Gates Public Library computers that access Internet and will be limited to visual depictions of materials defined as obscene [Section 1040, Title 18, United States Code], child pornography [Section 2256, Title 18, United States Code], harmful to minors, proxy servers, and web sites that host malware.

Harmful to Minors means any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depictions that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

Access to Inappropriate Material

Filtering or the use of technology protection measures that block or filter Internet access to visual depictions will be used as minimally as is legally permissible.

Subject to librarian supervision, filtering will be disabled, or in the case of minors, minimized upon library user request for research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of the users, particularly minors, of Gates Public Library's online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Prohibited usage includes:

1. Unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking' and other unlawful activities
2. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.
3. Appropriate network use by the public will be encouraged by all library staff Re: online etiquette, vandalism, harassment, copyright violation, plagiarism, and illegal file downloading.

Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of Gates Public Library staff, in particular, the librarians on duty, to supervise usage of public computers and Internet access to the Internet.

All staff shall strive to inform the public of the fact that user privacy is limited when using electronic resources in a public setting.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any filtering in use shall be the responsibility of the Librarian on duty or designated representatives.

Resources to assist the public in accessing Internet will be provided in print form and via group training as staffing and volunteer support permits.

Penalties

Violations by the public of this Internet Safety Policy will be addressed by implementing the library's Rules of Conduct and Barring Policy, except when violations of state or federal law occur. In the case of the latter, library staff will inform and cooperate fully with police and legal officials.

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