

## Shaler North Hills Library Computer and Internet Policy

In response to advances in technology and the changing information needs of our community, the Shaler North Hills Library endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services that meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of our diverse community. It is within this context that the Shaler North Hills Library offers access to the Internet.

The Internet is a worldwide computer network that provides easy access to an enormous and growing body of information. Currently, however it is an unregulated medium. The Shaler North Hills Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through this resource and cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy, legality, quality, or timeliness of Internet information. The Internet contains information of a controversial nature. The determination of viability and usefulness of Internet information falls upon the user.

Internet workstations cannot be used for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose, including any activities prohibited under applicable Federal, Pennsylvania, or local laws. The Shaler North Hills Library prohibits users from accessing Internet and on-line sites that contain or make reference to obscene or explicit sexual materials as defined by 18PA, C.S., Section 5903. Users may not send, receive, display and/or print text or images that may be "harmful to minors," unlawful or prohibited under any applicable federal, state or local laws.

### CIPA

**The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law that requires all computers in a public library to be filtered by July 1, 2004 if that library accepts any federal funds for Internet access or computers used for Internet access.**

**The Shaler North Hills Library complies with this law as a participating library of the eiNetwork. The eiNetwork receives a significant amount of federal funding to provide Internet access to over 85 library sites in Allegheny County.**

**All computers in the library are filtered using software called Netsweeper. Please be aware that filters are unreliable; at times sites with legitimate information or educational value can be blocked or access to sites that are illegal, obscene, or sexually explicit within the meaning of 18 PA, C.S. Section 5903 can be allowed.**

Parents or legal guardians, and not the Shaler North Hills Library or its staff, are responsible for monitoring their children's use of the Internet and for the information selected and/or accessed by their children. The library strongly encourages parents or legal guardians to supervise their children's Internet use and to provide them with guidelines of acceptable use. **Parents and children are encouraged to read "Child Safety on the Information Highway," (<http://www.safekids.com/>) or "Teen Safety on the Information Highway," (<http://www.safeteens.com/>)**

### CIPA Procedures

- Any adult (17 years of age or older) may request that the filter be disabled without significant delay by a Shaler North Hills Library staff member. Staff may request ID to verify age of user.
- Library staff will not question an adult user on the reason for their request. Staff may advise the user to review the library's Internet/computer policy.

- An adult may access any site that is not prohibited by Federal, state or local laws. Generally speaking, prohibited sites are those that are obscene; contain child pornography or those that may be used for fraudulent or unlawful purposes.
- Staff reserves the right to set a specific time for the filter to be re-enabled.
- An authorized staff member may override the filter for a minor (age 16 years or younger) in the event that the filter wrongly blocks or filters Internet access to a specific site with legitimate informational value.
- When a child requests that a site be unblocked, staff will review the web site. Staff will verify that the site is in compliance with the library's policy, federal, state and local law. Staff will unblock the requested site.
- If an adult is with a child and requests that the filter be disabled, it is up to the discretion of library staff whether to disable the filter or unblock each site. Adults must stay with the child if the filter is disabled.
- Users may file a written complaint about the filtering software with the Library Director and/or the Library Board President, the Director of the eNetwork or the Federal Communications Commission.
- The Shaler North Hills Library is not responsible for unauthorized use of a computer with a disabled filter.

### **CybraryN Procedures**

- All computers may be used on a first-come, first-served basis
- Users must present a current, valid, relatively fine-free library card to use a computer.
- The library uses time/print management software called CybraryN on all computers except for designated Online Catalog machines. Each user is limited to two one-hour sessions. If others are waiting, library staff reserves the right to limit time or sessions.

### **Additional conditions and terms of use**

- Except for the use of the card catalog, a parent or guardian must accompany children under 8 years of age while they are searching the Internet.
- Computer stations in the Children's Department/Teen Room are reserved for youth and their parents or legal guardians.
- Unacceptable usage includes, but is not limited to: hacking, transmission of threatening, harassing or abusive language or images; libeling or slandering of other users; misrepresentation of oneself to another user; destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the library or other users; disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications; unauthorized copying of copyright protected materials; the deliberate propagation of computer worms and viruses; or accessing internet sites that do not fall within the library's policy and guidelines.
- The use of Internet stations for game playing, e-mail and chat is considered a low-priority with respect to the library mission and the library reserves the right to limit these activities. Users may be asked to end a chat session when such discussion may become obscene or "harmful to minors."
- 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 on the Internet. It is the user's responsibility to determine what personal information to give out over the Internet.
- The library assumes no liability for use of credit cards by library patrons using the Internet.

- Patrons may not use personal software, alter, or attach equipment to the library's hardware. Patrons may not download information to the hard-drive. The library sells computer disks at the Checkout Desk.
- The library is not responsible for damage to patron disks or computers, or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from a patron's use of the library's computers.
- Printers are available for use for a fee. Pickup and pay for printing at the Checkout Desk. Please ask for assistance when using the printers.
- The library offers access to computers with Assistive Technology software. Those who have a need for such computers take precedence over other users using that particular computer.
- The library provides only usage statistics to funders. We do not disclose personal information or Internet activities to outside parties. The library may be required by law to release library records to law enforcement agents in the course of an investigation.

### **Compliance with Library Policy and Guidelines**

Misuse of the computer will result in the loss of computer privileges, potential loss of library privileges and possible prosecution.

Illegal activities involving the Shaler North Hills Library's Internet resources or equipment will be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.

The Shaler North Hills Library Board reserves the right to interpret this policy and to address issues that may arise not covered by this policy.

Approved by the Shaler North Hills Library Board 8/04