

**Penn Hills Library  
Children's Internet Policy  
In  
Accordance with the  
Neighborhood Children's Internet  
Protection Act.**

**Mission Statement**

The role of the Penn Hills Library is that of a community information/communication center. The library provides print and non-print materials to meet the educational, informational, recreational and cultural needs of the community. Reference services are provided to answer questions and to solve problems that the library patrons present to the staff. The library sponsors adults and children's programs as well as community activities.

**Internet Access**

The Internet, a world-wide network of computer networks is an essential medium for obtaining and transmitting information of all types. Therefore, public access to the Internet is germane to the Library's mission.

However, the Internet is an unregulated medium. It also provides access to information that is inaccurate, illegal, or that some may find offensive or disturbing. The Library will identify on its web site specific Internet sites that have potential interest for Library users. But the library cannot control a user's access to other Internet resources.

**Responsibilities of Library Staff and Users**

Library staff will not monitor a user's Internet use, except for length of use in order to ensure equal opportunity of access for everyone. The user, or the parent of a minor, is responsible for his or her Internet session at all times.

The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or that involves user behavior that violates the Library's policies.

As with all Library resources, the Library affirms the right and responsibility of parents/guardians, NOT Library staff, to determine and monitor their minor children's use of the Internet. (Minors are defined in this policy as children and young people under the age of 17 years.) Parents are responsible for their minor children's use of the Library's resources and facilities. Parents who believe that their children cannot responsibly use the Library's Internet access are requested to monitor their children's Internet use.

## **Disclaimers**

While the Library endeavors to provide access to information of the highest quality, the Library specifically disclaims any warrant as to the information's accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness, or fitness for a particular purpose.

The Library will have no liability for direct, indirect or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the Library's Internet service.

Since software and information downloaded from any sources, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus checking software on their home computers. The Library is not responsible for damage to users' disks or computers or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers.

## **Unacceptable Uses of Computers**

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

*1. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law.* Transmitting of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by law; viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, users should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.

*2. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property.* Engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "Trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful forms of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.

*3. Uses that jeopardize the security of access of the computer network or other networks on the Internet.* Disclosing or sharing the user's password with others; impersonating another user; using one's own software programs on the library's computers; altering the Library's computer settings; damaging or modifying computer equipment or software.

*4. Uses that compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications:* Minors under age 17: giving other private information about one's self or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers; arranging a face-to-face meeting with someone one has "met" on the computer network or Internet without a parent's permission.

5. *Uses that Violate Confidentiality of Information:* PA Act 1984-90, Section 428, commonly known as the “Library Confidentiality Law” or “Act 90.” Library Circulation Records. –Records related to the circulation of library materials which contain the names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the State Library or any local library which is established or maintained under any law of the Commonwealth or the library of any university, college or educational institution chartered by the Commonwealth or the library of any public school or branch reading room, deposit station or agency operated in connection therewith, shall be confidential and shall not be made available to anyone except by a court order in a criminal proceeding.

### **Procedures**

The Library staff has developed such rules and procedures as are necessary to ensure the fair and reasonable use of Internet access.

### **Response to Violations**

The user’s access to the Library’s computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user violates this policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this policy if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet. Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures will result in the forfeiture of the user’s right to access these computers.

Adopted by the Penn Hills Library Board of Directors on September 23, 2002.