

Thomaston Public Library

Internet Safety Policy

Introduction

Thomaston Public Library is a forum for all points of view and adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights formulated by the American Library Association, and endorsed by its Board of Trustees.

Thomaston Public Library's Internet Safety Policy is designed to promote access to the Internet while protecting children from exposure to inappropriate material, as well as the public from unlawful access to and use or disclosure of personal information, and unauthorized access to legally restricted areas.

The Internet Safety Policy's purpose is to prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; to prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information; and to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Filtering

In compliance with CIPA, the Library filters all its computers, and all access to the Internet through its network, to protect against access to obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other material harmful to minors, as required by law.

The filter may unintentionally block sites that have legitimate research value and fail to block objectionable content. Users should be aware that Internet filtering software installed for CIPA compliance should not substitute for individual judgment and/or parental involvement and oversight.

As the law requires, the Library will disable filtered Internet access to persons 18 or older who request it for bona fide research or any other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

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

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification

information regarding minors; and (c) dissemination and viewing of obscene visual depictions, child pornography, and/or other materials harmful to minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

The Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and caregivers to monitor and determine their children's access to library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet.

Parents or caregivers are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children. Children, defined as individuals under 18 years of age by Connecticut State Statute, who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate or disturbing information and images. Parents are encouraged to discuss the use of the Internet in relation to family values and boundaries with their children and teens and to monitor their children/teen's use of the Internet.

To assist parents, the Library has in print the pamphlet, [Keeping Kids Safer on the Internet](#), published by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Parents are encouraged to review this information with their children.

Public Access

Users are cautioned that, because security in an electronic environment such as the Internet cannot be guaranteed, all transactions, files and communications are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use and, therefore, should be considered public.

Internet access in the library is available on computers that are located in open public areas and are subject to supervision. Staff is available to assist customers who need help finding information on the Internet. The Library reserves the right to engage in monitoring activities, both electronic and non-electronic, at its sole discretion and without further notice unless otherwise restricted by law. Such practices may include, but are not limited to, those for the purpose of monitoring the nature and quality of our services, and the security and the conduct of people on our premises.

Disclaimer: The Thomaston Public Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy or usefulness or particular purpose of information accessed via the Internet.