

CHILDREN, PARENTS, LIBRARIES AND THE INTERNET

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROVIDE SAFE ACCESS FOR ALL



WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

The Internet is a collection of computers throughout the world that are connected for the purpose of sharing information electronically. The Internet is a dynamic and exciting information resource and no other technology has provided us with so much information so easily. It also provides opportunities for social networking, entertainment and personal enrichment for adults and children. But since no individual or organization manages the Internet and its content, it can be confusing to use. Libraries can help you and your children navigate the Internet safely.

THE LIBRARY'S ROLE

As part of its mission to provide access to information, the Library offers community residents access to the Internet. However, Internet usage has raised concerns about issues such as privacy, fair use and minors' access to inappropriate content. The Library cares about children and strives to balance each child's right to equal access to the information they need with preventing minors from accessing inappropriate, obscene or illegal content that may be harmful to them.

The Library does many things to support parents' efforts to help their children make good choices while using the Internet. Our goal is to help parents understand the Internet and to encourage them to visit the Library with their children. To meet this goal, the Library:

- Requires that users agree to comply with the Library's Access to Electronic Use Policy before using the Internet.
- Provides KidWeb and Teen Cyberlounge, which have numerous appropriate, content-rich sites for children and teens.
- Uses KidWeb as the default homepage in the Youth Services room and Teen Cyberlounge in the Young Adult area.
- Places youth computers with Internet access close to the Youth Services Information Desk.
- Restricts use of isolated computers to catalog-only access.
- Provides two chairs at youth computers to facilitate children, parents and caregivers working together.
- Provides a workstation with a filter in the Youth Services room.
- Automatically resets browsers on public computers after a time of inactivity.
- Manually resets browsers and monitors computer usage on public computers as staff constantly rove through the building assisting users.
- Reviews the Library's Access to Electronic Use Policy at all computer classes.
- Provides links from KidWeb to safe informational sites including those that promote Internet safety.
- Provides workshops on Internet safety.

THE PARENTS' ROLE

The public library does not serve *in loco parentis*, in place of a parent. It is the role of parents to provide direction for and supervision of children as they explore the Internet. Parents are responsible for setting standards and establishing guidelines for their children, and the Library encourages parents to use the Internet as a family, joining their children in exploring resources. Specific ways parents can help children include:

- Exploring the Internet and telling children about both appropriate and inappropriate sites.
- Encouraging children to use KidWeb and the Teen Cyberlounge on the Library's website.
- Setting time limits for Internet access.
- Instructing children to NEVER give out personal information on the Internet.
- Keeping the family computer in a high-traffic area of the house.
- Keeping informed of current trends and legislation regarding the Internet.
- Accompanying children to the Library and sitting with them while they use the computer.



TIPS FOR KIDS

- Always use the Internet for educational, informational or positive recreational purposes.
- Don't give out personal information like your last name, where you live or where you go to school.
- If somebody says something to you, sends you something that makes you uncomfortable, don't explore; get your parents instead.
- Only open up emails, files, or Web pages from people you know.
- Don't ever give out your password, except to adults in your family. Don't use anyone else's password.
- Always follow your family's rules for the Internet.
- Don't ever do anything that could cost your family money unless your parents are there to help you do it.



SITES TO HELP YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN NAVIGATE THE WEB SAFELY

KidWeb, the Library's page for children, includes Homework Help, which offers resources for research and class assignments that are reliable and appropriate for students in elementary school. The resource databases are organized by subject and are easy to use. Go to the Online Library at www.westbloomfieldlibrary.org/kidweb and click on "Homework Help."

The Library's KidWeb site also includes Parent Web, which offers parents and their children tips for navigating the Internet safely. Go to the Online Library at www.westbloomfieldlibrary.org/kidweb, click on "Parent Web" and then "Internet Use & Safety" to link to these excellent sites:

American Association of School Librarians

Use this site to find information about filtering, Internet safety, lessons about using the Internet and links to other Internet safety sites.

Parents Guide to the Internet

Read an introduction to the Internet and learn about safety tips from the U.S. Department of Education.

Kids' Rules for Online Safety

Print safety rules from the SafeKids.com website to post by your computer at home.

Media Awareness Network

Take a virtual tour through Privacy Playground with the Three Cyber Pigs and learn about protecting your privacy on the Internet.

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MAIN LIBRARY

Telephone: (248) 682-2120
Fax: (248) 232-2291 • TDD: (248) 232-2292

WESTACRES BRANCH

Telephone: (248) 363-4022
Fax: (248) 363-7243

ONLINE LIBRARY

www.westbloomfieldlibrary.org

HOURS OF SERVICE:

Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Friday & Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday (School Year) 12 noon - 8:00 p.m.
Sunday (Summer) 12 noon - 5:00 p.m.