# RUSSELL LIBRARY COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET POLICY

Russell Library endeavors to provide a comfortable and welcoming environment for all ages. The internet contains a wide variety of materials and opinions from various points of view. Not all sources provide information that is accurate, complete, or current, and some information may be considered offensive or inappropriate for certain age groups. While the Russell Library is sensitive to concerns about internet content, no one, including the Library, can control the information available on the internet. Each individual is responsible for their own appropriate use of the internet in a public place.

## USERS' RESPONSIBILITY

In order to ensure a positive library experience for everyone, the Library requires all users to:

- Use computers only for lawful purposes. Users may not use any Library computer for illegal purposes that violate local, state, or federal laws.
- Avoid viewing pornographic visual materials or content that is obscene under contemporary community standards.
- Adhere to the established computer time limits when other people are waiting.
- Safeguard the security of the network. The Library expects users to keep virus protection up-to-date on personal laptops or other mobile devices that connect to the Library's wifi.
- Refrain from tampering with the configuration of Library computer equipment. Downloading or installing software is prohibited.
- Take notice of the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) which governs the reproduction, distribution, adaptation, public performance, and public display of copyrighted material. Responsibility for any possible copyright infringement lies solely with the user.

## RUSSELL LIBRARY'S ROLE

Russell Library makes internet resources publicly accessible. The staff of the Russell Library helps users navigate, identify, and access resources on the internet. The staff reviews and recommends reliable sources of information on the internet.

The Library's goal is to make public computers available to as many users as possible. Time limits are established and enforced in service to this goal. There are a variety of programs available on Library computers; however, not all programs are available at every computer and some computers may be dedicated for particular purposes.

Russell Library supports digital literacy by empowering people to learn by doing. Staff may provide limited assistance with public computers and the internet, but are expected to refrain from:

- entering or saving sensitive personal information on behalf of a user;
- filling out lengthy forms on behalf of a user;
- composing whole documents on behalf of a user;
- handling legal or tax matters on behalf of a user; or
- fulfilling tasks on behalf of a user which would require an inordinate amount of time or breach their professional code of ethics.

**INTERNET FILTERS**

To be eligible for federal funds to maintain durable and fast internet connectivity, the law requires public libraries to adopt and enforce internet safety policies that are consistent with the federal "Children's Internet Protection Act," as amended (**P.L. No. 106-554** - PDF). To satisfy that imperative, and because accessing pornographic or obscene content in a public place is inconsistent with the welcoming and comfortable environment we endeavor to provide, Russell Library employs filtering software to block inappropriate content.

**CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

Russell Library follows state and federal law regarding privacy of library users' records and information. (Please see ***Privacy, Confidentiality, and Law-Enforcement Policy***)

It is the Library's practice to erase all use records, except those essential for library business operations. The Library will release records only as required by law.

The Library does not retrieve any information, including websites visited, passwords, credit card numbers, or any other information a user has entered. At the end of the business day, all computer use and reservation records are erased.

**INAPPROPRIATE NETWORK USAGE**

Russell Library is protective of the safety and security of users on the Library's network. To the extent practical, Russell Library prohibits activities that endanger network users' safety and security.

Specifically, the Children's Internet Protection Act prohibits inappropriate network usage such as: (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.

**CHILDREN AND THE INTERNET**

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 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 and caregivers are encouraged to discuss the use of the internet in relation to family values and boundaries with their children and teens and to monitor these family members' use of the internet.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to read and follow "internet-wise" parenting tips, such as those provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children on their website www.missingkids.org/NetSmartz.

**DISCLAIMER**

Russell Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy, or usefulness for particular purposes of information accessed via the internet.

**EMERGENCY CONNECTIVITY FUND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Russell Library received funding from the federal Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) to purchase broadband internet service deliverable via mobile hotspots. Any ECF supported equipment and services can be provided only to patrons who declare they do not have access to the equipment or services sufficient to access the internet.