

Children's Room Computer Usage Policy:

The Internet offers unlimited global access to information, which can provide wonderful learning opportunities for children. In addition to being a powerful resource tool, however, the internet does offer access to material (especially pictures, text, and video) that can be inappropriate for children. Also, unmonitored chat rooms and instant messaging have proven to be vehicles for predators to lure children into dangerous situations.

Because the Internet can be unsafe for children, the library requires **all patrons under the age of 12 to have written parental consent to use a computer**. Children under the age of 12 are the only patrons allowed to use the computers in the Children's Room. Furthermore, all children under the age of 7 must have their parent/caregiver sitting next to them for the duration of their computer use.

The library strictly forbids the use of chat rooms and instant messaging on the internet, as they do not fall under the library's mission statement. Beyond that, the Children's Room cannot control access to material, nor protect users from offensive information. Parents or guardians of children are responsible for their children's computer and/or internet use in the library.; We require a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian for all children under the age of 12 who wish to use the computers.

Additional rules regarding the use of the computers in the Children's Room are as follows:

- Anyone wishing to use a computer must sign up with the librarian at the circulation desk.
- Homework takes precedence over game playing at all times on the Children's Room computers.
- When patrons are waiting to use a computer, a 30-minute time limit for usage will be imposed, unless the patron using the computer is doing homework.
- There is a 2 hour limit on computer usage per patron, per day.
- The use of chat rooms and instant messaging on the library's computers will not be tolerated. If children are found to be using chat rooms or instant messaging, they will be required to immediately discontinue use of the computer.
- No food or beverages are to brought into the Children's Room.
- The computers are not toys. Children must have a basic understanding of them before using computers independently in the library. The librarians are happy to assist patrons when necessary; however, they are not able to sit with a child and teach him or her how to use the computer.