HYDE PARK FREE LIBRARY

Internet Access Policy

The Hyde Park Free Library is dedicated to meeting the informational and cultural needs of our community. We are pleased to offer access to Internet as part of our mission to meet those needs.

The Internet offers a wealth of information beyond that which is held on our own library's shelves. As such, it can be a valuable reference tool. Unlike reference books and journals, however, websites are not necessarily reviewed and endorsed by professional librarians. Accuracy and timeliness may be questionable with some websites. Users should use critical judgment in evaluating the accuracy of information from an Internet source.

It is also important that users keep in mind that the Internet is essentially a vast unregulated, de centralized network. New sites are constantly emerging, as older ones are revised and updated . Still others may disappear without warning. In such an environment, it is difficult to always avoid material that many might find objectionable. The so called "Internet filters" do not always work and may actually screen out useful information (e.g. medical sites). The library cannot guarantee that users will never come across material they find offensive or disturbing. We therefore strongly urge parental involvement in the case of children using the Internet. Parents are encouraged to supervise their children's Internet use at the library.

The library staff is not equipped to offer extensive computer and Internet training. We are always happy to assist in any we can and to share what we know. However, if a patron is new to either the 'Net or the computer itself, it may be advisable to first obtain some training from an outside source or to consult some of the computer and Internet texts we have on our shelves. (We hope to offer Internet training sessions from time to time in the library itself. Should that be the case, sign up sheets would be available several weeks in advance).

All Internet users here in the library are responsible for reading and adhering to the following guidelines:

• Patrons may book the computer for a 45 minute session. This practice is strongly

encouraged--as walk-ins may not be able to be accommodated. If there is no demand for the computer by other patrons or staff, users may remain on the computer beyond the 45 minute period. They should be advised that they may be interrupted at any time, however.

• Users may not download materials to the computer's hard drive. Patrons may download to a floppy disk.

Users may not install software on library computers.

• Any illegal or unethical use of the Internet will lead to the loss of computer privileges.

Users may not make unauthorized copies of copyrighted or licensed software.

• The configuration of the equipment used to access the Internet may not be tampered with in any way. Any malicious damage may result in prosecution.

• Damage to software or data residing on the Internet will lead to suspension of privileges, as will deliberate introduction of computer viruses or worms.