



## A Message to Parents and Caregivers about the Internet

Many parents and caregivers are curious about the Internet and how it might affect their children. The Internet is an important research tool, which offers a worldwide network of information accessed directly through a computer and communication media (such as a telephone line or cable modem). Libraries can give you and your children an opportunity to explore this exciting new technology. We offer computer workstations that provide customers of all ages access to our catalog, special reference tools, and Internet connections.

How can you protect your children from dangerous or objectionable material and still encourage them to use this important educational tool?

### Here are a few suggestions:

- **Be aware of how your kids use the computer.** Just as you monitor their reading and schoolwork, pay attention to how and when they use the computer.
- **The Library provides access to the Internet because it can be a useful research tool.** Even though most of our Internet stations are filtered, there may be sites you would prefer your child not to view. Please be involved with your child as he or she explores the Internet.
- **Set family ground rules.** Teach children to be cautious about “meeting” other people on the Internet. Teach them not to give out any personal information on the computer.
- **Set guidelines for how long they can stay online, what information sources they can use, and which topics you want them to avoid.**
- **Often, children and teenagers are much more comfortable using computers and exploring their possibilities than older family members.** If that’s the case in your family, let the kids show you how to use the computer. Spend time together learning how to use it. It’s fun, and will give you an opportunity to monitor what they’re doing without seeming too intrusive.
- **Remember that since no single government or private organization is in charge of the Internet, no one controls the accuracy of information posted there or polices the scams and other potential problems that come across the computer screen.**
- **Use the Arcadia Public Library’s home pages for children and teens to find a list of good, popular Internet sites as a starting point.** The Library also subscribes to several excellent online databases that make a good beginning to any search for information.



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