2-26-2015

Letters to the Editor Feb 26, 2015

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The Orland Park Prairie

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Library should install filters on adult computers

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my disappointment in the Orland Park [Public] Library's decision to continue to allow unfiltered access to the Internet on their adult computers.

I applaud the library on filtering the computers in the children's sections of the library. However, declaring the library safe because the children's computers are filtered, while leaving the adult machines unfiltered, is misguided and deceptive.

Walt Mueller of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding writes, “The Internet, mobile devices and other digital technologies combine to create a world in which children and teens no longer have to look for and find pornography. Now, pornography is in the mainstream and it finds them.”

Children are at great risk of accidental exposure to pornography at young ages. The library is risking the innocence and safety of our community's children by serving as a welcoming, open door to Internet pornography. By spending thousands of dollars on attorney fees to defend their position, instead of buying a sophisticated filtering program for their computers, they are telling Orland Park that they value access to pornography more than the well-being of our children.

It may seem that pornography is an industry employing people by choice. It may seem that it is a harmless and normal part of our society. In reality, it is an industry that causes addiction, destroys lives and families, and enslaves women and children. I recently learned that sex traffickers have two income streams — one from “johns,” who pay for the actual act, and the other from people who view that act on the Internet.

Library should install filters on adult computers
If traffickers are creating porn, and trafficking is illegal, then isn’t the library allowing access to illegal information? How can the library employees tell with any certainty which porn sites are legal and which are not? And should it be a library employee’s responsibility to make those distinctions?

Computer filtering programs are sophisticated enough to allow freedom of information access while keeping viewers safe from illegal and inappropriate material — material that no one in a public building, where children and teenagers gather, should have access to. I urge the library to heed the outcry of our community’s public and install filters on their adult computers. To quote U.S. Senator Mark Kirk, “I’m always for the First Amendment. We shouldn’t have the freedom to create slavery in America, especially in Illinois.”

Kate Rimkunas

Orland Park resident

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