



OHIO PUBLIC LIBRARY INFORMATION NETWORK

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**BIANNUAL REPORT on LIMITING and CONTROLLING IMPROPER USAGE of the  
NETWORK**

April 28, 2011

To: John Kasich, *Governor, State of Ohio*  
William Batchelder, *Speaker, the Ohio House of Representatives*  
Armond Budish, *Minority Leader, the Ohio House of Representatives*  
Thomas Niehaus, *President, the Ohio Senate*  
Capri Cafaro, *Minority Leader, the Ohio Senate*

From: Stephen Hedges, *Director, Ohio Public Library Information Network*

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Dear Governor Kasich, Speaker Batchelder, Representative Budish, President Niehaus, and Senator Cafaro:

OPLIN provides the vital telecommunications infrastructure that allows all Ohio public libraries to provide state of the art Internet information services to every community. This report concerning measures to limit and control access to obscene or illegal Internet materials in Ohio public libraries is required by Am. Sub. H.B. 1, Section 323.10:

The OPLIN Board shall research and assist or advise local libraries with regard to emerging technologies and methods that may be effective means to control access to obscene and illegal materials. The OPLIN Executive Director shall biannually provide written reports to the Governor, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and the President and Minority Leader of the Senate on any steps being taken by OPLIN and public libraries in the state to limit and control such improper usage as well as information on technological, legal, and law enforcement trends nationally and internationally affecting this area of public access and service.

OPLIN has been writing this biannual report since October 1999; in the last few years, we seldom have new things to report within the state, though we continue to monitor legal and technological developments that impact public access to information.

In an effort to provide you with more timely information and streamline our operations, OPLIN has sought to alter the language in the next budget bill to replace "...shall biannually provide written reports..." with "...shall provide reports upon request within 10 days..." This change will provide you with current information as needed.

## **Research**

The state budget set aside \$81,000 in FY 2010 and FY 2011 "...to help local libraries use filters to screen out obscene and illegal internet materials..." This earmark was first established in FY 2006, and since then these funds have always been distributed as grants to individual libraries for purchasing Internet filtering hardware and/or software.

For several years, OPLIN has been researching the possibility of implementing a central content filter available to all libraries, rather than distributing funds to local libraries. Such a central implementation would be more efficient and offer cost-effective Internet content filtering to all libraries that wish to filter.

OPLIN staff continue to monitor this technology, and are currently testing some new central filtering equipment. In the past, we have found that most central filtering solutions are not yet robust enough to handle a network of the size and complexity of the OPLIN network, but we hold out hope that the solution currently undergoing testing will have the technical capabilities we need at a price we can afford.

## **Advice**

OPLIN continues to recommend the [www.libraryfiltering.org](http://www.libraryfiltering.org) site to public libraries looking for information about available filtering software and hardware. OPLIN staff have actively worked with the owner of this site to make it both more useful for libraries and more user-friendly for filtering software vendors who wish to add their information to the site.

OPLIN has also created a custom search interface for the OPLINtech email list. Technical staff in libraries use this email list to share information about technical solutions to library problems, including controlling Internet content. The search interface is located at [oplin.org/techsearch](http://oplin.org/techsearch); the archives of the list have also been opened to Google indexing.

## **Filtering Activity in Public Libraries**

On August 26, 2010, OPLIN announced the availability of \$81,000 for a first round of Internet Filtering Assistance Grants for local libraries seeking to install new or improved Internet content filters, with applications due by October 1. The OPLIN Board awarded grants to 10 libraries for such filtering improvements (see list at the end of this document) totaling \$27,604.11.

On October 12, 2010, the availability of the remainder of the \$81,000 set-aside (\$53,395.89) was announced, with applications due December 1. This second round of assistance was awarded following these priorities: new filtering measures (first funding priority); upgrades or expansion of existing filters; and finally, maintenance or renewal of existing filters. Further determination was based on financial need according to the "Total Overall Revenue" in the most recent Ohio Public Library Statistics published by the State Library of Ohio, with assistance awarded beginning with the library with the lowest total overall revenue. 39 libraries received funding in this second round (see list at the end of this document).

Prior to the FY2011 filtering grant awards, 165 of the 251 public library systems in Ohio used Internet filtering software; an additional 3 libraries now have filters as a result of the first round of FY2011 Internet Filtering Assistance Grants. These 168 libraries serve about 75% of the Ohio population.

About 12,000 public Internet computers are currently available in Ohio public libraries, with more being added through grants. Public libraries continue to update their local policies on Internet access, as required by law (O.R.C. Sec. 3375.64(C)); OPLIN maintains copies of all these policies.

**Law enforcement requests:** Since the last Biannual Report (October 2010), the OPLIN Support Center has received eleven (11) requests from law enforcement agencies for assistance in locating the source of illegal Internet activities originating in Ohio public libraries. OPLIN typically receives one or two inquiries a month from law enforcement regarding activity at specific IP addresses within libraries.

## **National and International Trends**

Measures aimed at addressing online copyright infringement continued to dominate national and international Internet news, though a few actions were still aimed at controlling Internet pornography. Certainly the biggest news in this last regard was the approval in March of the .xxx Internet top domain for pornography sites. If it becomes widely used, this provides a very easy way to separate pornography from other Internet content.

In **Britain**, the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills approached Internet service providers (ISPs) in December about setting up an age verification scheme to govern access to pornographic sites. The ISPs contend that controls on children's access to the Internet should be managed by parents with the tools ISPs provide, rather than being imposed top-down.

iiNet, **Australia's** second largest DSL service, won a case in March in which a court confirmed that ISPs are not copyright enforcers; a judge ruled that they do not have an automatic duty to sanction subscribers upon receipt of piracy allegations against them.

In the **Netherlands**, the government announced this month that it plans to change the current policy of allowing private users to download copyrighted songs and movies without penalty, so long as they are for personal use. As in other European countries, they propose to make downloading unauthorized music and movies illegal. Uploading such content is currently illegal and will continue to be illegal.

In the **United States**, the Combating Online Infringement and Counterfeits Act (COICA, S.3804) failed to pass the Senate in November. This anti-piracy bill would have set up a system through which the US government could blacklist a pirate website from the Domain Name System, ban credit card companies from processing US payments to the site, and forbid online ad networks from working with the site. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) called the bill the "wrong medicine" for the copyright infringement problem.

In December, the Justice Department obtained seizure orders against 82 commercial websites accused of selling a wide variety of counterfeit commodities, including DVD box sets, music, software, sports equipment and handbags.

Earlier this year, Attorney General Eric Holder closed down the Obscenity Prosecution Task Force, a group that combated the proliferation of pornographic images on the Internet, without much success. The Justice Department instead has decided to focus more specifically on the growth of the child pornography business.

The Los Angeles city council decided this week that they would not install Internet content filters on computers in the city library. In December, parents complained that a patron at the Chinatown library was viewing pornography on a public computer, in plain sight of children nearby. Instead of installing filters, libraries are working to move computers so they cannot easily be seen by someone standing behind the user, and installing privacy shields to limit visibility. Library officials say they usually receive less than ten complaints a year about pornography on public computers.

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On behalf of the OPLIN Board, I am pleased to have had the opportunity to present this report to you, and I thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Hedges". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen Hedges  
Director

**Grants Recommended for Funding by the OPLIN Board on October 8, 2010 and Authorized as a Grant by the State Librarian for the Period of November 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011**

	<b>Amount</b>
Bristol Public Library	\$1,543.00
Chillicothe & Ross County Public Library	\$1,496.21
Fairfield County Public Library	\$4,500.00
Lane Public Library	\$1,600.00
Licking County Library	\$3,835.00
Logan County Libraries	\$4,232.15
Napoleon Public Library	\$2,315.75
Nelsonville Public Library	\$1,350.00
Pickerington Public Library	\$3,122.00
Rodman Public Library	\$3,610.00
Total	\$27,604.11

**Grants Recommended for Funding by the OPLIN Board on December 10, 2010 and Authorized as a Grant by the State Librarian for the Period of January 1, 2011 through June 30, 2011**

	<b>Amount</b>
Alexandria Public Library	\$3,122.00
Andover Public Library	\$200.00
Ashtabula County District Library	\$1,550.00
Barnesville Hutton Memorial Library	\$3,090.00
Briggs Lawrence County Public Library	\$376.89
Brown County Public Library	\$1,890.00
Canal Fulton Public Library	\$1,435.50
Cardington-Lincoln Public Library	\$3,765.72
Carnegie Public Library (East Liverpool)	\$400.00
Galion Public Library	\$550.00
Geauga County Public Library	\$3,500.00
Grand Valley Public Library	\$250.00
Grandview Heights Public Library	\$199.00
Harbor-Topky Memorial Library	\$810.00
Henderson Memorial Library Association	\$250.00
Hubbard Public Library	\$1,150.00
Kent Free Library	\$2,825.00
Kingsville Public Library	\$849.99
London Public Library	\$2,430.20
Madison Public Library	\$1,225.00
Marysville Public Library	\$398.00
McKinley Memorial Library	\$1,000.00
Monroe County District Library	\$3,090.00
Newton Falls Public Library	\$1,125.00
Perry Public Library	\$510.00
Pickaway County District Public Library	\$398.00
Plain City Public Library	\$199.00
Portage County District Library	\$2,500.00
Portsmouth Public Library	\$1,347.85
Putnam County District Library	\$574.40
Reed Memorial Library	\$1,550.00
Rock Creek Public Library	\$849.99
Sabina Public Library	\$169.90
Shaker Heights Public Library	\$4,494.10
Twinsburg Public Library	\$2,133.00
Union Township Public Library	\$319.20
Wagnalls Memorial Library	\$199.00
Warren-Trumbull County Public Library	\$1,469.15
Westerville Public Library	\$1,200.00
Total	\$53,395.89
Overall Total-Filtering Grants	\$81,000.00