

## ***A Child's First Library Card Information Every Adult Should Consider***

New Hampshire has one of the strongest library patron confidentiality laws in the country, and that law applies to all, regardless of age. Because of this, the Gilman Library would like you to think about a few things before your child becomes a full card holder.

The law states that with a patron card comes the right of privacy about what is checked out. It does not specify age. Everyone with a library card can expect borrowing information to remain private. This means that when we call about a reserved book, or an overdue one, we do not reveal the title except to the patron upon whose card it was borrowed (even though the parents/guardians may be legally responsible for the actions of the minors in their household). This can complicate things for parents/guardians.

Some families choose to have a family card that is used by adults and young children, in which case all members of the immediate family, whose names are associated with that patron records, have access to the information on it.

If your decision is to register for a family card, remember that the child can apply for an individual card when he/she reaches the age of 14 and no longer needs a parent's signature.

Before a parent/guardian signs his or her child's library card application, thought should be given to everything that signature means. Parents/guardians are encouraged to weigh the child's delight in their first library card against the knowledge that, according to state law, you may not have direct access to that child's borrowing record.

It's all about choices, and we are pleased that you, as a parent/guardian, are encouraging your child to explore the fascinating educational and entertaining experiences available. We provide a wide variety of informational sources. It is not the library's policy to decide what ideas your child should be exposed to, therefore, we hope you will continue to participate in the learning processes by helping your child select materials and by sharing them at home.

We provide the alternatives, you make the choices.

Please be aware of all these issues and choose a course of action appropriate for your child and your family.

Approved by the Gilman Library Trustees  
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