



Nov. 8, 2019

Mr. John Schaub, Chair, Library Board
Ms. Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian
Vancouver Public Library
350 W Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 6B1

Dear Mr. Schaub and Ms. de Castell;

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with the Library Board on Oct. 23, 2019.
Ms. Letendre (REED) and Mrs. Stinson appreciated your hospitality and attention.

We would again ask that the Vancouver Public Library filter their public WiFi in all areas of the library in all locations.

As you stated in your rationale for the 2014 changes to your internet policy, you want to ensure that VPL is a safe and comfortable environment for all patrons, free from harassment, including sexual harassment.

Exposure to pornography is still a possibility and a concern for patrons; people are often shocked that pornography can be viewed in a library. The case this past summer of a person in an Ottawa library accessing child pornography – observed not once but twice, highlights the need for additional measures.¹

We would appreciate your response to the question Mrs. Stinson posed at the meeting, “If VPL is not filtering pornography, then how will you know how to stop people from accessing illegal material, such as child pornography, which is so prevalent and accessible on the internet and adult pornography, which also has

¹ <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/man-77-viewed-child-pornography-at-public-library-police>

grave consequences?² As well, without filtering, people are being exposed to pornography, whether they make a complaint or not, the harm is done.

We would concur with our colleague, Lianna McDonald, the Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Child Protection who has said, their agency believes there is an urgent need to take steps to limit the accessibility to violent and degrading sexual content, particularly on websites that are publicly available.

As a vital part of the community, will the Vancouver Public Library take this step of filtering public WiFi and all terminals, to supplement your existing efforts against inappropriate material?

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G Gerrard', with a stylized, cursive script.

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² Dr. Sharon Cooper, a pediatric specialist testified, "We now recognize that adult pornography has become one of the most common catalysts toward youth sex-offending behaviours against peers and younger children....It isn't uncommon for them to victimize a younger child who is simply in the wrong place at the wrong time." Dr. Sharon Cooper, April 11, 2017, testifying before the Federal Health Committee.