

Press Release:

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For more information contact your local library or the Connecticut Library Consortium at infoanytime@ctlibrarians.org or 860-344-8777.

Connecticut Library Consortium and your local library announce InfoAnytime, a real-time, web-based reference service provided by professional librarians, so when you are out there on the web, you are not alone! By going to your library's website or to www.infoanytime.org, you can connect with a reference librarian who will help you to navigate through the increasingly complex world of web-based research.

Over 130 public libraries and 30 academic libraries in Connecticut have joined together to offer this new online research service to the public. "The InfoAnytime librarians provide a seamless experience that matches our high standards for local service," says Carl Antonucci, Chairman of the Connecticut Library Consortium's InfoAnytime Steering Committee. "All of the librarians have received extensive training in order to most effectively offer research assistance in an online environment."

The InfoAnytime service was piloted in Connecticut in 2005-2006 by Asnuntuck, Capital, Gateway, Housatonic, Manchester, Three Rivers, and Tunxis community colleges and the public libraries in Cromwell and Roxbury. Similar services which allow people to connect to a credentialed librarian 24/7 for research assistance have been offered in other states, including Colorado, New Jersey, and Wisconsin. All online librarians are hired and trained by New York based Tutor.com and hold an MLS, MLIS or an equivalent degree.

InfoAnytime can be accessed through any computer in the participating libraries or remotely using a library card. The software used for these sessions includes chat and co-browsing web pages and electronic databases, including iconn.org, the suite of research databases provided to Connecticut residents free of charge by the Connecticut State Library. At the end of each session, a transcript of the session can be emailed to the user. With no downloads or special software required, anyone with a web browser can access the service.

"A huge benefit to InfoAnytime is that people never need to wait for service since librarians are available where and when they are needed," says Mr. Antonucci. As the InfoAnytime posters and bookmarks say, "It's Sunday night and your librarian wonders if you're ever going to call." Go ahead, try it, and you'll never get lost on the web again!