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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Richmond Hill Public Library sees Spike in Online Usage During Closure

Supports for community members are accessed by thousands through digital branch

While the doors of Richmond Hill Public Library buildings may have closed since March 13, hundreds of new users and thousands of renewed users have headed to rhpl.ca to access online resources such as free apps, magazines, books and more.

“Library usage continues to grow, and our staff are passionately seeking innovative ways to connect with community members during this time,” said Yunmi Hwang, Interim CEO. “Our position as a digital service and a community hub goes beyond physical walls — we have various free learning apps, online programming and downloadable books that continue to connect and intrigue our customers from their homes.”

In addition to almost 400 new users and over one thousand renewed cards, the Library has seen over 33,000 active users use library e-resources since its March 13 closure. Over 24,000 eBooks and eAudiobooks have also been checked out by customers during this time, and over 4,500 users have accessed professional resources through Lynda.com since the closure.

Service	Mar/Apr 2020	Mar/Apr 2019	% increase
eBooks and eAudiobooks (Overdrive and Hoopla)	24,634	14,663	+68%
Professional resources (Lynda.com)	4,576	3,399	+34.6%
Newspapers and magazines (PressReader)	10,675	3,586	+197.7%

**Comparison of March 14 - April 14 in respective year.*

These numbers do not include hundreds of online users—tuning in on Facebook from as far as Stockholm and Northern Ireland—who watch almost a dozen new, weekly online programs the Library is launching each week.

“We’re actively seeking new ways to help out during this time,” says Hwang. “We’ve donated books to local partners like 360° Kids York Region, loaned our 3D printers to The STEAM Project to produce protective face shields for health workers, and we’ve launched instant, digital cards for persons who live, work or go to school in York Region. We’ve become much more than just books in the past few decades, and there are so many ways we can help our community during this time.”



For more information on how you can connect with the Library from home, visit www.rhpl.ca.

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About Richmond Hill Public Library: Richmond Hill Public Library has served its local community for more than 165 years. The Library has over 72,000 card holders, and sees one million annual in-person visits and 2.2 million digital visits to its physical and virtual spaces. It serves a population of more than 200,000 Richmond Hill residents through its four locations: Central Library, Oak Ridges Library, Richmond Green Library and Richvale Library.

To get the most current updates on what's happening at the Library, please visit www.rhpl.ca

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