

# Don't Filter Me!



## When Your School Blocks LGBT Content with M86 Web Filtering Software

M86's web filtering software has a "Lifestyle & Culture" category, which until recently was called "Lifestyles." Some schools and libraries blocked this category in the mistaken belief that the category was designed to include sexually explicit websites. Some schools and libraries may not have updated their M86 software yet, so it's possible that this category is still being referred to as "Lifestyles."

M86 has made several recent changes to clarify for its customers that the "Lifestyle & Culture" category is not intended to capture sexually explicit websites and can be unblocked without exposing viewers to sexually explicit material. The company changed the name of the category from "Lifestyles" to "Lifestyle & Culture" and changed the official description of the category. The category is now defined as: "Sites that contain material relative to an individual's personal, community or cultural identity, or organizational/club affiliations." The definition is accompanied by examples of websites listed in the category, which make clear that the category refers to a wide variety of non-sexual cultural and community organizations.

M86's definition of the "Lifestyle & Culture" can be found at the following link:

<http://www.m86security.com/resources/database-categories.asp#lifestyle>

M86 has also issued a public statement clarifying that "Lifestyle & Culture" category "is not designed to capture or block pornographic or sexually explicit content." You can read the entire statement from M86 at the following link: [http://files.m86security.com/pdfs/M86\\_Statement\\_08.04.11.pdf](http://files.m86security.com/pdfs/M86_Statement_08.04.11.pdf)

No filtering software is perfect. If your school or library's network administrator believes that sexually explicit material has been incorrectly placed in the "Lifestyle & Culture" category, the administrator should alert M86 to the incorrect categorization. Errors can be reported to M86 at the following link:

<http://www.m86security.com/support/M86FilterCheck.asp>

Public schools and libraries must ensure that their Internet filtering software operates on a viewpoint-neutral basis. Blocking the "Lifestyle & Culture" category can lead to viewpoint discrimination because the category includes LGBT-supportive websites but not similar websites with anti-LGBT viewpoints.