

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information please contact:
Andy Woodworth
856-465-2109
wawoodworth@gmail.com

New website, endlibraryfines.info, created to educate and inform librarians, library supporters, and the public about the benefits of eliminating library fines

July 11, 2019 - The movement towards eliminating library fines has a place online at EndLibraryFines.info. The website offers the latest research on ending library fines, current media articles about libraries eliminating their fines, and a constantly updated map showing which libraries around the world have eliminated all or most of their fines. As more and more libraries look to eliminate this barrier to access, the need for information on the topic grows for librarians, library supporters, and decision makers such as elected officials, deans and provosts, and the general public.

Overdue fines pose a significant barrier to library use for many vulnerable populations, especially people living in poverty. Families with young children are often negatively affected since overdue fines prohibit them from fully experiencing the rich early literacy materials and staff expertise available in libraries that are crucial to a child's development. Studies have shown that a lack of literacy support at a young age can directly impact their long-term academic success as well as future employment opportunities and economic mobility.

Most notably, there is no research to support the long held belief that fines encourage people to return library items on time. In practice, libraries that have eliminated fines in places such as Salt Lake City and St. Paul have maintained a consistent return rate. This shows that non-monetary incentives to return library materials on time are just as effective and without the additional staff time and equipment required to collect fines.

While eliminating library fines has been discussed within librarian circles since the late 1970s, it is only recently that the American Library Association passed a resolution which referred to monetary fines as a form of social inequity and encouraged all libraries to discontinue charging fines within their communities. Monetary fines are at odds with the core mission of the library to provide access to a wide variety of services and materials.

“We have arrived at the tipping point for the movement to eliminate library fines,” says Andy Woodworth, librarian and creator of endlibraryfines.info. “This website provides vital information to help those with the power to make the change to do so. It’s an important issue that makes a difference in the lives of those affected. It moves libraries back towards one of their commonly associated mottos: free to all.”

About Andy Woodworth

Andy Woodworth is an experienced public librarian and library advocate who has been involved in numerous statewide and national library issue campaigns and initiatives. Andy is a member of the American Library Association Working Group on Eliminating Fines in Libraries. He is a 2010 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker, award winning blogger, library publication guest columnist, conference presenter, unconference organizer, and graphic designer.

You can see his other library advocacy projects on his LinkedIn page:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andy-woodworth/>