**Eliminating Library Fines: Improving Community Access, Equity and Usage**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/eliminating-library-fines.html>

**Event Description**: The growing research and library case studies on the benefits of eliminating overdue fines indicate that the advantages to both library and patron far exceed the monetary value of the fines. This webinar explores going (and staying) fine-free as a social justice issue­­­­ and as a revenue issue. Presenters will discuss considerations such as the barriers to access for those facing financial insecurity, the cost to collect fines often exceeds the revenue they bring in, and that many libraries report that patrons return more items after going fine-free. This webinar shares how going fine-free eliminates barriers and improves access to your library’s materials and services, resulting in increased usage, higher circulation, lower staff stress, and higher customer satisfaction.

**Presented by:** Mark Fink and Peter Bromberg

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| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Understanding Community Inequities**  |
| Understanding economic, housing and demographic inequities experienced by members of your community can help build awareness of how fines can be a barrier to access. Using sources like the [American Community Survey](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data.html) from the U.S. Census, examine data about household income in zip codes in your area, and analyze library data for blocked accounts or accounts with fines in these zip codes. (See slide #10 from presentation to see community analysis done by Yolo County Library)What does this information reveal about your community and how fines might impact households with patrons who should have access to your materials and services? |
| **Library Values and Equity in Access** |
| With increased understanding, many communities and library associations (see ALA’s [Resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/Resolution%20on%20Monetary%20Library%20Fines%20as%20a%20Form%20of%20Social%20Inequity-FINAL.pdf) - pdf) are supporting libraries in becoming fine free. Explore the literature and resources listed on the event page and consider/discuss how these efforts align with library and community values related to eliminating barriers and ensuring access for all. How does going fine free align with your library’s core mission and values? With your community values? |
| **Gather the Facts** |
| Build out your plan by gathering additional information including:1. Internal data on blocked cards/cards with fines
2. Community data on demographics, income, and housing of disenfranchised
3. Current revenue generated by fines
4. Anticipated loss of revenue (separate calculation if activating auto-renewal)
5. Other research on real impact of going fine-free (see multiple resources on [webinar page](https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/eliminating-library-fines.html))

Begin to identify potential questions, concerns, or objections do you anticipate, and from whom. Consider all the stakeholders, including:* Library staff
* Trustees and boards
* Patrons
* Taxpayers
* Funders
* Friends and foundation
* Other:
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| **Creating, Practicing and Refining the Message** |
| Now it’s time to craft your key message for stakeholders. Using the **27-9-3 Rule** is a good way to begin to refine your message into a short, susinct and convincing package. Learn more about the [**27-9-3 Rule**](https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/learn-from-others/webinars/how-to-craft-a-quick-and-persuasive-message-the-27-9-3-rule) in a short 20-minute County Health Rankings & Roadmaps webinar, and use the [27-9-3 Rule worksheet](https://www.webjunction.org/content/dam/WebJunction/Documents/webJunction/Topics/smart-spaces/27-9-3-worksheet.pdf) (pdf) to craft your message.Start to workshop or test your message first with someone you trust. Ask them to consider how they might experience receiving the message by roleplaying some of your stakeholders, using the potential questions, concerns, or objections do you identified above. Adjust your message based on what you learned and test some more! |
| **Action Plan:** (include next steps, who, when, etc.) |
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