

# Library to stop charging overdue fines on children's materials

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WAUKESHA — Young readers in Waukesha will soon have a reason to rejoice.

Starting Sept. 3 the Waukesha Public Library, 321 Wisconsin Ave., will stop

issuing overdue fines on all children's materials.

At one point in its history, the library had a policy of not charging overdue fines on any material checked out on a child's card, but the new policy will apply to any children's items checked out on the library's second floor even if they are checked out

by an adult.

Fines will still be charged for lost or damaged items, but Waukesha Public Library Executive Director Bruce Gay said the Library Board determined that charging overdue fines on children's materials wasn't serving the library's mission.

"We learned that about 15 percent of children with library cards couldn't use them because they had more than \$10 worth of fines and couldn't check out materials," Gay said. "The board felt strongly that our job is to help kids read more and we didn't think that fines were accomplishing that.

There is no significant change in overdue rates between libraries that charge fines and those that don't."

The move, which is part of trend that is seeing libraries across the country eliminating fines for children's materials, is also expected to help teachers, Gay said.

That's because teachers often like to check out books for their classrooms, but can avoid doing so if they get hit with hefty overdue fines.

It should also help those young readers who pick out a book finish reading it without having to worry about returning it before they're done, Gay noted.