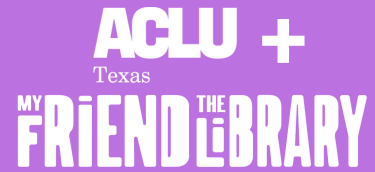


HOW TO BE FRIENDS WITH THE LIBRARY AS AN ADULT



LIBRARIES PROMOTE DEMOCRACY

Libraries serve as bastions of American democracy, upholding the principles of the First Amendment by providing free and open access to information. They ensure that individuals, regardless of their background, have the right to learn and engage in civic life. Both public libraries and public school libraries, as public institutions, are obligated to adhere to the First Amendment's principles.

LIBRARIES MUST NOT VIOLATE THE FIRST

Libraries risk violating the First Amendment when they fail to establish neutral criteria for selecting and removing materials or when they censor content based on viewpoint. This includes removing books due to disagreement with their ideas or making certain materials harder to access within the library. For example, public libraries must not censor online content affirming LGBTQIA+ individuals or restrict access to books featuring LGBTQIA+ characters or themes. Similarly, they cannot remove books authored by or featuring people of color due to personal discomfort or racial bias.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT LIBRARIES

- *Get to know your library:* Build a relationship with the librarians and familiarize yourself with the resources they have and challenges they face. Offer your time to assist the librarians with reshelving books, organizing events, or promoting literacy initiatives.
Take action: [Read a banned book with your loved ones!](#)
- *Join groups and committees:* Participate in library friends groups or advisory boards to advocate for library funding and policies that uphold First Amendment principles.
Take action: [Get involved with Texans for the Right to Read!](#)
- *Advocate for good policies:* Stay informed about policies affecting libraries and advocate for those that prioritize free access to information.
Take action: [Report censorship!](#)
- *Raise awareness:* Use social media and community events to raise awareness about the importance of open and inclusive libraries.
Take action: [Learn why Texas is eliminating school libraries!](#)
- *Celebrate successes:* Recognize and celebrate the achievements of libraries in promoting literacy and diversity.
Take action: [Show appreciation to the librarians of your state!](#)

By actively engaging in these steps, you can support your local school and public libraries in upholding the First Amendment and providing the community with the resources they need to succeed academically and as informed citizens.

