

## Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

# Kentucky public libraries provide books and much more

**Press Release Date:** Tuesday, February 12, 2013

### **Contact Information:**

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** – Kentucky’s public libraries are providing new digital services along with books and other items at an unprecedented level, according to statistics compiled by the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA) from annual reports submitted by Kentucky’s 119 public library systems.

Kentuckians checked out almost 20 million books from public libraries and bookmobiles in addition to more than nine million audio visual items in 2012, while welcoming almost 20 million visitors and serving many more through websites offering a wide range of services.

Children’s services were used more than ever, with 8,282,762 children’s items circulated. Attendance at children’s programs set a record at 1,269,546, an increase of 3.5 percent in 2012.

“These numbers debunk the myth that libraries aren’t a necessity in the Internet age,” said State Librarian and Commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives Wayne Onkst. “On the contrary, the data show that children are checking out books and other materials, as well as attending educational programs more than ever before.

“With continuing economic difficulties in the state, citizens are using the public computers and Internet access to seek employment and educational opportunities. Public libraries are a strong link in workforce development in Kentucky,” said Onkst.

Electronic services continued to increase rapidly last year. The libraries provided 4,497 computers free of charge for public use and trained more than 47,000 Kentuckians in using electronic resources. Kentuckians used library computers for creating resumes, searching and applying for jobs, accessing e-government resources, doing homework for school at all levels, obtaining information for small business applications and searching for information on a variety of topics. Collections of e-books increased dramatically so that more than three million e-books were available for checkout.

More community groups met at the library with a total of 58,097 meetings held in library buildings in 2012.

Almost 2.5 million Kentuckians, 57 percent of the state's population, are registered to use library services.

Local public libraries are also held in high regard across the nation. The recently released report "Libraries in the Digital Age" from the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life project, found that 91 percent of Americans (16 or older) say that public libraries are important to their communities, and 76 percent say libraries are important to them and their families.

KDLA provides equitable access to quality library and information resources and services, as well as helps public agencies ensure that legislatively mandated documentation of government programs is created, efficiently maintained, and made accessible. For more information on KDLA resources, programs and services visit [www.kdla.ky.gov](http://www.kdla.ky.gov) or call 502-564-8300 ext. 315.