

## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Banned Books Week 2024 – Freed Between the Lines

**Mechanicsburg, PA** – Banned Books Week, taking place from September 22-28, 2024, is a national event celebrating the freedom to read. According to the American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF), there were 1,247 attempts to censor library books and resources in 2023. The number of titles targeted for censorship surged by 65% in 2023 compared to 2022, reaching the highest levels ever documented by the OIF in over 20 years of tracking. A total of 4,240 unique book titles were targeted for removal from schools and libraries.

Banned Books Week highlights the value of free and open access to information. It brings together the entire book community in a shared commitment to the freedom to seek and express ideas, even those considered unorthodox or unpopular.

“During this annual effort to spotlight the risks and dangers of censorship, the importance of free access to information, and our fundamental freedom to read, we reaffirm the commitment of the Cumberland County Library System and all of our member libraries to enable parents and guardians to guide their own child’s use of the library and its unrestricted collection of resources” said Carolyn Blatchley, Executive Director of the Cumberland County Library System.

By focusing on efforts across the country to remove or restrict access to books, Banned Books Week draws national attention to the harms of censorship. The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) compiles lists of challenged books as reported by the media and submitted by librarians and teachers across the country.

The Top 10 Challenged Books of 2023, along with the reasons for the challenges, are:

1. **Gender Queer: A Memoir** by Maia Kobabe.
  - Challenged for: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit.
2. **All Boys Aren't Blue** by George M. Johnson.
  - Challenged for: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit.
3. **This Book Is Gay** by Juno Dawson.
  - Challenged for: LGBTQIA+ content, sex education, claimed to be sexually explicit.
4. **The Perks of Being a Wallflower** by Stephen Chbosky.
  - Challenged for: claims of being sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content, rape, drugs, and profanity.
5. **Flamer** by Mike Curato.
  - Challenged for: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit.
6. **The Bluest Eye** by Toni Morrison.
  - Challenged for: rape, incest, claims of being sexually explicit, and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) content.
7. (tie) **Me and Earl and the Dying Girl** by Jesse Andrews.
  - Challenged for: claims of being sexually explicit and containing profanity.
8. (tie) **Tricks** by Ellen Hopkins.
  - Challenged for: claims of being sexually explicit, drugs, rape, and LGBTQIA+ content.
9. **Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being a Human** by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan.
  - Challenged for: claims of being sexually explicit, sex education, and LGBTQIA+ content.
10. **Sold** by Patricia McCormick.
  - Challenged for: claims of being sexually explicit and rape.

Find all your reading materials at the Cumberland County Library System, which consists of seven federated local libraries, one branch facility, a system headquarters office, and an associated non-profit Foundation. The Library System provides support to its member libraries through information technology, procurement of library materials, services for older adults, training opportunities, and administrative and financial services. More information on the Cumberland County Library System can be found at [www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org](http://www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org).

*The Cumberland County Library System is a federated library system consisting of seven member libraries, one branch facility, an administrative headquarters, and a non-profit foundation. Member libraries include Amelia S. Givin Free Library in Mt. Holly Springs, Bosler Memorial Library in Carlisle, Coy Public Library of Shippensburg, East Pennsboro Branch Library in Enola, Fredricksen Library in Camp Hill, John Graham Library in Newville, New Cumberland Public Library, and Simpson Library in Mechanicsburg.*

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