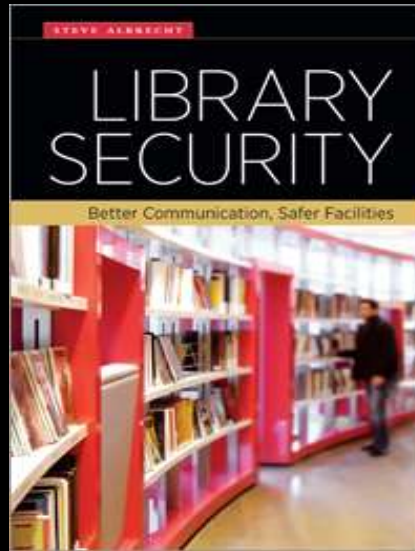


Trends and Topics in Library Security and Safety: Keeping Staff and Patrons Protected in the New Normal



Presented for the New Jersey State Library Conference by
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training program

**“The length of a film should be directly related to
the endurance of the human bladder.”**

Alfred Hitchcock



OUR AGENDA

What are the challenges we face as we return from a Work From Home status to back to working in and around our library buildings?

What safety and security challenges do we face in the wake of more national and local protests in our parks, public spaces, and government buildings?

How can library managers and supervisors monitor the work culture for conflict, communication, and morale?

How to respectfully request that patrons and other visitors follow Covid-19 safety protocols?

What does the future hold for law enforcement services to libraries?

RECENT EVENTS

Many states have mandated face masks:

“Inside of, or in line to enter any indoor public space; obtaining healthcare services; driving or riding in public or rideshare transportation; while outdoors and unable to maintain six feet distance from others.

May not be required at restaurants with six-foot social distance protocols (staff excluded), or dining outdoors, exercising outdoors, all while using social distance.”

RECENT PROTOCOLS

Employees must wear face coverings while performing work indoors or off-site;

While interacting with any member of the public;

Working in a space visited by the public, even if no members of the public are there;

Working where food is made or distributed;

Working or walking in common areas, hallways, stairways, elevators, parking areas;

In any room or enclosed area where social distancing is not possible.

According to a SHRM.org article from June 24, 2020:

“Employers can insist that workers and visitors to their premises wear masks and can bar anyone who refuses.”

“You have the right to exclude them if they do not comply with your standards,” said labor law attorney Bryan Hawkins, from Stoel Rives in Sacramento, provided businesses accommodate those who claim they cannot wear masks due to a disability. “The goal is to alleviate anxiety among employees and customers.”

“California Localities Take Different Approaches as State Reopens”
by June Bell

OUR GOALS

Keep all library employees safe, even with varying degrees of compliance by patrons.

Remind library staff and the patrons about “The (same as before) Coronavirus Rules.”

Maintain or regain employee and public trust.

Help all library employees demonstrate patience, empathy, and support, starting with each other and then the public. (Remind them of the Lifeguard Model.)

CHALLENGING SCENARIOS

Patrons or others refuse to wear a face covering and try to gain entry into a public building.

Patrons refuse to follow social distance guidelines.

Employees refuse to serve patrons or others who make entry with no face coverings.

Patrons wearing face coverings challenge or argue with other patrons who won't.

No supervisors, security guards or police are present.

Employees feel fearful working near uncovered patrons or who will not follow social distance guidelines.

Patrons who want to bait staff into political debates.

REMINDERS FOR SUPERVISORS

Tell staff not touch patrons for any reason other than self-defense. Don't have staff "escort" them out of the building.

Monitor the employee culture and step in to explain new or changing policies to all sides.

Use praise for staff; step into help them do parts of their job; boost morale.

Thank patrons for their patience and compliance.

Rehearse a "standard speech" in your mind, that you may have to say over and over to angry patrons.

Intervene with arguing patrons and use separation, space, requests to move away, and distance.

SOME SERVICE TOOLS

Everyone wants to show they are in control of their lives. Don't lecture or embarrass them, especially in front of others. Help patrons save face.

Check your body language and tone for empathy and patience. Use Venting and Validation.

Recognize the concept of on-going Moments of Truth.

Use Service Blueprints to fix reoccurring problems that irritate taxpayers (and staff).

Use the G.R.E.A.T. service tool.

G.R.E.A.T. CUSTOMER CARE

Greet the patron with eye contact.

Reassure the patron as to your interest in helping.

Explain what you will do to or for the patron.

Act accordingly, using your skills, policies, or protocols.

Thank the patron for his or her cooperation.

INTRODUCE / EXPLAIN / ASK

Introduce yourself. Try to get the patron's name.

Explain:

“I noticed that”

“The reason I'm here is”

“I'm sure you already know this, but”

Ask: “I need to ask you to” or “Could you do more of this or less of that?”

The Challenging 10

The Harassing Patron

The Entitled and Rude Patron

The Patron Experiencing Homelessness

The Mentally Ill Patron

The Substance-Abusing Patron

The Patron Experiencing Domestic Violence

The Tweenaged Patron

The Patron Who Steals

The Hygiene-Challenged Patron

The Patron Who Hogs or Misuses the Internet

The Harassing Patron

Behaviors: Physical, verbal, sexual, or racially harassing actions; creates a hostile work environment using intimidation, size, space-invading, fear, humiliation, embarrassment.

Reasons: Learned behavior; past behaviors that have worked; their need to keep people one-down to them; either unaware or don't care about gender, cultural, or diversity differences.

Tools: Tell them to stop, early. Report it. Call out the behaviors, enforce consequences, use supervisor interventions, suspensions, expulsions.

The Entitled, Rude Patron

Behaviors: “I pay your salary!” is one of their favorite phrases or mindsets. They can be dismissive if you don’t help right away. They ignore the rules, refuse to cooperate; no patience for others. They use verbal or physical intimidations, aggressive behaviors; they can be sarcastic, rude, demeaning in conversations.

Reasons: It works for them in other life encounters. They have low self-esteem, which they mask with bravado.

Tools: Provide firm, fair, and consistent service. Acknowledge their impatience. Praise them when they act appropriately. Use alignment. Ignore their comments. Don’t argue or try to change their minds.

The Patron Experiencing Homelessness

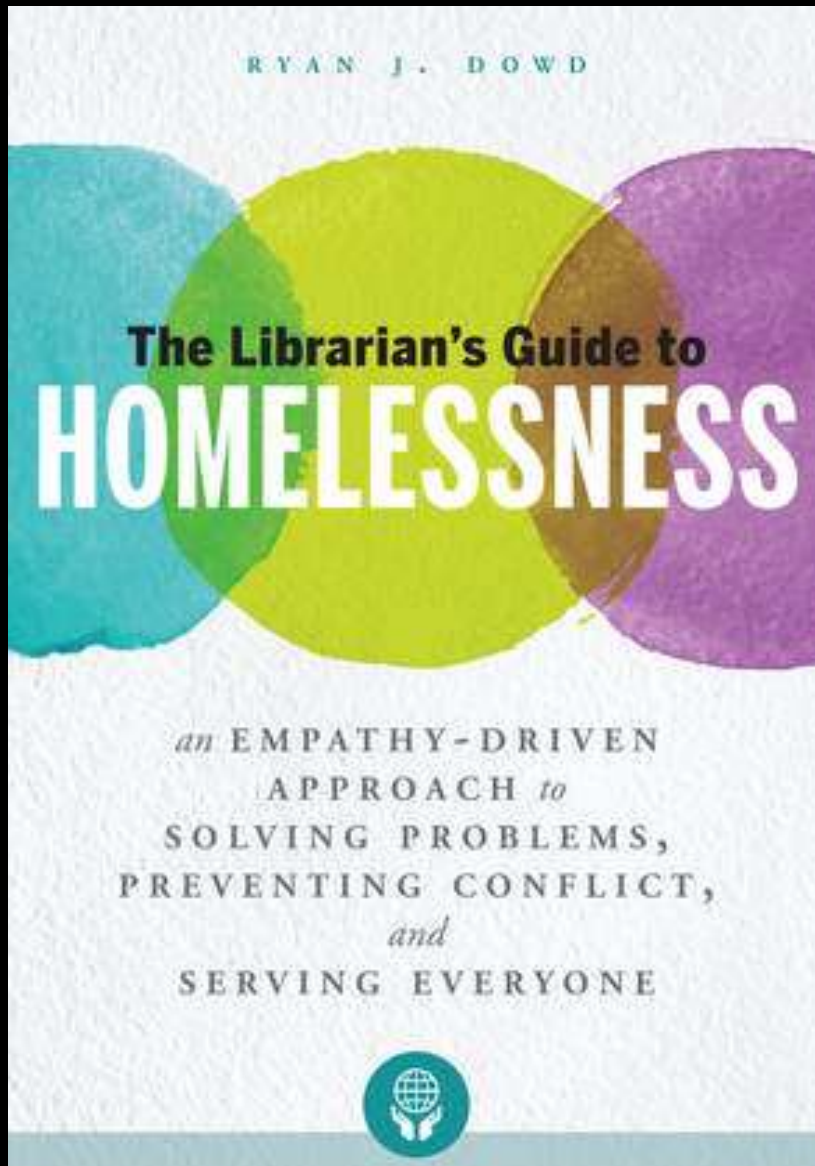
Behaviors: Confrontations, hygiene issues, possessions.

Reasons: Relationship failures, chronic unemployment, economic and housing hardships.

National estimates of mental illness among homeless people are hard to measure. Many have bi-polar, paranoid, antisocial, delusional, psychotic disorders. Many struggle with autism spectrum disorders. They cannot learn from their mistakes and are constantly rude and confrontational. Many struggle with substance abuse.

Tools: Create a task force of the many related stakeholders and service providers.

HomelessLibrary.com



Ryan J. Dowd
(ALA, 2018)

Fire Tools: Punishment-Driven
Enforcement

Water Tools: Empathy-Driven
Enforcement

Homeless, Mental Health, Social Services Support

In my Perfect Library World, we will create working partnerships with public and private advocacy groups that specialize in dealing with your most challenging patrons:

Homeless Shelters.

Behavioral Health Services, Hospitals, or Clinics.

Social Services.

Library leadership.

Law Enforcement – HOT and PERT.

Substance abuse treatment facilities.

Adult, Child, Elderly, Disabled Protective Services.

Housing Authority specialists.

Voc Rehab / Job Skills specialists.

Faith-based and grant-funded homeless outreach.

The Mentally Ill Patron

Behaviors: Serious untreated mental disorders. They can monopolize staff time and raise safety and security concerns. They can be fearful, anxious, confused, angry, delusional, unreasonable, uncooperative, and unwilling to follow the rules. They can be cyclical in their thinking and behavior. They can be victims or victimizers. Progress is slow.

Reasons: Undiagnosed, under-treated, under-medicated, wrongly-medicated, self-medicated.


Tools: Use careful tones; use space and distance; don't get too close to them or their stuff; build rapport. Know the three-type criteria and get help from social services and police. Consider restraining orders for the problematic.

CINDY GROVE



Libraries and the **Substance** **Abuse** Crisis

Supporting Your Community



The Substance-Abusing Patron

Behaviors: Stimulant drug use makes them erratic, irrational, and confrontational. Opiate drug use makes them susceptible to overdose. They use alcohol and/or marijuana to cope with the rigors of withdrawal.

Reasons: Too many to list: failed relationships, history of abuse, pain management, family genetic history.

Tools: Try to recognize their drug of choice by the odors, pupil size, and behavior. Ask them to leave for the day. Get help from a staffer, supervisor, or the police. Be aware of potential medical issues. Narcan training?

The Patron Experiencing Domestic Violence

Victims or perpetrators who come to the library.

Staff members with domestic violence issues that crossover from home to work.

Child custody issues? The library as neutral territory?

Local referrals? National DV hotline? Creative responses?
Location change? DV advocates, social services, police intervention?

The Tweenaged Patron

Behaviors: Rude to staff in front of their peers; more cooperative alone. Intentionally breaks or doesn't follow rules to see what they can get away with. May be the pack leader or a follower in groups.

Reasons: Trapped by peer pressure, hormones, immaturity, and the need to be in control or save face.

Tools: Talk to them away from the group if possible. Use the "Introduce-Explain-Ask" approach. Reward their compliance with praise. Send them out for the day if it's pervasive or severe. Choose the staff member with the best alignment. My two phrases? Call their parents?

The Patron Who Steals

Behaviors: Furtive, “casing behaviors” near the things they want to steal. In the library, they will target staff or patron property, cell phones, tablets, laptops, purses, backpacks, wallets, DVDs, books, equipment, charity jars.

Reasons: Too many to list.

Tools: Intervene with offers to help if they seem to be casing. Call the police to report petty or grand thefts. Encourage patron-victims to make a police report.

The Hygiene-Challenged Patron

Behaviors: Infrequent showers, teeth brushing. Body and mouth odors, unclean clothes, worn repeatedly. Their personal hygiene is noticeable and impacts others.

Reasons: Health-related, laziness, religious beliefs, depression, medication-driven, distracted by life issues, revenge on others.

Tools: Have the necessary “care-fronting” conversation and discuss the impact on others. Don’t judge; set expectations and ask if you need to make accommodations.

The Patron Who Hogs or Misuses The Internet

Behaviors: They ignore time limits or the needs of other patrons. They monopolize the PCs, under the cover of doing “work.” Or they watch porn and delight in making staff, children, parents, or other patrons angry or uncomfortable.

Reasons: Selfish for the first type; odd, eccentric, narcissistic, predatory, compulsive, immature for the second. They seem to like antagonizing people.

Tools: Enforce your rules and Code of Conduct. Use discipline, including expulsion for repeated events. Call the police for actual or suspected illegal sexual behaviors.

PERSONAL PROTECTION

Stay in **Condition Yellow**. Slow down your breathing.

Pay attention to personal space; use an offset stance.

Use careful eye contact.

Change the ratios of confrontation.

Develop and memorize your code words.

Use proxemic barriers or invite the person to sit with you.

Use physical movement and the Assertive Whisper.

WHEN DO WE NEED A POLICE RESPONSE IN OUR LIBRARIES?

Active shooter event.

Person armed with a deadly weapon, threatening or robbing others.

A fight between two armed patrons.

The sexual assault of a patron, child, or employee.

Attempted or actual kidnapping of a child.

Finding a gun or a large quantity of drugs in the library.

A violent confrontation between rival gang members.

WHEN DO WE NEED A POLICE RESPONSE IN OUR LIBRARIES?

Domestic violence, with injuries.

Person(s) trying to steal expensive items or equipment.

Crimes happening in the parking lot.

Bomb threat? Found suspicious device.

Indecent exposure; possession of child pornography.

Violation of TRO.

WHEN MIGHT WE NOT NEED A POLICE RESPONSE IN OUR LIBRARIES?

Petty theft.

Mentally ill or drunk/on drugs patron.

Loud, eccentric, rude, disturbing patron.

Drug overdose event. (Paramedics needed, not cops.)

Crime case where the victim will not cooperate with them.

Patrons arguing with each other.

Found marijuana.

Vicious dog?

Students fighting (no injuries); truancy issues; child abuse
(Call CPS / APS directly to report)?

Patron gets property stolen or car hit. (They can call.)

USING SECURITY OFFICERS

In-house or contract? Powers of arrest?

Review all posted orders for each guard position.

Meet with guard contractor to update contracts, posted orders, and create or modify duties.

Do guards serve a reception function? Panic, burglar alarm, or open-door responses?

How do they respond to medical or behavioral problems?

Review guard equipment: pass keys, call tree lists, radios, time clocks.

STAFF SECURITY TRAINING

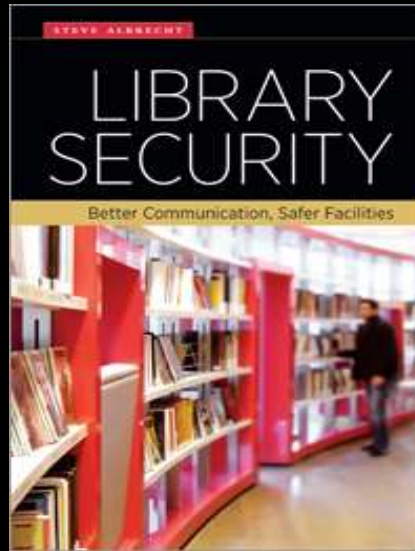
Specific training instructions, policy knowledge by your leadership team, PICs, and floor supervisors.

Frequent staff meetings, new-employee orientations for all patron-contact employees. Co-developed policies.

Specific training for all employees and security contractors who have security-related functions.

De-escalation: Verbal Judo Institute, Crisis Prevention Institute, AVADE, active listening skills, self-defense.

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