

Successfully Navigating Behavior Issues in the Library

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East Greenbush Community Library



Who are we talking about?

It's not just teenagers who misbehave!

- Older kids/tweens
- Small children
- Parents

General Complaints

- Noisy
- Disrespectful
- Messy
- Travel in packs

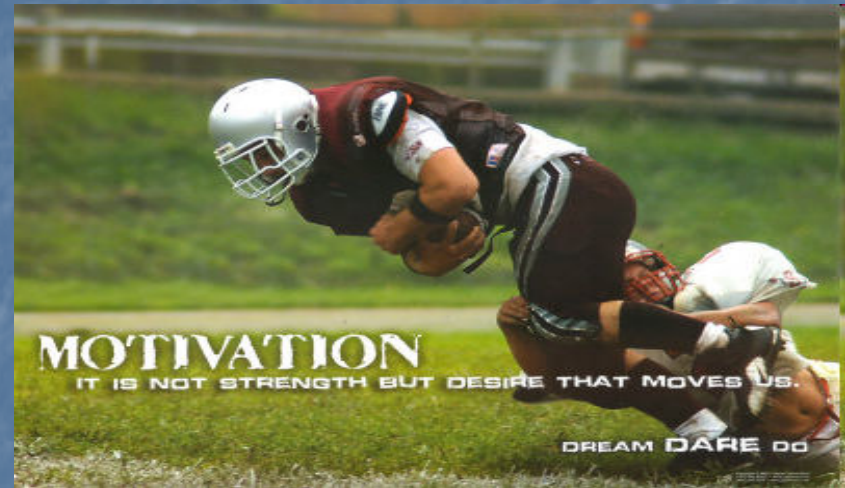
Dealing with Difficult People

- You choose
- Realistic expectations
- Be mindful
- Build empathy
- Stay strong

Empathy

- empathes – emotional
- pathos – experiencing
- The intellectual identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another.

Why



Building Empathy Exercise

Communication

- Knowing how to communicate is powerful
The essence of conflict resolution
- Communication Process
 - 7% of what you communicate is what you say
 - 38% of what you communicate is what you sound like
 - 55% of what you communicate is what “they” see

Non-Verbal Communication

- Be aware of your:
 - Body Language
 - Eye Contact
 - Facial Expression
 - Posture
 - Gestures

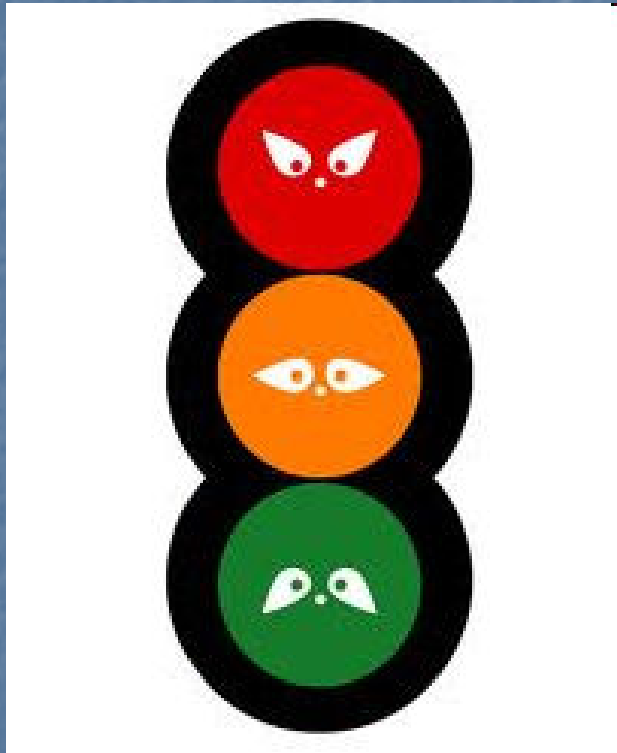
Verbal Communication

- Pacing
 - Shows being in sync, establishes common ground
- Backtracking
 - Repeating what a person says (*not* what you think they said)
- Intent Pacing
 - Communicates being in sync, establishes common ground
- Clarify
 - Ask questions, get all the info

Practice Mindful Communication

- Awareness
- Insight
- Compassion
- Choice

Traffic lights



- **Red Light**

- Notice when you become defensive and closed off

- **Yellow Light**

- Pay attention to the limbo between open and closed.

- **Green Light**

- When your state of mind is open, explore!

BEFORE a Problem

- Have policies in place
 - Patron code of conduct
 - Unattended juvenile policy
- Get staff on board
 - Should know policies
 - Know where to find a copy

Code of Conduct

A. Code of Conduct

1. All conversation should be kept as low as possible.
2. All equipment with sound (i.e. mp3 players, laptops, smartphones, etc.) must be used only with earphones in the large open spaces of the library, and should not disturb other patrons.
3. Cell phones should be set on vibrate when entering the building and conversations should be pursued in the entrance hallway, especially not in the computer lab, or other areas where study and/or computer use is occurring.
4. Parents are responsible for the actions of their children. Parents will be notified if a child's actions are disruptive. Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied by an adult. Children from 8-11 should have a parent in the building. See the [Unattended Children Policy](#).
5. Only animals intended to serve people with disabilities are allowed in the building.
6. The East Greenbush Community Library building and grounds is a smoke free environment. NO smoking is permitted.
7. No person shall physically, materially or verbally interfere in any way with the public's right of access. (i.e., the entrance and exits are open to all.)
8. Any behavior that compromises the safety or security of the Library staff or patrons is prohibited.
9. Use of verbal or physical threats in the library or through the use of library technology to insult or intimidate library patrons or staff is strictly prohibited.

Unattended Child Policy

Unattended Juveniles in the Library

A policy is necessary to address the issue of families using the library as a childcare center and leaving children unattended in the library. The policy is also necessary to provide for the general safety of children in the library and to make parents aware that the library is a public building, open to all manner of people, and can therefore present risk to children.

Statement of this policy:

1. Children under 11 must be accompanied at the library by a parent/guardian/authorized caregiver age 13 or over except while in attendance at a library program.
2. Children under 8 must be accompanied in the Children's Reading Room by a parent/guardian/authorized caregiver age 13 or over at all times. A parent may be asked to stay with their child, regardless of age, if the child's behavior warrants it.
3. If a child remains at the library after closing time the librarian in charge will make sure the child has called for a ride. The staff member will remain with the minor for 15 minutes at which time, if the child has not been picked up, staff will notify the police. The librarian will remain with the child until the police arrive.
4. Children of any age are not welcome in the library if they are ill or disruptive.

Unattended Child Policy

Responsibilities:

Minors are the responsibility of their parent, guardian, or authorized caregiver age 13 or over, not of the library. The library takes no responsibility for the safety or welfare of children left unattended at the library.

If a child under 11 is not accompanied by a parent or guardian at the library the librarian will call the parent or guardian to pick up the child. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, and/or cannot pick up the child, police will be called and apprised of the situation.

In the event of abuse of library privileges by a child, the library shall contact the parent/guardian. Should the library need to contact a parent/guardian of any child and they are not on site or cannot be reached the librarian will notify the police.

Complete policies can be found on our website:

www.eastgreenbushlibrary.org

→ About the Library → Services & Policies

DURING a Problem

- Be Firm, Fair, and Consistent!
 - All staff
 - All patrons
- Communicate
 - Verbal language
 - Body language
- Stay Strong
 - Support
 - Chain of command

Consequences

- What are the consequences for the disruptive patron?
- Are you ready for them?
- What are the consequences for the library if you don't follow through?

Effective Responses for Disarming Difficult People

- **When people _____, Try This**
 - Push your buttons
 - **Have a humorous response**
 - Make an outrageous accusation
 - **Be silent, then redirect**
 - Are complaining
 - **Reflect back**
 - Blame
 - **Acknowledge**
 - Won't stop Arguing
 - **Agree to disagree**
 - Keep asking questions
 - **Answer with a question**

Scenario #1

- Every week, you have a group of parents who engage in conversation during storytime. Because they are not paying attention, their children are disruptive.
 - What do you do while it's happening?
 - What can you do to PREVENT this behavior in the future?



A reminder to the grown-ups...

Please save your conversations until AFTER the program. Talking is distracting, and sets a bad example for the kids.

*When YOU are an active participant,
your kids will get more out of the program!*

Thank you for your cooperation.

Scenario #2

- You see a small child playing on the computers and their parent/caregiver is nowhere to be found.
 - What do you do while it's happening?
 - What can you do to PREVENT this behavior in the future?

**Unattended children
under the age of 8
will be given a**

**FREE
PUPPY**



& an



ESPRESSO!



Children must be AT LEAST 8 YEARS OLD to be left unattended in the Children's Room (while their adult is elsewhere in the library), but we ask that NO CHILDREN are left unattended in the Family Play Room - for the safety of all present.

Scenario #3

- There is not enough staff to supervise the Teen Area today, and the large group of teens is getting noisy and tossing paper balls around the room.
 - What do you do while it's happening?
 - What can you do to PREVENT this behavior in the future?

Teen Area Rules

These rules fall within the *Patron Code of Conduct*. Let this list serve as a reminder:

1. Bullying is NOT tolerated. Be respectful.
2. Don't yell or scream... ***You're in a library!***
3. WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE.
(Adults and small children use the library, too!)
4. No fighting, roughhousing, or throwing things.
5. PDA = gross... Don't do it!
(kissing, cuddling, sitting on laps, etc.)
6. Use headphones when listening to music, watching videos, etc.
(Other people shouldn't be able to hear your headphones.)
7. Clean up after yourself.

REMEMBER:

You're not the only one in the library. Your actions affect other patrons and staff. If you cannot follow these rules, you will be asked to leave.

Thank you for your cooperation

Questions & Share

THANK YOU!

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