

ON THE SAFE SIDE

VLA Lightning Talk
October 25, 2019

Miriam Herrell, Library Administrator
Bull Run Regional Library
Prince William Public Library System

BACKGROUND

- 2017: the Help Manual for the Prince William Public Library System was out of date
- The review process uncovered the necessity of empowering all staff to handle situations

CHALLENGES: BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

- Front-line staff need to gain confidence
 - What to say
 - Procedures
 - Navigating gray areas, when to escalate a problem
- Training, coaching, help manual review

HELP MANUAL REVISED

- Topics in categories
 - Behavior – References to the PWPLS Code of Behavior, legal statutes
 - Building and Weather
 - Medical Emergencies
- Appendices
 - Code of Behavior
 - Behavioral Guidelines for Code of Conduct Non-Compliance
 - Temporary Ban Letter
 - How to do an Incident Report
 - Work Requests (building issues)

SOLUTIONS: WHAT TO SAY

- Introduction to Behavioral Related Incidents section
 - Assume patrons have a legitimate reason for using the library
 - All staff members have a degree of responsibility
 - Good judgement, listen, calm, teamwork, consistency
- Refer to the PWPLS Code of Behavior

SOLUTIONS: PROCEDURES

- Behavior Guidelines for Code of Behavior Non-Compliance
 - Provides greater detail to behavior infractions, when managers use discretion
 - Category One: Immediate Removal/No Trespass (1 year)
 - Category Two: Warning then No Trespass (1 year)
 - Category Three: Warning than ban from 1 to 30 days
 - Category Four: Excluded until problem is corrected (no shoes, hygiene)

TRAINING STAFF

- Triage categories and topics.
 - Easily addressed: cell phone use, food and beverages
 - Behavior: sleeping, noisy behavior, homeless
 - Potentially threatening or illegal: aggressive behavior, theft, substance abuse
 - Special circumstances: abuse/neglect, unattended children

- Building and Weather
- Medical Emergencies

SAFETY

- Focus on Observation
 - See Something Say Something
 - Customer Service
- Positive Feedback