

Censorship Awareness:

Train Your Staff BEFORE
Material is Challenged





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**“A truly great library
contains something in it
to offend everyone.”**

- Jo Godwin



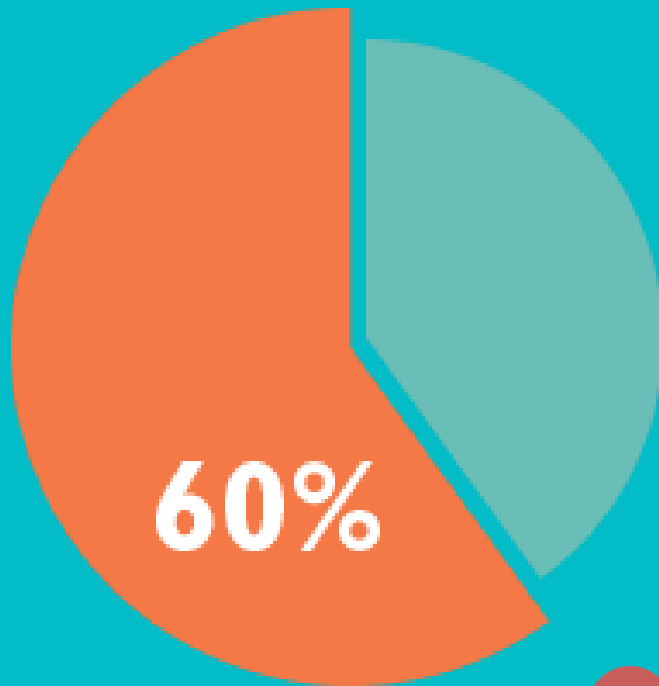


2021-2022 school year

11 people

made 60% of all book challenges
in the US

Individuals who filed 10 or more complaints
were responsible for two-thirds of all challenges.





What's essential for this work?

PREPARED STAFF

- Know talking points
- Rehearse responses
- Ready for interactions

PROCEDURES


Established methods of responding to:

- Complaints
- Formal challenges

POLICY

- Clearly written
- Board-approved
- Includes acquisition & weeding criteria





**Acknowledge
feelings &
reflect back to
customer**



Agree/validate/reflect +

Use value-neutral language+

Offer professional RA services



Using Neutral Language

- Follows our professional practices of non-judgmental guidance
- Gives staff examples of how to describe material without assigning value
- Avoids labeling other books as lesser or unworthy as compared to other books



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“**You’re right**, it sounds like this title isn’t a **good fit** for your family. Let’s find something with **different content** that better meets your family’s needs.”

“We have many different tools to find the books that you’d like to see.”

“Our collection is very diverse because **inclusion is one of our values**. Every reader should be able to find something they like at the library. **Not every book will be for every person.**”





“**I agree**, it appears this book wasn’t what you expected or wanted. Can I help you find an item that does?”

“Tell me more about what you’d like to see in your next read.”

“We empower families to **make their own decisions** and let their children know what is and isn’t ok **in their house.**”



Ratings



MPAA is not a law

**Libraries don't rate materials
(subjective based on content)**

**Libraries don't enforce industry-
specific ratings for books or movies**

(Keep an eye on Texas & HB 900)



Label or List?



Labeling

- Can discourage readers by advertising their reading to others
- Helping people **avoid** books doesn't fit with our professional values – we help them **find** things
- Can be overly broad or narrow, depending on use

Lists/Tags/Headers

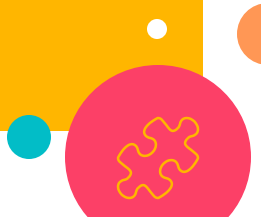
- Can improve discovery in the catalog
- Can help readers connect between categories
- More dynamic way of presenting information



MILD & FREE

CONTENTS:
**BOOKS WITHOUT SEXUAL
CONTENT, EXCESSIVE LANGUAGE
OR EXCESSIVE VIOLENCE***

*KISSING AND HEAVY TENSION MAY BE PRESENT





TEEN
ALL FALL DOWN
BOOK ONE OF EMBASSY ROW

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAR

TEEN
Don't Judge a Girl by Her Cover

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAR

TEEN
Out of Sight, Out of Tim

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAR

TEEN
ON: THE D We SpY

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAR

TEEN
ON: THE D We SpY

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAR

TEEN
Gross My Heart and Hope to SPY

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAR

TEEN
THE SIREN

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAS

TEEN
THE PHENOMENON

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CAS

TEEN
THE LAST VOYAGE
POE BLYTHE

MILD & FREE

YA
F
CON

TEEN
FIREKRAP

MILD & FREE

YA
F
DAL

TEEN
WINDCHASER

MILD & FREE

YA
F
DAL

TEEN
WINDFALL

MILD & FREE

YA
F
DAL

TEEN
WATER CROSSING

MILD & FREE

YA
F
DAL

MILD & FREE

YA
F
DAL

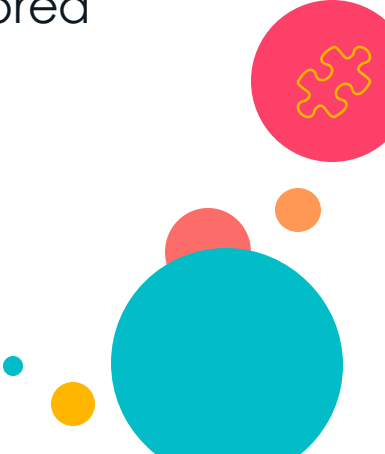
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Soft Censorship in the Wild

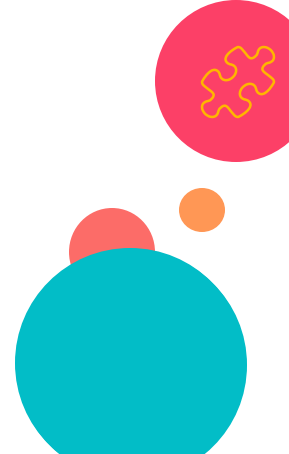


Display Sabotage

- “Today I discovered a booklet left on our display in the CP entitled “God and Sexuality”. It was very recently placed there in place of one of our books. I just wanted to bring it to everyone’s awareness because they might be back with more. I only skimmed through it, but it is definitely anti-LGBTQ+. Whoever left it also attached a rainbow-colored clothespin to draw attention to it.”
- 




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 - “We just found two books on Capital Punishment and the Death Penalty “added” to our Rainbow Friends display in kids.”
- 



Misdirection & Meddling

- Purchased books not making it to the shelves
 - “Forgetting” to catalog titles
 - “Disappearing” from shipments
 - Being mis-cataloged to incorrect collections
 - Suddenly, many books on a subject are lost or missing*
 - Finding books hidden in the library (example)
- 

As we wind down [#BannedBooksWeek](#), let's not forget the person who purposely hides books in our libraries so parents can't let their kids read these books.

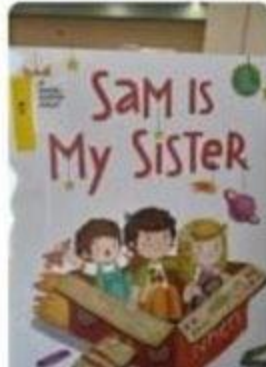
Stephanie Green Owens

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In today's episode of "Books Stephanie Hides at the Library..."

(As in all episodes - our content is brought to you by: truth, common sense and the effort to protect children from this insane world).





Christina Soontornvat:

“[C]ensorship is motivated by fear - fear of letting kids feel each other's humanity and step into someone else's heart...

**[W]hen you become another person,
you cannot hate that person.”**

#alsc22 [@teacher2library](https://www.instagram.com/teacher2library)





THANKS!

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