Be Prepared
What to Do Before, During and After a Materials Concern or Challenge
CCBC Intellectual Freedom Information Services

Know
the selection and reconsideration policies at your library/in your district. Have a checklist or game plan to follow in case of concern or complaint.

Practice
talking conversationally about library/classroom goals (e.g., "We work to meet many needs and interests, to engage, to entertain, to offer choices, to encourage critical thinking.").

Talk
with colleagues, administrators and community members about ways intellectual freedom supports library and classroom goals. It benefits everyone!

Call
for assistance. Wisconsin librarians and teachers can contact the CCBC at 608-263-3720.

Inform
your supervisor. Review policies and procedures together—make sure they’re being followed. Discuss next steps. Document what’s happened.

Respond*
to concerns/complaints: Breathe. Listen openly. Affirm collection/classroom goals. Acknowledge all readers & families are different. Inform of next steps if not resolved (per policies & procedures). Provide your contact information. Smile and say thank you.

Communicate
internally as needed (e.g., reconsideration committee, staff, board members). Determine who speaks for the library or school as situation develops.

Follow Up
with the concerned individual. Inform of outcome if there was reconsideration request, as well as options for appeal.

Review
after resolution: Were policies and procedures followed? Was anything in them unclear? Did staff feel supported? How can everyone be even better prepared next time? Pat yourselves on the back.

*See the "Materials Concern Checklist" handout for more details on responding

Cooperative Children's Book Center

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See also:
What IF: Questions and Answers on Intellectual Freedom
A CCBC Q & A forum for librarians, teachers, administrators and others thinking through what the principles of intellectual freedom look like in practice.
http://go.wisc.edu/s1ofsl

Infographic created by CCBC Intellectual Freedom Information Services Coordinator Samantha Jackson and librarian Megan Schliesman. ©2015 Cooperative Children’s Book Center