

Ten Quick Tips

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- 1 Challenges to library materials happen everywhere and stay informed on intellectual freedom issues.
- 2 Never underestimate the power of one individual to have a positive or negative impact.
- 3 Have clear, concise materials selection and Internet policies and procedures for handling complaints.
- 4 Follow those policies and procedures. Don't act in the heat of the moment; both sides benefit from a deliberate process that allows cooler heads to prevail.
- 5 Focus on defending *access* to materials, not the *content* of the materials.
- 6 Treat people with respect! Listen, clarify, and refer if necessary, offer alternatives, provide policy and form, and thank patrons for their feedback.
- 7 Use common sense and good judgment in deciding when and how to publicize issues and when working quietly behind the scenes will be more advantageous. When appropriate, tell your story (select one person to be the primary media contact); issue well-written, concise press releases; articulate your reasons, the process, and the library's policies.
- 8 Keep library staff, board of directors, governance authority, and community leaders informed.
- 9 Get help, mobilize supporters, seek help from community organizations, and form coalitions. Contact ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom.
- 10 Start this work before a challenge happens!