Resolution on Developing Library Security Policies in keeping with ALA Policy

Whereas the rate of police violence in the United States is far higher than peer nations (Picheta, R., & Pettersson, H);

Whereas that violence disproportionately affects people of color and especially Black people (ibid);

Whereas the US arrest rates are higher than other nations and those arrests also disproportionately affect Black people (ibid);

Whereas overpolicing and mass incarceration are factors that drive people more deeply into poverty (Bread for the World Institute);

Whereas using alternative methods like restorative justice and de-escalation tactics to create personal connections and encourage accountability is highly effective (International Institute for Restorative Practices);

Whereas trauma experiences can become deeply ingrained in individuals' stress responses and impact their responses to conflict in any context, making 'trauma-informed' practices that take this impact into account crucial when dealing with vulnerable populations (Benedict);

Whereas "it is crucial that libraries recognize their role in supporting (people experiencing poverty, which include people experiencing homelessness,) so they may participate fully in a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and strategies (ALA Policy B8);

Whereas "[Libraries] must seek to provide an environment free of racism, where all are treated with respect and dignity." (ALA Policy B.3.2);

Whereas "ALA opposes any use of governmental prerogatives that lead to the intimidation of individuals or groups " (ALA Policy B.2.4);

Whereas exposing all patrons--especially Black patrons, Indigenous patrons and patrons of color and/or those who are experiencing poverty or homelessness--to police contact risks their lives and livelihoods in ways incompatible with the aforementioned ALA policies; and

Whereas high quality, informed options are currently being created regarding alternatives to using policing in libraries; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. urges libraries to proactively adopt person-centered, trauma-informed policies that support staff in keeping staff and patrons safe by finding alternatives to bringing in police;
2. urges libraries to require any police responding to incidents regarding patrons that may be having mental health challenges to have training responding to such incidents;
3. urges libraries to use restorative justice practices when developing security protocols with regards to the creation and enforcement of library behavior policies ;
4. urges libraries to refrain from using police in a punitive role to solve security challenges arising from interactions with patrons under the age of 18, except in cases of immediate danger and to instead work with local agencies to use restorative justice practices; and
5. urges library administration and governing bodies to continue to invest in training for their staff in how to best keep their staff and patrons safe - like using de-escalation tactics, implicit bias training, a trauma lens and implicit trust with youth.

Mover: Tara Brady, SRRT Councilor, 301-318-4216
Seconder: Gina Kromhout, GameRT Councilor, 412-427-6793

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