



A Statement from the Long Island Library Pride Alliance

Love and acceptance need to be on display at all libraries, both here on Long Island and beyond. We are appalled by the decision issued by the Board of Trustees at The Smithtown Library, directing their staff to dismantle all Pride displays in the children's sections of their four buildings.

The mission of the Long Island Library Pride Alliance is not only to promote diverse collections and programs at our libraries, but to help ensure safe spaces for our LGBTQIA+ colleagues, as well. The action taken in Smithtown sets the dangerous precedent that queer library patrons and library professionals can be erased. Libraries are for everyone! They are for all the patrons walking through our doors, as well as for the employees who work so hard to assist them. They do not exist to promote exclusion or intolerance nor to abet ignorance.

In light of recent events in Smithtown and across the country, and as queer librarians ourselves, we ask that you check in on each other and offer support in any way you can. Then, take action. Ask your supportive friends and family members to run for library boards, to help ensure that this never happens again on Long Island. Be present in local government. Talk up the importance of diverse books when outside your library. Inside your library, show Pride all year by making safe space stickers visible; book-talk queer books to all patrons; include queer presenters in programming, regardless of the subject matter, whenever possible; and prominently place LGBTQIA+ titles in all your displays and booklists, no matter the month.

And right now, in solidarity against those banning physical displays, join us in creating a virtual display by posting photos of your favorite queer materials across social media platforms, using the hashtag #prideinlibraries. Let's show our queer patrons and co-workers just how much we support them!

If the fight comes to your library, we hope you find the following resources regarding book challenges and selection policies helpful. In addition, the LGBT Network is holding a Town Hall meeting on Monday, June 27th at 7PM. We hope to see you there. [Click here to register.](#)

To contact LILPA reach out to lilpa.nys@gmail.com



Ask the Lawyer - Western New York Library Resources Council

<https://www.wnylrc.org/ask-the-lawyer/raqs/270>

A detailed response from the WNYLRC attorney sharing what can and cannot be done in regard to a library board limiting displays in children's/YA areas.

Intellectual Freedom Resources

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom>

A wealth of resources on censorship and intellectual freedom from ALA, including issues of *Intellectual Freedom and Privacy*, trending news topics, banned book lists, and many topic-specific pages.

LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/affiliates/relatedgroups/merrittfund/merritthumanitarian>

The LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund is devoted to the support, maintenance, medical care, and welfare of librarians who, in the Trustees' opinion, are:

- denied employment rights or discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, age, disability, or national origin, or
- denied employment rights because of defense of intellectual freedom

Page includes applications for assistance.

National Coalition Against Censorship: Defend LGBTQ Stories Resource

<https://ncac.org/resource/defend-lgbtq-stories-a-resource>

The Defend LGBTQ Stories resource offers an overview of common arguments made by would-be censors and techniques for advocating for LGBTQ stories in your schools and communities.

(see also Book Challenge Resource Center: <https://ncac.org/resource/book-challenge-resource-center>)

Office for Intellectual Freedom Website

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/oif>

Established December 1, 1967, the Office for Intellectual Freedom is charged with implementing ALA policies concerning the concept of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Library Bill of Rights, the Association's basic policy on free access to libraries and library materials. The goal of the office is to educate librarians and the general public about the nature and importance of intellectual freedom in libraries.

Report a Challenge

<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/report>

If a material or display has been challenged at your library be sure to report it to ALA OIF. Reporting censorship and challenges to materials, resources, and services is vital to developing the best resources to defend library resources and to protect against challenges before they happen. The report will remain confidential unless otherwise noted. OIF staff can even help libraries through a challenge if need be.

Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit

<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/selectionpolicytoolkit>

Created by the Office for Intellectual Freedom, this toolkit offers steps to creating a Selection & Reconsideration policy including why your institution needs a policy, basic components, and reconsideration procedures.