

## **Conflict Resolution/De-escalation Training**

### *Intro*

Our goal is *\*ALWAYS\** to accommodate our patrons. Find a way to help. After communicating a policy initially, all following dialogue should be non-combative, apologetic, and professional. Never *\*tell\** someone what to do or attempt to force them to do something, always *\*ask\** them to please work with you and the policies that are in place. If someone gives you attitude, treats you poorly, refuses to comply, or you feel like you can no longer get any further with someone while remaining professional and continuing to be accommodating, apologize again, and inform them that you will be contacting your manager to speak with them, and do so. If you do not have a specific manager or head monitor for your location, you may consult one that is on duty (follow the phone tree) and may use your support resources for the location that you are working at, if necessary, which are outlined on the employee portal.

### *Things to keep in mind*

- Body language and confidence is key
  - Genuine smile
  - Stand tall, shoulders back, and use hand gestures that indicate accommodation
  - Be aware of facial expression; look interested and concerned, not annoyed or frustrated
  - Be knowledgeable of facility, policies, service expectations, and solutions
  - Have confidence in how you handle interactions; always believe that the way you are handling a situation is the right way; be careful not to confuse confidence with arrogance (comes with practice, experience, and self-reflection)
- Active listening
  - Listen
  - Convey Understanding
  - Repeat back concerns
  - Address concerns directly
- Clear and concise language
- Stay professional and accommodating
- Ask, don't tell
- Patience
- Contact a manager

### *How to approach interactions*

- Start *\*EVERY\** interaction with a friendly greeting
  - "Hello, how are you (and your family) doing today?"
  - "Hello, are you enjoying yourself(selves) today?"
- Follow up with a sentence or two of small talk acknowledging their experience and/or offering a complement
  - positive
    - "I'm glad that you are enjoying yourself"
    - "That is great to hear"
      - "It is a beautiful day"

- “You have a wonderful family”
  - “I love your (insert complement here)”
  - Address a common interest if you notice one
- Negative
  - “I’m sorry to hear that you are having that experience”
  - “I’m sorry that you are feeling that way”
    - “Is there anything I can do to help?”
    - “I can definitely let my manager know about your concerns”
    - Offer a solution or alternative if there is one
- Only after your greeting and lead in conversation should you then address policy enforcement
  - “So, I noticed that you have/are doing (restricted item or activity). Unfortunately, facility policy does not allow this and my expectations as a pool monitor require me to ask you to (remove the item/stop the activity). Would you mind please... (removing item/stopping activity)? If you need a further explanation or assistance beyond what I can provide, or have any other questions or concerns, I can have my manager speak with you.”
    - Offer an alternative solution
    - Explain the reasoning for the policy
      - Safety concerns
      - Security concerns
      - Consideration for others
    - “I understand that it is frustrating...”
    - “I sympathize with your situation...”
    - “I’m really sorry...”
    - “Please tell me more...”
    - “We will communicate your concerns with facility management.”
    - “I apologize that we are unable to reach a solution. I will contact my manager right away to assist you further.”
    - “Is there anything else I can do for you, or anything I can do to better my service to you?”

The tone conveyed in all of these examples is clearly accommodating. Notice how none of the examples are commanding, authoritative, or telling someone to do something. They are respectful explanations followed by either further questions, statements of understanding, or offered solutions. We never respond with a command. Even in the case of children, we will ask them to please walk or address the parents directly to ask their children to please walk, don’t command them to walk or not run. Parents may become hostile to this tone. Remember to always keep all of these things in mind and it is never too early to contact your manager.