e Wellness FOR Library Professionals
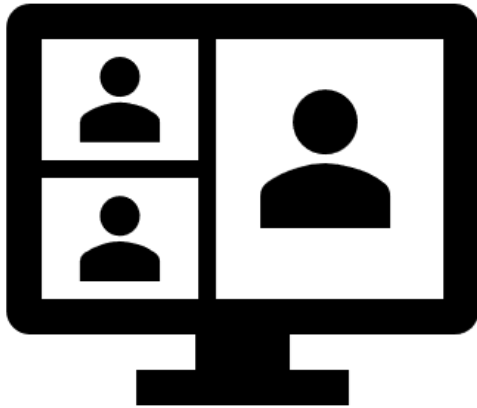
South Central Library System

AGENDA

- **Challenging and Changing Dynamics in Libraries**
- **Secondary traumatic stress (STS), Burnout, and compassion fatigue.**
- **De-escalation resources and strategies**
- **Setting healthy professional boundaries**
- **Creating a culture of community care within libraries.**

A little about me…

Associate Professor at UWSP

Classes I teach:

- Social Welfare Policy
- Professional Ethics and Boundaries in the Helping Professions
- ~~Practicum Seminar~~

Field Coordinator for social work internships

My Professional Background:

- Youth justice, interpersonal violence, and child welfare
- Certified Advanced Practice Social Worker (DSPS)
- Licensed School Social Worker (DPI)

Public libraries: Ho... shelters

Share

Why US libraries are on the frontlines of the homelessness crisis

Homeless people are relying on public libraries as a safe haven to stay warm and avoid harassment from law enforcement, advocates say

Wisconsin libraries would have to notify parents about ... under GOP proposal ... for librarians related to

safe haven': ... vulnerable ...uring the

Conservative... library exodu...

Quitting Time

The pandemic is exacerbating attrition amo...

By Lara Ewen | June 1, 2022

Libraries are under attack—and so are library workers

Libraries are increasingly being targeted by local and state legislators and protestors trying to ban books and block LGBTQ content. How is that affecting the people who work in them?

NEWS

Library board members ... amid controversy over re...

WHEN THE CULTURE WARS COME FOR THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

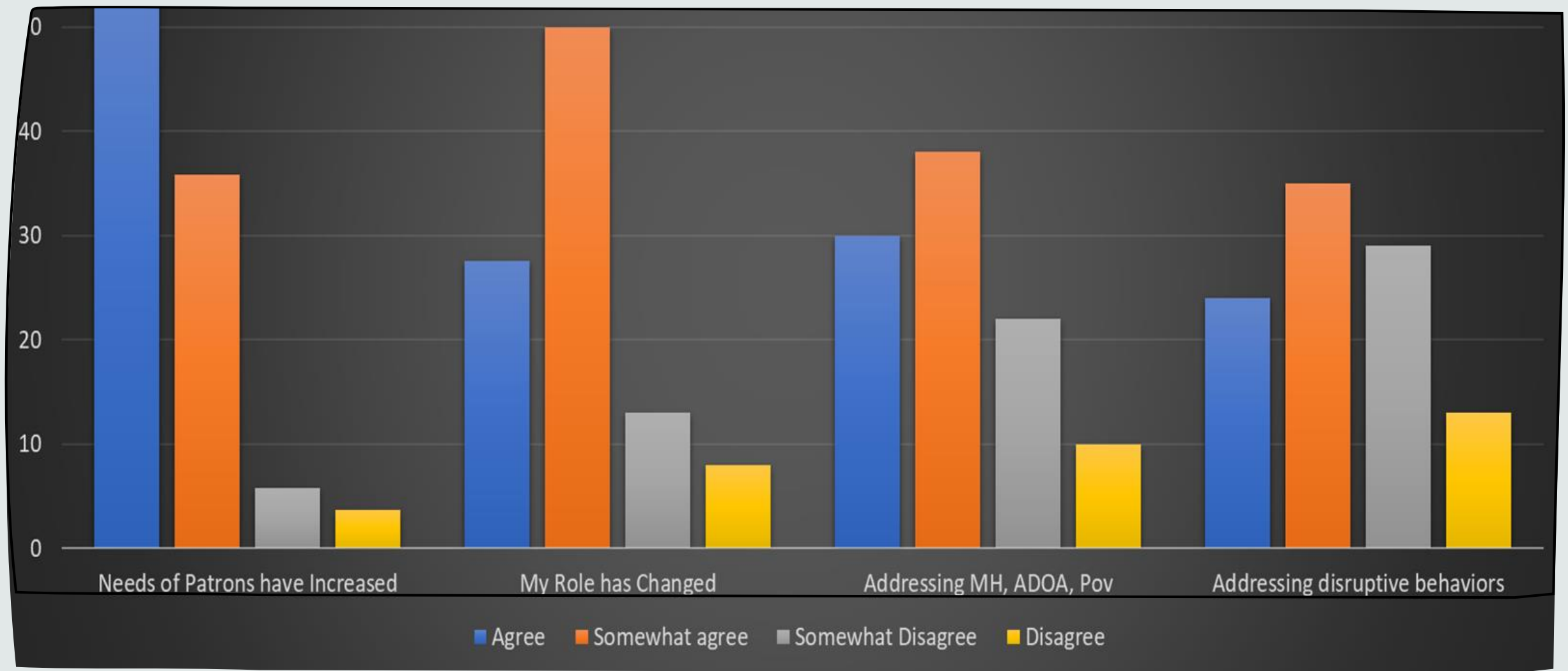Bans Are Rising Sharply ...blic Libraries

Arkansas governor signs law aimed at holding libraries accountable for 'obscene' material
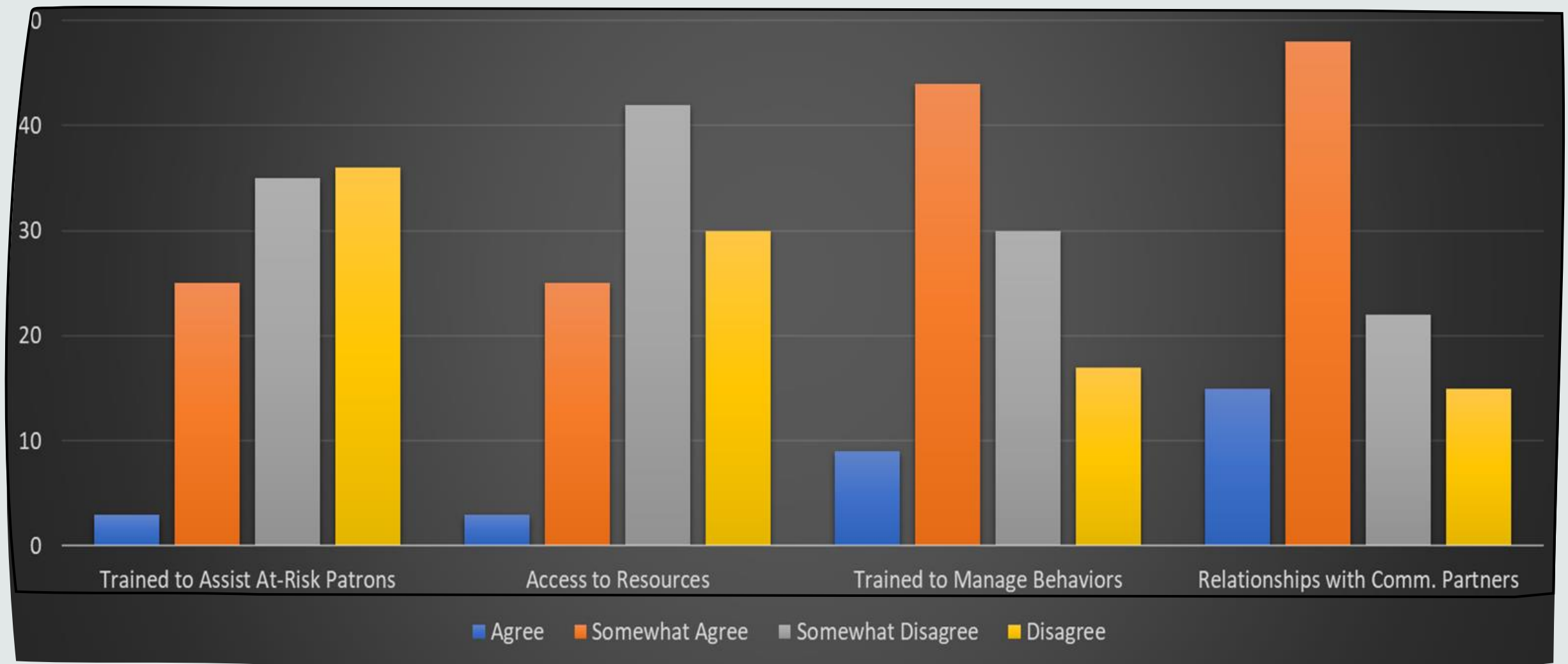
BY: TESS VRBIN - MARCH 31, 2023   4:59 PM

...ge in book banning efforts across the country, ...e largely happening in school libraries, where ...n, are now affecting the wider community as

Outside Pressures Impacting Library Work

SCLS Staff Survey (259): Library staff roles and responsibilities

SCLS Staff Survey (259): Self Efficacy

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)

Physical and psychological symptoms appearing in professionals exposed to the suffering of others. Also known as Compassion Fatigue.

Regarded as an occupational hazard of providing direct services to traumatized populations.

- **Exposure to traumatizing events**

- **Physical and sexual abuse, DV, Suicide, unexpected death**

Physiological Symptoms:

- **Hypertension, sleep disruption, immune system malfunctioning**

Psychological Symptoms:

(Social Work, 2017; NASW 2021)

Centers for Disease Control, 2023)

BURNOUT

Process that causes a gradual increase in emotional exhaustion in workers

<u>**Symptoms:**</u>

- **Negative attitudes toward patrons/clients**

- **Reduced commitment to the profession**

<u>**Work Environment**</u>

Causes of Burnout

Increased client/patron needs

Low wages

Limited resources

Organizational structures and stressors

Workplace conflict

Funding Concerns

Unsafe situations

Inability to detach from clients' issues

Exposure to abuse, poverty, and social and racial inequities

Ethical Dilemmas

Culture of Overwork

Signs Of Burnout in Helping Professionals

Physical and emotional exhaustion

Feeling ineffective

Lack of patience and focus

Loss of enthusiasm about the work

Heightened irritability & sense of vulnerability

Sleep issues/fatigue

Loss of inspiration

Feeling distracted or unable to focus

Increased cynicism or negativity

Depression

Anxiety

(CDC, 2023)

beware
OF EMPLOYEE BURNOUT

burnt-out employees
COST AN ESTIMATED
$125–$190B
a year
in health care
spending in the U.S.

23%
more likely
to visit the
emergency room

13%
LOWER
CONFIDENCE
IN PERFORMANCE

63%
MORE LIKELY
to take a sick day

50%
less likely
to discuss
performance goals
with their manager

2 OUT OF 3
FULL-TIME WORKERS
experience
burnout
on the job

How to Prevent Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) in your daily routine

3. **Exercise regularly**

4. **Be aware of your stress level; take precautions against exceeding your own limits**

5. **Acknowledge your reactions to stressful circumstances; allow yourself time to cope.**

(National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2023)

How to Prevent Secondary Traumatic Stress At Work

1. Diversify tasks at work to the extent that you can
2. Take breaks during your workday
3. Take vacation days
4. Use relaxation techniques (e.g., deep breathing) as needed
5. Talk with colleagues about how your work affects you
6. Seek out, or establish, a professional support group
7. Set limits with Patrons and colleagues

(National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2023)

Reflection Questions

Are there de-escalation protocols used at your library?

Are there clear policies regarding patron behavior?

Are policies and protocols applied consistently?

Are policies communicated clearly to patrons?

Are all staff trained on these policies and protocols?

Lean into policy- Important First step

Your library has policies in place that can help maintain a safe environment.

Do you know these policies?

Do staff apply them consistently?

How do you implement and communicate your policies to patrons?

How Trauma Impacts Behavior

...framework to understand and respond to trauma.

All behavior is a form of communication.

- **Fight:** Aggressively responding to a perceived threat

- **Flight:** Running away from perceived threat

- **Freeze:** Unable to act against a threat

- **Fawn:** Trying to please to avoid conflict

Lean Into Assessment

Not every difficult encounter you face will require de-escalation techniques.

When De-escalation may be needed:

- **Is the person disrupting other patrons or staff?**

- **Is the person making threats?**

- **Is conflict occurring**
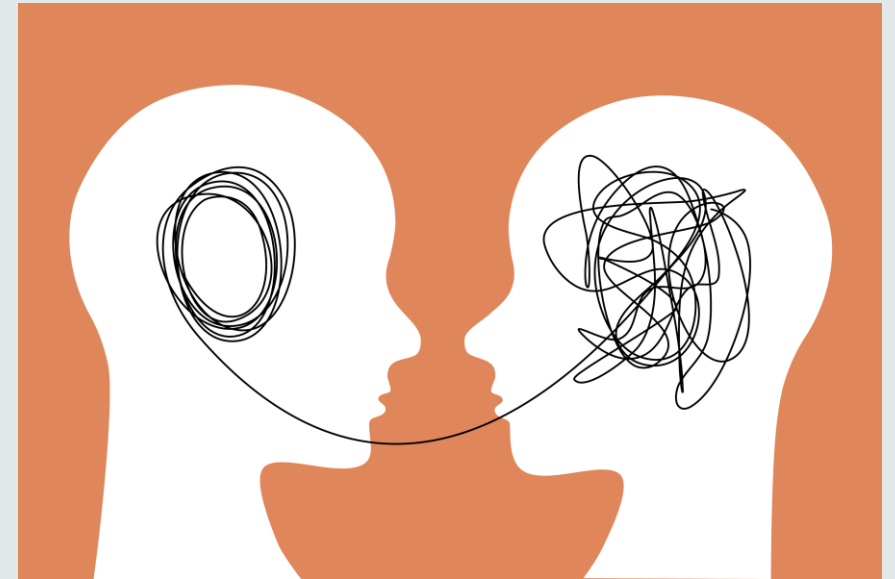
De-escalation

Employ trauma-informed practices in de-escalation

Slow down and think through what kind of support is needed.

- Intervene early by developing rapport
- Offer to talk with a person to see how you can help.
- Provide an alternative way for an opinion to be heard
- If a someone is being defensive, offer choices to help the person be part of the solution.
- Take appropriate safety interventions like asking for help from colleagues or remove bystanders.

Five Step De-escalation Model

1. **Ground yourself**. **Take a deep breath and think about the situation at play — and your goal.**

2. **Assess for safety**. **Get the agitated person away from weapons, harm, and other people**

3. **Show that you are calm**. **Speak calmly, softly, body language is in control**

4. **Ask, listen and empathize**: **Listen and show empathy. Offer choices.**

5. **Have the person exit. Offer a space to calm**

Self Care

Self-Awareness

· Perception of your personality, including strengths, weaknesses, thoughts, beliefs, motivation, and emotions.

Self-Regulation

· Process that monitors, evaluates, and modifies emotional reactions

Self-Efficacy

· The belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals

(National Institute of Health,

paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Professional demands, challenging workplace climates, and exposure to trauma warrant that social workers maintain personal and professional health, safety, and integrity. Social work organizations, agencies, and educational institutions are encouraged to promote organizational policies, practices, and materials to support social workers' self-

NASW Code of Ethics (2021)

Tips for Setting Good Boundaries at Work

- Avoid your work email outside of office hours
- Stick to your work hours.
- Use sick time and mental health days when needed.
- Set away messages when engaged in deep work mode.
- Avoid drama or gossip.
- Do not imprint on someone else's bad mood or outburst.
- Delegate work when necessary.
- Create a schedule that prioritizes the balance in work-life balance.

(Usborne, 2021)

Creating a culture of Care Among Library Staff

Regularly Check-in with one another
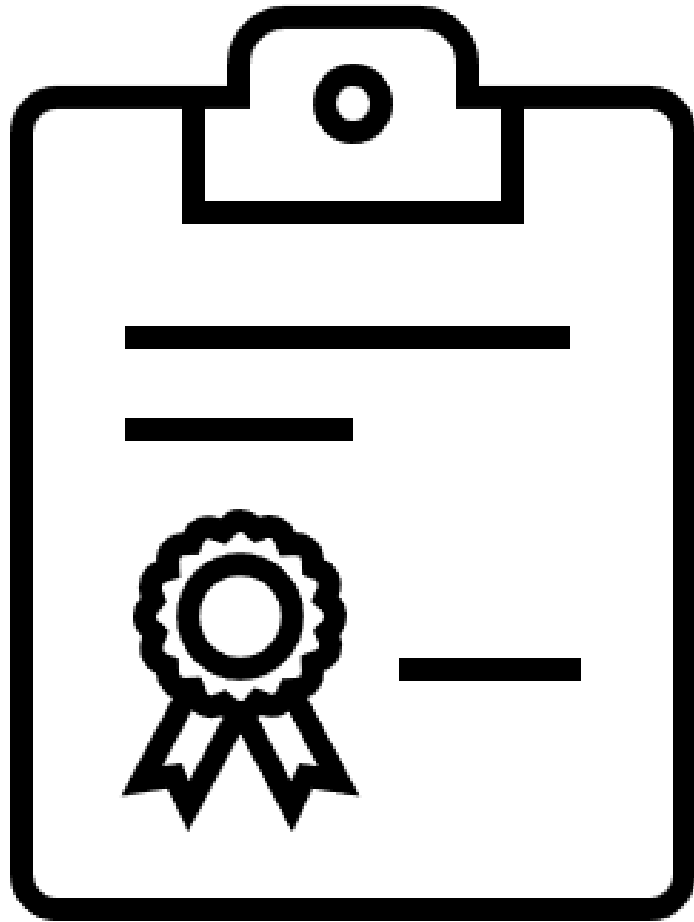
Recognize people for outstanding performance

Encourage breaks

Offer and Seek out professional development and training opportunities

Practice Active Listening and Offer Support

Say no to glorifying overworking

Make the workplace fun

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