

From: Alyce Anderson  
Sent: Friday, February 08  
To: Taylor, Reads & Counts Coordinator  
Subject: Library Incident

Hello Taylor,

I am writing to detail the incident I told you about a week ago. I appreciate the time you are taking to look into my concerns and take care of the children that we tutor.

On Tuesday, January 29, I was tutoring a student from Mrs. F's 1st grade class in the library. Mrs. F instructed that after we had finished reading the student's book that we return the current book and look for a new book to check out.

We read the student's book, looked for a new one and proceeded to check out. At the check-out, Ms. X (the librarian) checked the student's account. The student had two books overdue, one which was being returned then. The student did not know about the missing one that was on their account. Ms. X proceeded to explain to the student about how the book was missing and that it needed to be returned. She was very harsh in her explanation, and ended the conversation saying, "it's stolen" and "you're going to pay for it," all the while literally pointing fingers at the student in a very demeaning tone of voice.

I understood the reasoning for the conversation, but even as I was walking away, I thought it was very over the top for a first grader. It was more fear-inducing than effective; I would have cried instantly if I was the student she was speaking to. As the student and I were walking back to Mrs. F's classroom, I tried to console the student about the situation, but also helping to understand that we needed to find the book because the books in the library belonged to everyone at our school. We did not make it far down the hall way, and at the Statue of Liberty, the student burst into tears and could not move. I did not leave to get Mrs. F until another teacher was walking her class to lunch and she said she would watch my student, as I knew I could not leave my student alone.

I told Mrs. F, and she took care of the situation and was able to bring our student back in the classroom. I did find out after the incident that this student may have some level of autism, and generally does not react to many situations well. But even so, the tone of the incident greatly impacted me.

After I left school that day, I realized how upset I was by how the situation was addressed by Ms. X. I am writing this because I have been surprised before by how she handles situations in the library and how she treats her students, and this recent one brought me to action when it happened while I was with a student. Even if this is the first time a child has reacted to her discipline in this way, I know it also needs to be the last. I need to advocate for my students, especially as I saw my first grader burst into tears out of fear, unable to control their own body. I understand that discipline needs to be instilled in students, but I felt this was done disrespectfully. My student was treated with disregard to their dignity, and I never want my students to feel disrespected in this way.

Please let me know if I need to do anything else.

Thank you,  
Alyce Anderson