Crisis Communication

ACM Interactivity 2017

Panel

• Dora Lipper
  KidsQuest Children’s Museum
• Anais Rodriguez
  Miami Children’s Museum,
• Marilee Jennings
  Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose
• MaryAnn Viviano
  Kidspace Children’s Museum
De-escalation Training
We can only control what we can control.

We can’t control...
Consistency
Expectations

Reality
**Whoa Words and Go Words**

**Whoa words** slow down the lines of communication:

- Unfortunately
- I’m sorry
- But
- However
- I can’t
- You should have
- You have to

**Go words** move communication in the right direction:

- Let me find the answer to that
- Here are some options for you
- That’s a good question
- I will
- Thank you
- I would be frustrated too if

**KidsQuest**

Children’s Museum
Start with a smile

Let go of the need to be right

Welcome feedback, don’t fear it

When all else fails, call for back-up
Threatening actions by a visitor must be stopped immediately.
Create a Physical Barrier with Your Hands
In the end, remember why we are here!
Miami Children’s Museum

Anais Rodriguez
Associate Director of Museum Experiences
First Check Point: DFI
Second Check Point: Security
Third Check Point: Security
In addition we have Rigid Entrance and Sign in Policies:

- Adults are not permitted in the Museum without children
- All persons who have meetings with MCM staff must leave their photo ID and are escorted to their meeting
- All (non-parent) visitors to MCMCS must leave their photo ID and are escorted to the school.

Our policies and procedures are based on information from the City of Miami and Miami Dade County Police, FBI, and Homeland Security. Our museum is also monitored by security cameras (with digital backup).
Crisis Scenarios at MCM

- Bomb Threats
- Power Outages
- Unauthorized Pick-Ups
- Aggravated Disputes
- Visitor Sickness or Injuries
Gun Found at Miami Children’s Museum

WATSON ISLAND (CBS4)- What should have been a fun day of learning at the Miami Children’s Museum turned into a potentially dangerous situation when a parent found a gun.

Miami police said that on March 6th, the parent who discovered the unloaded .38 caliber pistol turned the weapon directly over to security personnel who in turn called the Miami Police Department and gave the gun to them, according to a statement issued by the Museum, located at 980 MacArthur Causeway, Monday.
OFFICIAL STATEMENT FROM MIAMI CHILDREN’S MUSEUM:

Today, Sunday, March 6th, a small firearm was discovered on the premises of the Miami Children’s Museum. It was found by a parent who turned it directly over to security personnel at the Museum. Security called Police and turned the gun over to them and they are investigating the matter. At no time was any patron of the Museum in any danger.

In the 26 years that the Miami Children’s Museum has been in existence, this is the first time that a situation of this kind has ever been experienced. We strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment where children and families can play, learn, imagine and create. We will continue to assure the safety of all our patrons for the future.
Internal Protocol

- All staff are instructed to contact Security upon encountering a crisis situation

- Ensure department leads receive the accurate information

- Department Leads know their specific roles
  - Identify who will need to be informed
Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose

Marilee Jennings
Executive Director
May, 2017
San Jose – Majority Minority City

San Jose, CA
Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity*

- **Asian**: 33%
- **Hispanic**: 33%
- **Other**: 3%
- **White**: 28%
- **African-American**: 3%

*United States Census Bureau, 2010
San Jose Household Income Distribution

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014
CDM’s Mission and Vision

Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose inspires creativity, curiosity, and lifelong learning so that today’s children become tomorrow’s visionaries.
CDM Demographics

• 400,000+ visitors per year comprised of families and school field trips

• 60% come from within a 10-mile radius; add’l 25% from up to 30 miles

• *Open Door Policy* and *Museums for All* program serve 60,000 annually

• Audience demographics mirror San Jose demographics
Recognizing Cultural Differences: A Proactive Approach

Each new audience development initiative includes:

- Formation of a community advisory committee/experts
- Modifications to the visitor experience to be welcoming
- Staff training for all staff; in depth training for visitor experience staff
Going Deeper in Understanding

Strategies to support ongoing cultural competence learning:

• Daily floor staff debriefs
• Weekly Managers’ meetings
• Cultural Confidence Committee
Some challenging cultural issues arise from various places:

- Different parenting styles
- Lack of understanding of how a process works
- Inadvertent offense
- Open Racism
CDMSJ Strategy

Emotions are likely very high

• Approach every negative visitor interaction with cultural differences in mind
• End any negative behavior that is occurring
• De-escalate; assure visitor you are listening and ready to help
• Share the Museum’s position or actions on the source of the problem
• Work towards visitor being able to move on with their visit
In support of the Museum’s learning culture:

• Talk about the situation and your handling at debrief

• Bring it to the discussion at the Mangers’ meeting for feedback

• Take action on anything that needs to change to reduce conflict in the future
Crisis

Any situation that threatens the integrity or reputation of the organization. A potential crisis may include a situation pertaining to legal dispute, theft, injury, fire, flood, earthquake, gas leak, pandemic influenza outbreak, or other threat to the museum.
July 28, 2015
Messaging

When the emergency occurs, the need to communicate is immediate. Answering media requests as promptly as possible is essential to positive public perception of the handling of the crisis. The information should be definitive and not speculation.
Crisis Communication Steps

- Identify a Crisis Communication Team
- Identify Audiences
- Public Statements
- Spokesperson
- Media Guidelines
# Identify Audiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Designated Kidpace Staff To Relay Messaging</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Guests</td>
<td>Chief Operations Officer/Floor Management Team / Reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injured parties &amp; families impacted by incident</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer w/ approval from insurance provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees and their families</td>
<td>Accounting &amp; HR Manager/Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Media</td>
<td>Spokesperson (CEO or Marketing Manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funders / Donors</td>
<td>Chief Development Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Elected Officials</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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</tbody>
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* If the duty cannot be fulfilled by the designated party, the Chief Executive Officer or the most senior officer will assume this responsibility.
Public Statements

Sample #1:
A (what happened) at (location) involving (who) occurred today at (time). The incident is under investigation and more information will be forthcoming.

Sample #2:
Facts are still being gathered but there will be a press release distributed at (time).

Sample #3:
Facts pertaining to the incident are under investigation but there will be a press conference at (location) that is scheduled for (time).
Media Guidelines

• Designate a media center for interviews and press briefings. Don’t make it too remote or it won’t be utilized.
• Prepare talking points or drafted statement.
• Anticipate questions and prepare responses.
• Drafted statements can be read over the telephone to reporters who call to request information but are not represented at news conferences or briefings.
• Keep a media contact log of all calls received that is inquiring about the crisis. Note date, name of caller, telephone number, and questions asked.