

# Community Conversation

Insight summaries from November session



A library may be a haven or sanctuary for students who feel marginalized, intimidated, or threatened elsewhere, for instance at school or even at home. That feeling of being unsafe prior to arrival can affect the environment inside the space, especially without the necessary tools for nonviolent conflict resolution.

Encountering a library full of hundreds of students can bring feelings of anxiety, chaos, and exclusion for adult patrons based on the sheer volume of students from throughout the city who appear unsupervised outside of formally structured time.

Students need access to “third spaces” to socialize and just be with friends after school, where they are not forced to spend money. Third spaces can build community with others in person and serve as unplugged social environments.

As a geographic cornerstone, surrounding neighborhoods and populations have a role to play in the maintenance of a shared public space, like a library. Because patrons can use any library branch, their sense of belonging may shift and even wane as they travel.

Safety is a feeling based on the trust that others will have your back; a physical and emotional protection that we all need and deserve. Although, since we perceive safety differently depending on our own identity, position, and experience, we should provide ways for all people to explore what safety means to them.