THE ROLE CHILDREN’S LIBRARIANS PLAY IN FOSTERING LITERACY IN THE COMMUNITY

Kathleen Bing

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

May 2009

Committee:

Dr. Cindy Hendricks, Advisor

Dr. Nancy Fordham

Sara Bushong
ABSTRACT

Dr. Cindy Hendricks, Advisor

The purpose of this study was to investigate the roles of children’s librarians in public libraries. Between 150 librarians from various cities and states were sent a short survey to take that inquired about their responsibilities as well as asked the librarians to review the core beliefs about children’s librarianship and indicate if they felt this value is still relevant and something they practice, still relevant but something they don’t practice, or not relevant and not practiced. Librarians who indicated that they would like to participate in a phone interviewed were called and asked to expand on the reasons they answered the questions from the survey the way they did. Results were analyzed from both the surveys and the interviews and used to find out more about the roles of children’s librarians and how they perceive their role and responsiblities.

It was found that a majority of librarians surveyed felt that the nine core beliefs about children’s librarianship, based on the five laws of children’s librarianship, are still relevant and still practiced. Librarians who were interviewed expanded further on how exactly they implement and practice these core beliefs.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandparents, Harry and Violet Bing. Their commitment to seeing their children and grandchildren succeed in school has encouraged me to excel from a young age. My grandfather taught me how hard work and sacrifice, in addition to a good education, is the key to changing my life. I thank my grandmother for showing me it’s possible to be both pretty and smart.

I would like to thank my mom and Nana for being my inspiration to teach, and my dad and brothers for supporting me in everything I do. I would also like to express my appreciation to the rest of the Martha Gesling Weber Reading Center graduate assistants and faculty, for becoming my family in Bowling Green, and making this year worth it.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theoretical Orientation for the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation and Self Selection</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Literacy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History of the Children's Library</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children's Librarianship</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role of the Children's Librarian</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Service Funding</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>METHODS AND PROCEDURES</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection ........................................................................................................................................... 25
Data Analysis ........................................................................................................................................... 25
Summary ................................................................................................................................................ 26

CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS ................................................................. 27
Data Analysis ........................................................................................................................................... 27

Responsibilities of the Children’s Librarians ..................................................................................... 28
Core Belief I ........................................................................................................................................... 28
Core Belief II ......................................................................................................................................... 29
Core Belief III ........................................................................................................................................ 30
Core Belief IV ....................................................................................................................................... 31
Core Belief V ......................................................................................................................................... 32
Core Belief VI ....................................................................................................................................... 34
Core Belief VII ..................................................................................................................................... 34
Core Belief VIII ................................................................................................................................... 35
Core Belief IX ....................................................................................................................................... 36

Discussion of Results .......................................................................................................................... 37

Summary ................................................................................................................................................ 37

CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .................................................. 39
Summary ................................................................................................................................................ 39
Conclusions ......................................................................................................................................... 41
Recommendations ............................................................................................................................... 43

Librarians ........................................................................................................................................... 43
Parents ................................................................................................................................................... 44
Teachers ................................................................................................................................. 45

Future Research ...................................................................................................................... 45

Summary .................................................................................................................................. 45

REFERENCES .......................................................................................................................... 47

APPENDIX A. SURVEY DOCUMENTS .................................................................................. 51

APPENDIX B. COVER LETTER .......................................................................................... 53

APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ............................................................................... 55

APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS .................................................................... 57

APPENDIX E. DATA TABLES ................................................................................................. 73
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Many avid adult readers can trace their love for books back to hours spent pouring over picture books at their local public library. A long awaited trip to the library brought a chance to have new adventures and escape an ordinary day through the pages of a good book. Stepping through the door and into the children’s area, with brightly colored murals and shelves of children’s books lining the walls, was like stepping into another world.

Fond memories of the “Children’s Section” in the library usually go hand in hand with memories of a caring, enthusiastic children’s librarian who greeted each child with a smile and was readily available to recommend books. Preschool story hours and summer reading clubs have long been traditional services of the library in which many children have participated. Children’s librarians have the chance to watch their young patrons grow and mature as readers and are there to help and guide them through this process.

According to Neuman (2002), “…libraries are vital for children's achievement and developing informational needs” (p. 4). Children’s libraries are an invaluable service offered to the community. Beyond a home for books, children's libraries provide the community a place to incubate early literacy in young patrons, resources for parents, and programs that assist in creating a community of competent readers and foster love for literacy.

Statement of Problem

The children's library is not merely a room full of children’s books stacked on shorter shelves. For a children’s library to be effective and foster literacy in the community, trained professionals need the resources to create and run an environment that is
conducive to learning. As presented in Children and Libraries: Getting it Right, Walter (2002) presents five laws of children’s librarianship, as follows:

1. Libraries serve the reading interests and information needs of all children directly and through service to parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children.

2. Children’s librarians provide the right book or information for the right child at the right time in the right place.

3. Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books, information technology, and ideas.

4. Children’s librarians promote children’s literacy in all media.

5. Children’s librarians honor their traditions and create the future. (p.19)

It is assumed that the role of the children’s librarian is ever changing and fluctuating to adapt to changes in literacy and media, and the needs of the patrons, but that even with these changes, children’s librarians still stay true to these core beliefs about children’s librarianship.

Research Question

The purpose of this study was to explore the roles of children’s librarians and how they perceive their role and responsibilities in relation to the five laws of children’s librarianship identified by Walter (2002). Research was conducted in the form of surveys and interviews to determine how widely practiced these laws are, and whether or not children’s librarians find these laws relevant. The question investigated in this study was: How do children’s librarians perceive their roles and responsibilities with respect to the five laws of children’s librarianship?
Rationale

This study was conducted to explore the roles of children's libraries and the perceptions children’s librarians have about their roles and responsibilities. There is such a strong desire in the United States to improve literacy education and if children’s librarians can have an effect on literacy in the community, their resources need to be used to their full potential.

Because so much of libraries’ funding is based on proof of need and service, it is important that the role librarians they play be made known. A major problem in obtaining and keeping funding for children's libraries is “a lack of measurable outcomes for our work” (Walter, 2002, p. 18). It is often assumed that the children’s librarian’s job description consists of mainly preschool storytimes and running a summer book club. In reality, when given the available resources, children’s librarians can play a key role in fostering literacy in the community (Walter, 2004).

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions are essential to the understanding of this study:

**Children's Librarians:** A public librarian who works with children and young adults at the library.

**Children's library:** This term will be used to describe the children or youth section of a public library or a stand-alone building that serves children aged birth to 18, and their parents. This term does not include school libraries or libraries that are privately funded.

**Storytime:** Any instance where children meet at the library and the children’s librarian, or a volunteer, reads a story aloud and engages the children in discussion and activities pertaining to the book.
**Young Adult:** Young adult materials and services are geared toward the teenage patrons, of patrons age 12-18.

**Library Program:** Any workshop, activity, social gathering, lesson, or class offered by the public library to its patrons.

**Read-aloud:** Any situation where someone reads a story out loud to a child, adult, or group of people. Comprehension and discussion questions may or may not be presented throughout the reading.

**Limitations**

A major limitation for this study was that the participants being interviewed may not fully disclose information with complete honesty when answering questions. They may have given answers that were based more on what they thought was expected rather than truth. Their answers may also be affected by the fact that the answers will be published.

Another limitation is the population interviewed. Librarians were interviewed from Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania in various settings, including urban, suburban, and rural. The children's librarians interviewed provided different answers depending on the location of their library, the amount of funding they receive, the diversity and needs of their patrons, and the duties and responsibilities expected from them. Because surveys were sent through the mail, there was no way to control who returned the survey, and who volunteered to answer the additional interview questions.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Children’s librarians play important roles in the community. Many parents and caregivers bring their young children to the library to introduce them to the joys of reading. The children’s librarian is there to facilitate early exposure to literacy and to guide parents and children to becoming lifelong readers. Various research studies have shown that motivation is a key factor in success in reading. Children’s librarians are responsible for reaching out to the youth of the community and drawing them into the library with exciting book selections and motivating programs. The role of children’s librarians goes beyond storytimes and summer book clubs. Chapter two will provide the theoretical orientation of this study, the research that supports the actions of children’s librarians, the historical background of the children’s library and librarian, and the role of the children’s librarian,

Theoretical Orientation for the Study

The theoretical orientation guiding this study is the belief that for children to become good, lifelong readers, it is imperative that they are exposed to literacy early in life and that they are motivated to read (Allington, 1994). Children need to have access to a variety of interesting and motivating reading materials. It is also important that they have adults in their lives that model good reading and support reading. Children’s librarians and libraries, when properly funded and staffed with trained and caring individuals, can help bring these services to communities.

Motivation and Self Selection

According to Fielding, Wilson, and Anderson, “The key to improved reading achievement is very simple: Encourage students to read on their own for ten minutes a day” (as cited in Gunning, 2008, p. 421). Allowing children to choose the books that they
read will motivate them to read on their own more frequently (Gunning). Allington (1994) stresses that personal interest “remains the most potent factor in the development of reading processes” (p. 95). Reading development grows through repeated practice. As children read more, their reading abilities improve (Rasinski, 2003).

A study by Worthy, Moorman, and Turner (1999), found that there is a large discrepancy between the materials children prefer to read and the materials readily available at schools and libraries. If children do not have access to the materials they want to read, like comics, magazines, and popular series books, they will lose their motivation to read (Worthy et al.). Worthy et al. state, “...students’ preferences must be addressed in order to capture their attention and engagement, and, thus, to foster conditions for learning” (p. 24). Children are apt to read more when they have a greater number and selection of materials available (Krashen, 1993). Providing children with interesting books is one of the best incentives available for encouraging children to read (Ramos & Krasaen, 1998).

Hughes-Hassell and Lutz (2006) conducted a study that surveyed the habits and attitudes of urban middle school students when reading for leisure. Leisure reading is defined as reading a student chooses to do as opposed to reading required by a teacher or parent. Many students, especially those who cannot afford to purchase books at a bookstore or through a mail order service, go to the public library to obtain books to read. When surveyed in the study, these teenagers indicated that as young children, they enjoyed traditional storybooks, but as young adults related better to books that had characters and plots with which that they could relate (Hughes-Hassell & Lutz). They also indicated that they enjoyed reading multicultural literature, urban young adult literature, magazines
geared towards teenagers, biographies of celebrities and athletes, graphic novels, comic books and pages on the Internet. This study also stresses that student’s need to have materials of interest available to them (Hughes-Hassell & Lutz; Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007).

Children learn best when they are intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation develops through a child’s own personal interests. Much of the reading students do for school is out of extrinsic motivation. They are motivated by the desire and need to satisfy teachers, parents, and peers. Intrinsic motivation has been shown to increase reading ability and skills (Sweet & Guthrie, 1996).

Early Literacy

Research shows that there exists a “tyranny of time” children must battle when learning to read (Kemmenui, 1993). If children do not acquire reading skills at a young age, there is a greater chance that they will remain poor readers in the future (Kammenui; Rasinski, 2003). Morrow and Tracey (2007) argue, “Babies begin to acquire information about literacy from the moment they are born” (p. 57). For children to become successful readers, it is essential to surround them with a literacy-rich environment. Children need to be provided with opportunities to experience reading and build a positive attitude towards reading (Morrow & Tracey).

The Commission on Reading (1985) stresses that “…the single most important activity for developing the knowledge required for eventual success in reading” is joint book reading (as cited in Bus, IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995, p. 2). Reading aloud to a child, especially at a young age, exposes the child to language structure, and story language (Bus et al.). Reading aloud builds children’s background knowledge, as well as their listening and
speaking vocabularies (Perkins & Cooter, 2005) It also facilitates discussion about books and listening comprehension skills, which are building blocks to becoming a good reader (Bus et al.). Graves, Juel and Graves (2001), assert that children who have been read to before they enter school “... enter classrooms with considerably more ideas about how print works, more understanding of how stories work, and more knowledge of literary language and structure than children who lack this advantage” (p. 90). Children who read with their parents, caregivers or other adults also are more experienced in the types of questions they can answer about a given piece of writing. Before these children even enter school, they understand that books are part of their lives and have important messages. They show a greater interest in books and learning to read, because reading has been a part of their childhood (Graves et al.).

Allowing children to experience books at a young age gives them the opportunity to learn about books. Through storytimes and opportunities to handle books, children learn the skills necessary for early literacy. They learn the parts of the book, and the left-to-right sequence. They also learn to distinguish between pictures and text. Exposure to multiple types of text is also important. Children should learn about stories, newspapers, nonfiction books, menus, and other types of text that surround them (Morrow & Tracey, 2007).

Phonemic awareness is essential when learning to read (Graves et al. 2001; Rasinski, 2003). Rasinski states that phonemic awareness is usually “…developed through opportunities to play with the sound of language—to hear sounds, make sounds, and manipulate sounds in an engaging and metacognitive manner” (p. 3). Children acquire this knowledge through exposure to rhymes, songs, chants and poems. When children are read these poems and songs from a book, they not only have the opportunity to the “explore the
sound of the letter”, but also to match words in print with the spoken sounds that they make (Rasinski, p. 3). Early letter-sound relationships and understanding of print symbols develop in this manner (Rasinski).

Although formal reading instruction does not begin until children enter school, the foundation of successful readers is built in the early years of their lives. Reading to young children who are not yet in school and exposing them to books and print sets them up to be successful readers for life (Vacca, Vacca, Gove, & Burkey, 2003).

History of the Children’s Library

In 1854, the Boston Public Library opened. This was the first publicly funded library to open its doors in America. To enter the Boston Public Library, a person had to be at least 16 years old. At other libraries around the country, there were varying age requirements, and in some cases, girls were not permitted to enter, even if they met the age requirement (Cummins, 1999; Lepore, 2008).

Libraries were soon established in cities and towns across the United States. Between the years of 1881 and 1917, Andrew Carnegie supervised the construction of more than 1600 public libraries in America. Even with all of these new libraries, the public’s view on the libraries’ purpose was not the same as what it is today. Many believed that nonfiction was inferior and less intellectual than fiction. Children were still not permitted to enter the libraries (Lepore, 2008).

Anne Carroll Moore, who grew up in Limerick, Maine, spent her childhood sharing books and stories with her father and grandmother, and reading on her own. Moore originally wanted to be a lawyer, which was unheard of for a woman at the time (McElderry, 1992). In 1895, at age 24, she moved to New York City, and in 1896, she was
assigned the task of creating the Children's Library of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. Moore worked hard to create an environment that was attractive to children, and that would foster a love for literacy among its first young patrons (Bader, 1998; Lepore, 2008).

Kindergartens were just beginning to open around the country at the same time, and Moore spent much time touring the local facilities and researching the way the classrooms were arranged, so that she could best set up her children's section. She took note of the child sized tables and chairs, the artwork on display, the plants in the rooms and most importantly, the books, and created the first children’s library (Cummins, 1999; Lepore, 2008).

In 1911, Moore was hired as the superintendent of the New York Public Library’s Department of Work with Children. Her job description included heading all of the children’s programs at all of the New York Public Library branches, as well as creating the Central Children’s Room (Cummins, 1999; McElderry, 1992). By 1913, one third of all books borrowed from the New York Public Library were children’s books (Lepore, 2008).

Moore was a pioneer in children’s librarianship. In 1911 alone, she organized over 200 story hours, and each year, the number increased. She researched and created a list of 2,500 standard children’s books that was used as a guide for children’s libraries around the country. She fought to remove any age restrictions and to give children the ability to borrow books from the library on their own. The only requirement was the ability to write their name. Moore introduced programs that celebrated the heritages of a very diverse New York City. She filled the library with books in foreign languages so that all children had an opportunity to enjoy literature. Moore removed the “silence” signs from the walls and replaced them with framed illustrations from well-loved children's books (Lepore, 2008).
In 1919, Moore organized the first Children’s Book Week, as a celebration of reading and children’s literature. This even took place in the children’s room of the New York Public Library. Events were hosted at the library to recognize children’s books and children’s involvement in reading. Kate Douglas Wiggin, the author of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, was the speaker at the main event. Fredric Melcher, the editor of Publisher’s Weekly and secretary of the American Booksellers Association, participated in Children’s Book Week. As a result of this event, his interest in children’s literature was piqued and established the Newbery and Caldecott awards (Bader, 1998; Cummins, 1999).

Between the 1920s and the 1950s, the concept of the children’s library, create and implemented by Moore became “…an institutionalized part of public library offerings” (Walter, 2001, p. 6). Libraries began expanding the outreach of the children’s library, and started offering specialized services to young adults. In 1956, the federal government passed the Library Services Act. This act provided funding for the construction of new libraries and expansion of services for already existing libraries (Walter).

In the 1960s, public libraries ventured out and expanded their outreach to attract new patrons who typically did not utilize the services of the libraries. Librarians tried to attract nonwhite patrons and patrons from a lower economic class to the library. They offered new programs, beyond storytimes, to create a new interest in the library. Children’s librarians mobilized their storytimes and brought their books to projects playgrounds and local street festivals. They added multicultural stories and literature to their book collection (Walter, 2001).

In 1997, the Library Services and Technology Act, was passed. This act funded “the development of electronic information resources and the establishment of electronic
linkages among libraries” (Walker, 2001, p. 8). This act also “...aims to improve the provision of library services to underserved populations” (Walter, p. 8). Until 1997, when this act was passed, the U.S. Department of Education was in charge of the public libraries. This act created the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which takes responsibility for the public libraries in the country (Walter).

Children’s Librarianship

The formal job description of a children’s librarian is a librarian who “coordinates collections and services for patrons under age eighteen and their caregivers” (Shontz & Murray, 2007, p. 11). Children’s librarians are in charge of more than just organizing storytime and helping children navigate the children’s section of the library. Children’s librarians are also responsible for offering reference services, coming up with innovative and appealing programs, drawing new patrons into the library, advocating for funding, and overall creating an environment that is conducive to fostering a love and appreciation for literacy.

As presented in Children and Libraries: Getting it Right, Walter (2002) presents five laws of children’s librarianship, as follows:

1. Libraries serve the reading interests and information needs of all children directly and through service to parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children.

2. Children’s librarians provide the right book or information for the right child at the right time in the right place.

3. Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books, information technology, and ideas.
4. Children’s librarians promote children’s literacy in all media.

5. Children’s librarians honor their traditions and create the future. (p. 19)

Role of the Librarian

The children’s librarian has many roles and responsibilities. Children’s librarians work to get to know the children who come to the library and help them select books that they will be interested in (Walter, 2004). Roxburgh states that the two essential characteristics of children’s literature are “the opportunity to imagine and the transformative power of dramatic action” (as cited in Walter, 2002, p. 19). Children’s librarians guide their patrons in discovering books that fit these two elements (Walter, 2002).

Computers and Internet have become integral parts of the children’s library. The card catalog, once a large cabinet with many drawers, housing individual cards with book information and local, have now been reformatted to be accessed online. Although typically children are viewed as more computer savvy than adults, they still struggle to obtain information from these online card catalogs. Limited spelling and vocabulary knowledge, as well as the inability to formulate proper Boolean searches, can be frustrating for children, and even lead them to believe that there are no books in the library on the topic they have searched.

With traditional card catalogs, students could flip through the cards and possibly stumble across a book of interest. Although using an online card catalog has many advantages, this option to browse through listings is not available. With such an overabundance of information available on the Internet and through the online card catalog, children need to be instructed on how to retrieve it. For that reason, children’s
librarians around the country are taking it upon themselves to set up various classes and workshops to teach children and parents alike how to use their card catalogs and how to best navigate the Internet (Walter, 2001).

According to Walter (2001), “Public libraries have always been a resource for homework assignments, but only recently have they begun offering formal homework assistance” (p. 82). Children’s librarians are there to offer assistance to students as well as guide them to the right resources to help them complete school assignments and projects (Bishop & Bauer, 2002). Depending on funding, demand, and programming availability, the amount of homework assistance provided varies between individual libraries. At the very least, children’s librarians are expected to assist students in finding appropriate resources and ability to locate materials in the library (Walter).

The Los Angeles Public Library sponsors Homework Centers that reach out to students of all ages, and provide them with computers and software to assist students with homework assignments and projects. There are monitors who work in the centers to help resolve technical issues, but they are not trained to assist with actual homework assignments. Other programs in various states, including Minnesota, New York and Indiana, use paid aides and volunteers to work with students after school (Walters, 2001).

Traditionally, children’s librarians are responsible for running preschool storytimes during weekday afternoons in the children’s room of the public library. In the past, storytimes consisted of children brought to the library by stay at home parents or caregivers, and the librarian reading a seasonal picture book. Those who attended these storytimes typically had a high enough, stable income to have a parent at home at all times, or a caregiver on a daily basis (Lamme & Russo, 2002).
Storytimes for young children offer more than just a children’s librarian reading a story. Incorporated in these storytimes are often songs, games, craft projects, and finger plays that relate to the story. These additional activities encourage language development, an interest in books and reading, and fine and gross motor skills (DeMicco & Dean, 2002; Hughes-Hassell, Agosto, & Sun, 2007). These storytimes also allow children to develop social skills and make friends. In addition to creating a learning environment for children, parents and caregivers benefit from storytimes too. Children’s librarians can use this time to educate and model how parents and caregivers should be interacting with their children and fostering early literacy (DeMicco & Dean, 2002; Walter, 2004).

Storytimes are evolving to meet all the needs of the young child, and to prepare them in all ways possible for reading. According to Bergen (2002):

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that high-quality pretend play is an important facilitator of perspective taking and later abstract thought, that it may facilitate higher-level cognition, and that there are clear links between pretend play and social and linguistic competence. (p. 1)

Some children’s libraries are using books to facilitate play and make believe. Reading books gives children the background knowledge on which to build their imaginary worlds and situations (Bergen, 2002; Vacca et al., 2003). The Greenville County Library System, in Greenville, South Carolina, has created a program called Let’s Pretend. This program, organized and run by the children’s librarians, invites children aged two to five and their parents to meet once a month and explore books, play games, learn songs and use their imaginations. While children play, the librarians show the parents ways to help their children create playthings out of common, household items (Bane, 2008). The goal of this
program is to “guide children through play that focuses on the imagination and fosters the
development of thinking, language, social, and physical skills” (Bane, p. 22).

Children’s librarians around the country have been working hard to adapt and meet
the needs of all types of families from different economic backgrounds and reach out to as
many children in the community as possible (Lamme & Russo, 2002). One way children’s
librarians are doing this is by bringing storytimes to daycare centers that are both privately
owned and federally subsidized for low income families (Arnold, 2002; Lamme & Russo).
Research states that, “the impact of the discrepancy between book access for low- and
upper-income children is great” (Lamme & Russo, p. 36). To better able bring the joys and
benefits of books to lower income children, it is becoming more common for children’s
librarians to bring storytimes and books to daycares that are federally subsidized. When
possible, childcare centers and preschools bring the class to the children’s library for a tour
and to get the children interested in the library (Arnold).

According to the 2007 Kids Count report, in the United States, 62% of “children
under six have all available parents in the labor force.” In the past, libraries have only
offered storytimes and activities for younger patrons in the afternoon. Children whose
parents work during the day were unable to attend these storytimes. Some children’s
librarians reach out by offering storytime sessions in the evening or on weekends so that
parents who work can bring their children (Hughes-Hassell et al., 2007; Lamme & Russo,
2002). Children’s librarians have been expanding their outreach by creating programs that
make early literacy activities accessible to all children. Many public libraries have created
websites that provide early literacy support for parents and children, as well as provide
links to other websites that offer interactive stories, activities, and parent information.
Some libraries have set up “Dial-a-Story”, which allows children to call and listen to stories being read by library staff, over the phone, 24 hours a day. Other libraries offer videos online of the librarian reading a story and singing or acting out finger plays. Children’s librarians develop storytime kits that contain books with activities and other resources. Parents can check out these kits and share them at home with their children. Most libraries instate these programs as a response to the needs of their communities (Hughes-Hassell et al.).

Children’s librarians have also been expanding the age groups that they reach through storytimes. Many libraries offer storytimes for children and their parents between the ages of birth and 36 months old, and are now adding booktalks and read-alouds for young adults (DeMicco & Dean, 2002; Follos, 2007). Booktalks and read-alouds introduce young adults to literature and get them excited about reading. Adults generally view read-alouds as something only young children enjoy, but teenagers enjoy being read to. As students get older and progress from elementary school to middle and high school, the teacher reading aloud is eliminated and replaced with the expectation that students read all course materials themselves. This is a difficult and daunting task, an often causes young adults to despise reading. Conducting read-alouds with young adults allows them to sit back and enjoy reading again. It also lessens the gap between the struggling readers and the proficient readers. Children’s librarians can use read-alouds to introduce young adults to new titles available or expose them to literature that they may find enjoyable (Follos).

Children’s libraries and librarians can be an integral resource to the local schools. They work with teachers and administrators to develop curriculum and provide resources to their patrons that align with what is being taught in school. Ramos and Krashen (1998)
conducted a study in inner city Los Angeles, California that set up a partnership between
the public library and a low-income elementary school. This elementary school provided
little access to books for the students. Classes of second and third graders from this school,
who mainly came from print-poor households were brought to the public library during
school hours, but before the library was open to the public. Students were permitted to
explore the library and choose up to ten books. The students then brought the books back
to their classroom and had the option of taking the books home as well. Through parent
and student interviews, it was found that students read more after going to the library and
that they found reading easier. A total of 67% of the students asked their parents to take
them to the library, after going with school. This study shows the benefits of a partnership
between public libraries and schools (Ramos & Krashen).

Another role that children’s librarians have taken on is role model and mentor to
their young adult patrons. According to the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development
(1992), “Many American youth are starved for positive interactions with adults”
(Rosenzweig, 1995, p. 58). Young adults need strong adult role models and librarians can
provide some of that support if young adults believe they can rely on them (Rosenzweig).
Librarians can help youth adult patrons with problems they are facing in their everyday
lives including topics they may not feel comfortable discussing with their own parents.
According to Levine (2002), “Young people need a safe and supportive environment to
research and obtain accurate sexuality information that will help them build a foundation
as they mature into sexually healthy adults” and youth service librarians can help provide
young adults with the materials and resources to make responsible decisions pertaining to
their health (p. 45).
Because school is not in session over the summer, children who regularly accessed books during the school year from their school libraries or classrooms go to the public libraries. According to Heyns (1978), “More than any other public institution, including the schools, the public library contributed to the intellectual growth of children during the summer” (p. 77). Summer reading programs are another popular service that most children’s libraries offer. These programs, which have been in existence since the mid-1890s, encourage children, age birth to 18, to read or have someone read to them through the months of the summer while school is out (Arnold, 2002; Craft, 2008). These programs aim to offer incentives that celebrate reading and instill a sense of pride in children when they complete a book (Craft). Summer Reading Programs have gained popularity and have become a tradition in most public libraries, not only because they are fun, but because they have educational benefits. A study from Johns Hopkins University Center for Summer Learning (2004) argues that “…children who reading during the summer retain or improve their reading skills from the previous school year to the current one and that children who do not…demonstrate a significant loss of reading skills from the previous school year” (as cited in Craft, p. 8).

Children’s librarians are always working to bring new programs into the library. Both children and parents need to realize that literacy extends through all areas of academia and of life. Children’s librarians are committed to making this known throughout the community. One Oregon library hosts an interactive exhibit called “Go Figure!” which combines mathematics and popular children’s literature. They followed up the exhibit with mathematics workshops for parents (Arnold, 2002).
Youth Service Funding

Lack of funding has always been one of the main problems public children’s libraries have faced (Jones, 2001). According to a report released by the United States Department of Education, “...more money spent on libraries in a community may lead to more reading” (as cited in McQuillan, 2003, p. 46). It was found that in all different sizes and types of communities, the more money allotted and spent on public libraries, the more libraries were used and the higher the levels of circulation (McQuillan). According to this study, “A community spending about $550,000 a year on its library had a 67 percent greater general circulation than communities spending $300,000” (McQuillan, p. 46). Research shows that the more money that is available to a library, the more librarians they can hire, the more books and resources they can provide and the greater the number of hours they can be open.

Children’s librarians often have new programs and materials that they are interested in implementing and purchasing, but without proper funding, it is impossible. Because many services provided by librarians are not measurable, funding is often cut, because proof of necessity cannot be provided to legislatures (Walter, 2002). Children’s librarians are breaking out of traditional roles and attempting to offer services to which younger generations will respond. Unfortunately, “without adequate funding...these new and significant initiatives that respond effectively to the changing loves of children and families will undoubtedly be abandoned...” (Walter, p. 19).

Because public libraries are funded mainly through taxes, when the economy is struggling, public libraries tend to loose funding. In some libraries, programs are cut, and fewer new materials are purchased. Other libraries are forced to fire employees and close
down entire branches. Even in major cities, like Los Angeles and New York, there are proposals to cut library hours of operation to save money (American Libraries, 2008). Mayor Bill Finch of Bridgeport Connecticut proposed a 25% reduction in funds for the Bridgeport Public Library. This would result in laying off one-third of the staff and closing down branches. Finch, quoted from the April 2 Connecticut Post, “We will not try to be all things to all people. Libraries are not essential services” (as cited in American Libraries, 2008, p. 26).

Summary

The children’s library is an icon in the community. Each day, children walk through the door in search of a new book to bring them a new adventure, or the perfect resource to help them with a school project. Children’s librarians are there to facilitate the search for the perfect book, to run fun and interesting programs and to create an environment that supports a growing love for reading. Research shows that early literacy activities and exposure are essential for developing good reading skills in the future. Storytimes and other programs at the library both educate parents about early literacy and prepare children for success in reading. Children’s libraries offer a larger selection of books and reading materials and children are free to choose to read what interests them. The more interested children are in what they are reading, the more they will read, and the better they will become at reading.
CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This research study was intended to investigate the roles of children’s librarians, and their perceptions of their roles. Walter (2002) identified five laws of children’s librarianship. Children’s librarians devote their time to building collections of outstanding children’s texts, designing programs that are educational and interesting, and offering homework help and supplementing children’s learning with resources from the library. Children’s librarians’ roles differ depending on the library in which they work. It is important to study the how children’s librarians perceive their role in the library and what their actual responsibilities are. This research investigated whether or not children’s librarians believed these laws are relevant and practiced and what evidence supports this.

Methods

Research Design

The question being explored in this study was: How do children’s librarians perceive their roles and responsibilities with respect to the five laws of children’s librarianship? To gather data to answer this question, 150 surveys were sent to children’s librarians. Of the 33 surveys returned, eight librarians volunteered to be interviewed. Interviews were completed over the phone.

According to Mertler (2009), the best approach to use when conducting these interviews is the semistructured interview approach. With this method, “...the researcher asks several ‘base’ questions but also has the option of following up a given response with alternative, optional questions...” (p. 110). This will allow for variation in each interview depending on each librarian’s response.
Participants

The participants in this study were librarians who work with children and young adults. Initially, 150 children’s librarians were contacted via mail to participate in the study. Those selected to receive the survey were chosen based on their title, such as “Children’s Librarian,” “Head of Children’s Services,” and “Youth Services Coordinator.” They were sent letters explaining the survey and optional interview.

Thirty-three librarians responded to the survey and eight of these librarians volunteered to participate in an optional, extended interview. All attempts were made to interview children’s librarians from settings that were representative of different size communities, with different socioeconomic status. Surveys were sent to librarians in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts. Libraries contacted were located in rural, suburban and urban areas.

The thirty-three librarians surveyed were asked to indicate their official titles. Fifteen of the librarians indicated that their official title was either “Children’s Librarian” or “Early Childhood Librarian”. Five librarians had the title of “Youth Services Manager” or “Youth Services Coordinator”. All other titles mentioned were unique.

The thirty-three librarians surveyed were asked to list their main responsibilities. Twenty-eight of the 33 librarians mentioned that they plan programs, and many of the librarians mentioned specific programs that they plan such as storytime, summer reading programs, Ready to Read, and school visits and community outreach. Selecting and ordering materials and upkeep of the collection was frequently mentioned. A majority of librarians listed reader’s advisory, providing reference services and homework guidance as
their responsibilities. Only one librarian mentioned budgeting and hiring, so it can be assumed that most of the librarians surveyed did not have this responsibility.

*Instrumentation*

A survey was developed that queried librarians regarding their responsibilities and the core beliefs of librarianship, as described by Walter (2002). The five laws of librarianship were divided into nine different core belief statements that stated a role of the children’s librarianship. For each core belief statement, the librarian indicated whether she believed that (a) the core belief statement was relevant in her work and that she practiced it, (b) that the core belief statement was relevant but she did not practice it, or (c) that the core belief statement was not relevant and not practiced. The survey is located in Appendix A.

An additional, optional interview was developed and administered over the phone, to consenting participants (see Appendix B). This interview consisted of nine questions, which required the librarians to expand on their answers to the survey, and to provide more depth describing their actual role. This survey was administered over the phone. It can be found in Appendix C.

*Procedures*

The purpose of this study was to identify how children’s librarians perceive their roles and responsibilities in relation to the five laws of children’s librarianship identified by Walter (2002). The data for this study were obtained by surveying various children’s librarians from a variety of locations and settings, and conducting in depth interviews.

Letters of consent, that explained the research project, as well as the survey and interview process, were sent to 150 librarians. Included with each explanatory letter was a
return envelope with postage affixed to it. Surveys were sent out to librarians and returned through the mail.

The letter of consent provided a section for librarians who indicated interest in participating in the interview. If a librarian indicated interest in taking part in the interview, she was contacted via e-mail upon receipt of the signed letter of consent, to set up a date and time for the interview to be completed over the phone. She also received a list of the questions that were to be asked, so that she could prepare for the interview in advance. Also, she received a copy of the five laws of children’s librarianship (Walter, 2002). This list of questions, and the letter of consent can be found in Appendix B.

Each interview was conducted individually over the phone. The interviewer took notes electronically. The conversation was not transcribed verbatim, but rather, important points were recorded. Important quotes were recorded verbatim and set apart from notes by recording them in italics typeface. Pseudonyms were used in place of the actual names of the librarians and libraries. Descriptions were used to describe the setting each library.

Data Collection

Data were collected through responses given by 33 children's librarians by administering a survey. Additional data were collected by interviewing eight of these librarians more in depth, over the phone. See Appendix E for survey responses and Appendix D for interview responses.

Data Analysis

Data collected through the surveys given to the children's librarians were transferred to a table and analyzed to find what percentage of librarians answered with each possible choice for each core belief. Individual identities were kept anonymous.
Interview questions were analyzed to support the findings of the surveys and expand on the answers provided in the survey.

Summary

To examine the role of the children’s librarian and the effect that children’s librarians have on literacy in the community, 33 librarians completed a researcher-developed survey, while 8 children’s librarians from various states and cities participated in more in-depth interviews via telephone. Children’s librarians were asked at least one question from each of the categories identified earlier in the chapter, so that comparisons could be made, and commonalities between the libraries could be identified.
CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the roles of children’s librarians and how they perceive their role and responsibilities in relation to the five laws of children’s librarianship identified by Walter (2002). The first portion of the study involved various children’s librarians completing a short survey that asked them their official title, and their responsibilities. The survey also listed nine statements based on the five laws of children’s librarianship and librarians indicated how relevant and practiced each was. Librarians who participated in this survey were given the option to participate in an additional interview that expanded on the statements from the survey. Eight librarians participated in the in-depth interview process.

Data Analysis

The study began by sending 150 surveys to children’s librarians; a total of 33 librarians returned the survey. The survey listed nine statements based on the laws of children’s librarianship. For each statement, the librarian indicated (a) either that she practiced the idea described in the statement and she believed it was relevant, (b) that the idea was not practiced, but still relevant, or (c) that the idea was neither practiced nor relevant.

Of the 33 children’s librarians who responded to the survey, eight volunteered to participate in the optional interview. Each interview was conducted over the phone and answers were transcribed. Copies of these transcriptions can be found in Appendix D. This interview consisted of nine questions that were designed to provide greater insight into the answers given in the short survey.
Responsibilities of the Children’s Librarian

In each survey, librarians were asked to list their responsibilities in open response form. Responses were then sorted and tallied to determine which responsibilities were most prevalent among various librarians. Planning and carrying out programs was the most mentioned responsibility. Twenty-eight out of 33 librarians mentioned some type of programming as part of their job description. Storytime, summer reading club, selecting and ordering books, and school and community outreach were also frequently mentioned.

Core Belief I

The first core belief of children’s librarianship presented in the survey was: Libraries serve the reading interests and information needs of all children directly. Of the 33 librarians surveyed, 29 librarians indicated that this was a relevant statement and that it was something that they practiced, while four librarians indicated that although this was a relevant belief, it was not something that they practiced. Of those who participated in the optional interview, all agreed with this statement. Anecdotal evidence further expands on this core belief.

Librarian three stressed the importance of getting the children the materials they need. She believes that materials in the library should be accessible, and not just fulfill academic requirements. She knows that the more interested children are in what they are reading, the more they will read. She also believes that it is important to not just find the information or book a child needs. She takes the time to teach patrons how to use the computerized card catalog, Internet and research databases, so that they can become independent. Librarian eight, reveled in her interview, that she believed her most important responsibility as a children’s librarian, is to help children find up to date
information, and provide recreational resource for children that meet a variety of their interests.

*Core Belief II*

The second core belief of children’s librarianship presented on the survey was: *Libraries serve the parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children.* All 33 librarians indicated that this was something that they practiced and was relevant to their job description. All eight librarians interviewed agreed with this as well.

Librarian four, was one of the many librarians who mentioned the Ready to Read Program. This national program has children’s librarians create programs and resources that prepare students for kindergarten. It also informs parents and childcare providers about early literacy practices. Through this program, they can learn about games and strategies to help their young children become ready to read.

Librarian six created a special “Parents Collection”, housed within the children’s library. In this area, there are parenting books for all ages, as well as books that deal with sensitive issues, such as grief, death, and divorce. Parents are able to access these books while their students peruse the rest of the children’s area.

Librarian seven, is the Youth Service Manager for 29 locations in a county. She has facilitated the start up of after school homework help session at 10 of her branch libraries. These programs were started in response to local parents’ needs for quality homework help and a safe place for their children to go after school. They also host various family literacy nights that provide parents and their children with a free dinner and information and fun activities about different topics each month. Past literacy nights included “Great Books” which introduced parents and children with new books as well as book selection
strategies, and "Science Workshop" which included hands on science experiments that integrated reading, and helped children prepare for the upcoming science fairs in the local schools.

Librarian seven, stresses the importance of being open to parents’ suggestions and actually implementing them, if possible. For example, she found that many parents were not bringing their children to storytime because they forgot to register their children. In response, Librarian seven chose to eliminate registration, and has seen an increase in the number of attendants at storytimes.

Librarian eight shared about a unique program she runs at her librarian in conjunction with the local hospital. Together, they partner up to teach prenatal classes at the library to expectant parents. The hospital teaches the expectant parents about prenatal health, as well as the health resources available to them. Then, Librarian eight, gives a presentation about the books and resources the library offers for expectant parents, and also introduces the parents to early literacy activities parents can engage their children in at an early age.

Core Belief III

The third statement about children’s librarianship on the survey was: Children’s librarians provide the right book or information for the right child at the right time in the right place. Thirty of the librarians surveyed indicated that this is something that they practice and is relevant to their job. Three librarians indicated that this is something that is relevant, but not practiced. All librarians interviewed agreed with this. Further explanation of their reasoning follows.
Librarian one provides “readers advisory” for both children and adults. Through conversation and questioning, Librarian one, helps children and adults locate and select the books or information that best suits them. She really enjoys matching kids with books they enjoy. She states “kids are little sponges—it is amazing to see what they are interested in and what their favorite stories are ”. She also educates adults and children how to use different aspects of the library so that they are more comfortable browsing or locating materials. She has a partnership with many of the local teachers. When they assign research type projects, Librarian one creates pages for the library’s website with links to information that can be used for the projects. Students can access this page and find information from the library or from another computer.

Librarian five, is in constant contact with the local schools. Teachers notify her when projects and reports are assigned and she creates displays and collections of books and other information so that students can easily access information they need for school.

Librarian six, when asked her favorite part about being a children’s librarian, replied “I love when I pull a book off the shelf that a child has been looking for or when I recommend a book and the child comes back later to tell me how much they love it and that they want more just like it”. She genuinely enjoys matching a child to a book or source of information that he or she is looking for her. She thinks that it is a vital part of being a great children’s librarian.

Core Belief IV

The fourth statement pertaining to the core beliefs of children’s librarianship was:

*Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books.* All 33 librarians surveyed
indicated that this was something that they practiced and was relevant to their job. All librarians interviewed, believe that this is a key component of their jobs.

Librarian one enjoys the actual process of selecting books for the library and building the collection in the library. She reviews the books and meets with vendors before she chooses new books. She features new and interesting books so that children are more apt to choose them. She loves to see children excited about new books!

According to Librarian two, “I just love children’s books—the timelessness, the quality of writing, the illustrations, the art, that it introduces children to a new way of seeing things.”

Librarian five introduces books to children, and gets them excited about reading and the library by giving book talks at the local schools. She regularly makes trips to the elementary, middle, and high schools and advertises upcoming programs and gives book talks about new books that she believes students will be interested in reading. Students often come to the library the check out the books that she discussed in their classrooms.

Librarian six takes pride in building the collection of books her library has. She believes that the collection “is a very important way to allow children to be introduced to and experience the world outside their community.” She tries her best to organize the collection as well as possible, and to help children find books of interest

**Core Belief V**

The fifth statement presented in the survey about the core beliefs of children’s librarianship was: *Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s information technology.* Twenty-nine of the 33 children’s librarians surveyed indicated that they actively practice this and it is relevant to their job. Four children’s librarians indicated that this is something
that is relevant, but they do not practice it. All librarians interviewed believe that this is relevant and practiced, and some anecdotal evidence follows.

Librarian two tries her best to make different types of technology available for her patrons, even with a limited budget. Her library has computers and Internet access for the children. She teaches children how to access information through the Internet and databases. She also has a non-working computer that she uses to teach children at a young age about computers. Through the library website, patrons can download books onto their computers or iPods. She teaches responsible use through individual interactions.

At many libraries, for children to access the Internet, they need to have a signed parental consent form and/or a library card. Librarian eight asserted that many children in her community needed to access the Internet for school, but were unable to obtain a consent form or library card, both of which require the child’s parent to make a trip to the library. She recently got permission to allow all children to use the children’s room computers and Internet, regardless of whether or not they had a signed letter from their parents or an active library card. Librarian eight believes that with this new rule, all children have access to this important form of technology—even if their parents’ schedules prevent them from coming to the library.

Librarian seven ensures that there when important decisions in the county are being made about technology, there are children and teen representatives on the decision making board. She believes that children and teens should have a say in issues that affect them.
Core Belief VI

The sixth statement presented in the survey about the core beliefs of children’s librarianship was: *Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s ideas*. Twenty-eight children’s librarians indicated that this is something that practice and believe is relevant. Three librarians indicated that this is something that is relevant, but that they do not practice. Two librarians indicated that this is something that is not relevant and not practiced. The eight librarians interviewed all agreed that this is important and something they work hard to practice in their libraries.

Over the past year, Librarian two has organized a children’s and teen’s advisory board. Children and teens who are interested meet once a month with her and her staff, and discuss what programs and materials they would like to see in the library. She opens up discussion among the children, and helps them plan and implement their ideas.

Librarian six believes that it is essential for her and her staff to make connections with the children who come into their library so they feel important and valued. Customer service or “face time” with the children allows these connections to form and for communication to flow freely between them.

Core Belief VII

The seventh statement about the core beliefs of children’s librarianship was: *Children’s librarians promote children’s literacy in all media*. Thirty of the 33 children’s librarians indicated that this is something that they practice and is relevant to their job. Three children’s librarians indicated that this is something that is relevant, but they do not practice. All eight librarians interviewed felt strongly about this issue and provided anecdotal evidence.
Librarian five, has advocated to get different types of media, besides books, in her children’s room. They have a growing collection of CDs, DVDs, and computer games. She often creates displays of books and their movie tie-ins. Librarian five has found that during the summer, when parents or children mention that they are going on vacation, if she suggests books on CDs to take on the trip, the families love it and continue to take out books on CD throughout the year.

Librarian seven, believes that all types of media literacy are important. She often runs professional development sessions for her staff to introduce them and teach them about different types of literacy and how to incorporate it in programs and materials in their branch libraries.

Librarian eight, stressed the importance of introducing and surround her patrons with all kinds of media, not just books. When planning programming for her library, she tries to incorporate different types of media. She enjoys planning theme nights that introduce children to a specific topic using books, computers, hands-on activities, and movies.

Core Belief VIII

The eighth statement referring to the laws of children’s librarianship, as presented in the survey was: Children’s librarians honor their traditions. Twenty-eight children’s librarians indicated that this practice is both relevant and practiced. Two children’s librarians indicated that this practice is relevant, but not practiced. Three librarians felt that this is something that is not relevant and not practiced. Seven of the eight librarians interviewed agreed with this statement. Librarian seven agreed that it was an important belief, but brought up another point in regards to it.
Librarian seven stressed how important it is to honor librarianship in the traditional sense, but also to move forward and continue evolving and improving children’s librarianship. She tries to improve on traditional practices, such as storytimes, by introducing a philosophical and theoretical framework that helps those running the storytimes to best reach out to children through multiple modes of instruction, and by implementing research based early literacy practices.

*Core Beliefs IX*

The ninth and final statement referring to the laws of children’s librarianship presented in the survey was: *Children’s librarians create the future*. Of the 33 librarians surveyed, 29 indicated that this is something that is relevant and practiced. One librarian indicated that this is relevant, but not practiced. One librarian indicated that this is neither relevant, nor practiced. Two librarians failed to indicate an answer for this statement. All eight librarians interviewed believed that this is relevant and practiced. Anecdotal evidence further explains their thoughts.

Librarian four expressed her passion for being a children librarian. She discussed how she chose this profession, because she truly believes that being a children’s librarian changes children’s lives. Her main goal, through great programs, book selection and other services, is to impact the lives of children, and help them become productive, successful adults.

Librarian five expressed that the best part of her job is working with kids of all ages. She loves to see their love of reading grow, and get the chance to foster that appreciation.

Librarian seven mentioned that her favorite part about being a children’s librarian is “to know you are making a difference in kids live for the future, even if you don’t know
about it!.” She believes it is important to help her patrons form stable, healthy relationships with adults while cultivating a love for reading.

Discussion of Results

The five laws of children’s librarianship, as outlined by Walter (2002), were divided into nine core beliefs about children’s librarianship. The research question that guided this study was: How do children’s librarians perceive their roles and responsibilities with respect to the five laws of children’s librarianship? It was found that a majority of children’s librarians surveyed agreed that the nine core beliefs of children’s librarianship, which were based on the five laws of children’s librarianship, are still relevant and practiced. Few librarians believed that the core beliefs were relevant and not practiced. Very few librarians thought that some of the core beliefs were not relevant and not practiced. All librarians surveyed agreed that core belief II, Librarians serve the parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children, and core belief IV, Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books, are both relevant and practiced.

Eight librarians were interviewed to expand on the ideas expressed through the survey. Most of the librarians agreed that all of the core beliefs were still practiced and relevant and provided anecdotal stories and examples to show ways in which they put these laws into practice.

Summary

Data collected through surveying 33 children’s librarians indicated that Walter’s (2002) five laws of children’s librarianship are still relevant and still practiced by children’s librarians. These issues were further investigated through interviewing eight of these
children’s librarians. These librarians interviewed are dedicated librarians who work hard to promote literacy through different programs and materials.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The children’s library is not merely a room full of children’s books stacked on shorter shelves. For a children’s library to be effective and foster literacy in the community, trained professionals need the resources to create and run an environment that is conducive to learning. The purpose of this study was to explore the roles of children’s librarians and how they perceive their role and responsibilities in relation to the five laws of children’s librarianship identified by Walter (2002). This chapter includes a brief summary of the research study and the results. The chapter also presents conclusions drawn from the data and recommendations for other children’s librarians, parents, and teachers.

Summary

This research study was conducted by administering surveys to 33 children’s librarians from various different areas. The children’s librarians were presented with nine statements about the five laws of children’s librarianship. The children’s librarians indicated whether they believed that the statement was something that was relevant to their job and something that they practiced, something that was relevant, but not practiced, or irrelevant and not practiced. Librarians who were surveyed were also asked to participate in a voluntary phone interview. Those librarians who chose to be interviewed participated in a 15-minute phone interview. Their answers helped expand on the answers given during the survey, by giving in depth, specific descriptions of their roles. Children’s librarians described in detail the responsibilities they have, and specific programs and materials that they believed were important to the study.
The first core belief of children’s librarianship presented in the survey was: *Libraries serve the reading interests and information needs of all children directly.* Twenty-nine of the 33 librarians reported this was a relevant and practiced concept.

The second item on the survey was: *Libraries serve the parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children.* All 33 librarians indicated that this was something that they practiced and was relevant to their job description.

The third core belief presented in the survey was: *Children’s librarians provide the right book or information for the right child at the right time in the right place.* Thirty of the 33 children’s librarians indicated that this was a relevant and practiced belief.

The fourth statement about children’s librarianship on the survey was: *Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books.* All 33 librarians indicated that this was a relevant and practiced statement.

The fifth core belief about children’s librarianship was: *Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s information technology.* Twenty-nine of the 33 children’s librarians surveyed indicated that they actively practice this and it was relevant to their job.

The sixth item on the survey was: *Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s ideas.* Twenty-eight children’s librarians indicated that this was relevant and practiced.

The seventh core belief included on the survey was: *Children’s librarians promote children’s literacy in all media.* Thirty of 33 children’s librarians agreed that this is a relevant and practiced statement.

The eighth statement on the survey was: *Children’s librarians honor their traditions.* Twenty-eight librarians indicated that this was relevant and practiced.
The final statement on the survey was: Children’s librarians create the future.

Twenty-nine children’s librarians indicated that they believed that this was a relevant and practiced statement.

Conclusions

Based on the survey results, it can be concluded that the five laws of librarianship (Walter, 2001) are still relevant and practiced by a majority of children’s librarians surveyed. Although not all libraries are the same, and children’s librarians run different programs and provide a variety of different materials, it can be assumed that their work has a foundation in the five laws of librarianship.

Librarians believe that they contributed to the literacy development of their patrons, particularly in the early years. Research shows the importance of early literacy skills and the connection with learning to read. According to Kammenui (1993) and Rasinski (2003), if children do not acquire reading skills at a young age, there is a greater chance that they will remain poor readers in the future. It is important for children, to become successful readers, to be surrounded by literacy. According to Morrow and Tracey (2007), “Babies begin to acquire information about literacy from the moment they are born” (p. 57).

Another conclusion that can be drawn is that librarians continue to keep abreast of changes in materials, and technology that are relevant to their positions. Many librarians who were interviewed mentioned the Ready to Read program as a way of helping young children begin their literacy experiences. Twenty-nine of the 33 children’s librarians surveyed indicated becoming aware of new technologies, including the Internet, was relevant to their job. Traditionally, children’s librarians were in charge of running
storytime and running literacy based programs. With rapid advancements in technology, librarians are now in charge of assisting patrons, and many times teaching children to use all types of available technology. According to Walter (2004), most librarians take it upon themselves to educate their patrons on how to make best use of these computers.

Librarians also believe that it is their responsibility to meet the reading interests and needs of all children, their parents, and other adults, including teachers. Twenty-nine of the 33 librarians reported this was a relevant and practiced concept. Librarian three emphasized the importance of helping children find books that interest them so that this would help them become better readers. Librarian eight believes that it is her job to help children discover books about topics they want to read about. Their thoughts are aligned with Allington’s (1994) work when he stressed that personal interest “remains the most potent factor in the development of reading processes” (p. 95). According to Walter (2004), it is the children’s librarian’s responsibility to get to know the children who come into the library and help them select books of interest. Book talks seem to be a frequently used technique in children’s libraries. This strategy is aligned with Follos’ (2007) ideas that book talks help to get students of all ages interested and excited about books, and make them aware of what books are available.

Children’s librarians believe it is important to know their patrons. Librarian two runs children and teen advisory boards, so that she can get the input from her patrons on decisions to be made in the library. Librarian six discussed how important it is for her to form relationships with her patrons. According to Walter (2004), it is essential for children’s librarians to form relationships with their patrons.
A final conclusion that may be drawn from the results of this investigation is although the role of the children’s librarian is ever changing and fluctuating, the children’s library continues to adapt to changes in literacy and media, and meets the needs of the patrons, while staying true to these core beliefs about children’s librarianship that were created by Walter in 2001.

Recommendations

The results of this research study suggest many recommendations for children’s librarians, parents, and teachers. These recommendations are ideas for librarians that can help improve their services offered, and for parents and teachers to better utilize the services offered by local public libraries.

Librarians

By surveying and interviewing children’s librarians, it was found that different libraries offer unique programs and materials. It is suggested that children’s librarians spend time talking and networking with other children’s librarians and determine what programs they are using, what is successful, and how they are being funded. By acquiring this information about popular programs and resources other libraries are using, the patrons may be better served. This collaboration may yield new and exciting ventures with other children’s libraries.

When planning programs and selecting materials, it is important for librarians to consult with parents and children, as well as local educators. Members of the community rely on the library as an educational and recreational resource. Children’s librarians should plan programs and select materials that meet the needs of the patrons they serve.
Programs like family literacy nights and after school homework programs are useful resources for most communities.

*Parents*

Most libraries offer programs for parents. Parents of young children should take full advantage of storytimes, which are now more than just reading stories. Children’s librarians model early literacy best practices, and many times teach parents early literacy strategies. Also, a majority of libraries have the Ready to Read program which teaches parents and provides resources for early literacy preparations. Family literacy fun nights and afterschool programs that include parents are prevalent in public libraries and are appropriate for all ages. Getting involved in a child’s reading journey enables them to become better readers.

Many libraries, with budget cuts, are desperate for extra help in the library. Parents who support the library may be interested in finding out about volunteer opportunities at the libraries. Some libraries use parent volunteers to help catalog materials, clerical work or helping out with programs.

*Teachers*

Many of the librarians surveyed indicated that they in some way worked with the local schools. In addition, librarians who were interviewed expressed that the enjoyed collaborating with local teachers, and wished that more teachers request their services.

One thing that children’s librarians mentioned was they collaborate with teachers and compile resources for assignments given by teachers. One librarian mentioned creating pages on the website with links for resources for certain projects assigned by teachers. Librarians also can teach entire classes how to use the Internet, research databases, and
the card catalog. Another librarian who was interviewed visited schools to visit students of all ages, and lead book talks. These book talks introduce students to new and interesting books and make them aware of what is available in the library. This gets students to visit the library and more interested and excited about reading.

Teacher educators can model collaborative behavior between schools and librarians by working closely with university libraries. Teacher candidate students can contact local children’s libraries and run educational programs that will help them practice teaching, as well as engage students in learning activities.

*Future Research*

To get more clear results, if this study were repeated, some changes would have to be made to the survey. The survey used only allowed for children’s librarians to either agree that the core belief was practiced and relevant, not practiced, but relevant, or not relevant and not practiced. If this survey was administered again, there should be space for the librarians to explain their answers, to get better insight into why the librarians answered the way they did.

*Summary*

This chapter reviewed the research investigation and summarized the basic findings of this study. This investigation demonstrates that children’s librarianship work has its foundations in the five laws of children’s librarianship identified by Walter in 2001 and that these beliefs are relevant and are the foundation for the work of children’s librarians. This investigation showed that children’s librarians are active in fostering literacy in the community by offering literacy based programs and materials, and supplementing what
children are learning in school. Children’s librarians perceive that their work is proof that the five laws of children’s librarianship are still relevant and practiced.
REFERENCES


Retrieved on October 13, 2008, from
http://imls.gov/news/events/whitehouse_1.shtml#sn


APPENDIX A.

SURVEY DOCUMENTS
1. What is your job title? ____________________________

2. What responsibilities do you have that involve working with children and young adults at the library?

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

3. The following ideas listed are core beliefs about children’s librarianship. Please indicate if you feel this value is still relevant and something you practice, still relevant but something you don’t practice, or not relevant and not practiced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Belief</th>
<th>Relevant, practiced</th>
<th>Relevant, not practiced</th>
<th>Not relevant, not practiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Libraries serve the reading interests and information needs of all children directly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries serve the parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians provide the right book or information for the right child at the right time in the right place.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s information technology.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s ideas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians promote children’s literacy in all media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians honor their traditions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s librarians create the future.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Would you be interested in participating in a phone interview to discuss your answers more in depth? If so, please fill out the following information and I will contact you to set up an interview.
   Name: ____________________________
   Library: ____________________________
   Phone number: ____________________________
   e-mail address: ____________________________
APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER
Dear Librarian,

I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University pursuing my Master’s Degree in Reading and am conducting a study for my thesis.

You are invited to be a participant in a research study on the role of children’s librarians. This study is being conducted to find out more about the roles of children’s librarians and how they perceive their role and responsibilities through surveys and interviews. This information will be used to provide students, parents, teachers and other members of the community with information on how public children’s libraries can be better utilized for literacy instruction and reading motivation.

This study will involve you filling out and returning the short survey attached. It should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. If you are interested in participating in a phone interview to discuss your answers more in depth, there is a section to indicate your interest on the survey. This interview should take between 15-20 minutes. The purpose of the survey and interview is to discover to what extent the core beliefs of children’s librarianship are practiced and considered relevant in public libraries today.

The anticipated risks to you are no greater than those normally encountered in daily life. The information that you provide from the survey and interview will remain confidential and your name will not be revealed in any published results of the study. The survey and interview responses will remain in a locked cabinet throughout the study and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Your responses to the survey and interview questions will be transcribed and analyzed, but at no time will your name be included in the study. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you are able to refrain from any part without penalty or explanation. If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can contact me (Kathleen Bing) at (516) 587-3619 or at KathleenBing@gmail.com. You may also contact my advisory, Dr. Cindy Hendricks at (419)372-7320 or at cindyg@bgsu.edu. You may also contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419)372-7716 or at hsrb@bgsu.edu if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant. Thank you for your time and participation.

By signing this here you are indicating you have read this document and give your consent to participate in the survey.
Librarian’s Signature: ________________________________
Date: ____________________

By signing this here you are indicating you have read this document and give your consent to participate in the optional interview.
Librarian’s Signature: ________________________________
Date: ____________________

Thank you for your interest and help in my project! Please return this signed consent form and survey in the provided envelope as soon as possible!

Sincerely,

Kathleen Bing
Graduate Assistant
School of Teaching and Learning
Bowling Green State University
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Interview Questions:

1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important?
2. Based on the core beliefs about children’s librarianship,
   a. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library?
   b. How do you serve the parents?
   c. What are some ways that you are advocate s for children's access to information technology?
   d. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?
3. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility?
4. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian?
APPENDIX D.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why? | • Favorite: book selection, all picture book selection, easy readers and non fiction. Enjoy process, reviews, meeting with vendors, featuring new books in the children’s section. See kids excited about new books.  
• Creative energy that goes into storytime programming (13/week) 35 kids at each  
• Effort and enthusiasm needed  
• Staff of 6- 1 full time                                                                 |
| 2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library? | • Figuring out ways to get books into kids hands  
• Readers advisory- one on one help for kids who need books to read, “interview” kids to see what they are interested in  
• Marketing “Schemes” to get kids interested in books—new books, displays for holidays, books that are displayed are checked out more  
• 13 storytimes/week- Saturday                                                                 |
| 3. How do you serve the parents?                                         | • Readers Advisory for parents too  
• Show parents how to use the library so they can help their children  
• AR lists available so parents can find books for their children                                                                 |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | • Provide 2 internet computers in children’s area, access not filtered. Can sign in with library card and pin number. Children have access unless parents opt out.  
• Word and other applications  
• Promote access by not restricting access  
• Students come in to use computer and internet, not always for books  
• Certain projects teachers assign, librarians set up pages online to assist students with resources, websites, etc. that is up to date.  
• If info isn’t available in hard copy, librarians help students find what they need online                                                                 |
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?                  | • On website, interactive database called TumbleBooks. Leveled PreK-High School. Interactive site, read along with book, book read to you, activities (comprehension), animated version of the story. All books are also in library collection,  
• Non-entertainment videos and media are stored with books (i.e. Fire truck movie and books are on the same shelf). Take out books as well as videos. |
| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | “Implied babysitter”—policy says child must be 8 to be unattended.  
People see library as safe place, but not safe to leave child unattended  
Made accommodations |
|---|---|
| 7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian? | Matching kids and books...*kids are little sponges*—it’s amazing to see what they are interested in and what their favorite stories are. I love to listen to them tell their favorite story back  
Get kids excited about reading  
Challenge to continue making reading fun and exciting as long as possible.  
Make reading attractive and rewarding thing to do |
### Interview: Name: Librarian 2 Library: Small urban area Date: February 10, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why? | • Exposing young children and their parents/adults to children’s literature and helping them access information  
  • *I just love children’s books—the timelessness, the quality of writing, the illustrations, the art. That it introduces children to a new way of seeing things*  
  • Also how much children’s books have changed in the last 15 years. |
| 2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library? | • Lots of materials that are available and there within reach  
  • Organized so that all ages can find books and interact with texts  
  • Same with CDs, nonfiction books, etc  
  • Toys to make children feel comfortable  
  • Provide materials and make it accessible  
  • Programs that involve different ages and their parents and caregivers  
  • Materials that are prepared that give guidance—read alouds, etc  
  • Computers give information  
  • Children’s and Teen advisory board |
| 3. How do you serve the parents?                                           | • Parents are included in programs for 3 and under  
  • Classes for parents—book selection, new books  
  • Parenting magazine and materials  
  • Develop rapport with parents/adults  
  • Many staff members have children in the school system and live in the community—outreach to younger parents, connect parents with community activities |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | • Computers in children’s department, internet access  
  • Computers with games for younger children  
  • Non working computer as toy for younger toddlers  
  • County system—can download books on computer and ipod  
  • Making technology available.  
  • Teach responsible use through individual interactions |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?                 | • DVDs  
• Audio books  
• Cd/cassette book kits  
• Lots of CDs and storytelling CDs and DVDs  
• In programs (4 and up) short movies are used that are based on books  
• Subscribe to show feature films (snow days, holidays) at the library and tie in books, etc. |
| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | • Nope! Children’s Librarian and small staff to supervise and help in other parts of the library |
| 7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian?        | • Working with the children and talking about books  
• Real passion for books and reading and engaging children in books  
• Interaction with the children (birth-12) and parents |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why? | • Getting the children their materials (movies, books, etc).  
• If they are interested, make sure they are reading  
• *It is so important to get kids interested in reading!* *It is our job to make sure that each child has something they love that they can read!* |
| 2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library? | • Programs, BabyTIme, Storytime, Ed programs  
• Help kids find books and info  
• Ordering books, materials  
• “weed” materials and information  
• Help with reference questions, homework  
• Readers advisory |
| 3. How do you serve the parents?                                         | • Offering programs for children  
• Starting for Every Child Ready to Read—“teach” parents to read with children, importance of storytime and early literacy  
• Help parents select books for their children |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | • Help the kids get on the internet, filtered for children, log on  
• Take turns, let all children get a chance  
• Kids come in for just computers for school work |
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?                  | • Card catalog online  
• Help students find information on the internet, databases, using credible websites  
• Movies, CD’s (music), CD books, DVDs, Videos, some literature based DVDs, CD-Roms software, magazines |
| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | • Children in library all day, “babysitter” role |
| 7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian?        | • Programs- storytime, Babytime, elementary programs, crafts, getting kids excited about books |
### Interview: Name: Librarian 4  Library: Small suburban/rural area  Library Date: February 10, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why? | - Outreach to schools and daycares  
- read to each class (el school) and presentations at middle school about getting children ready to read and preschool at local schools  
- children become of library and service and books and programs  
- Already know someone when they walk into library  
- Read fun books |
| 2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library? | - Help find correct reading level and subject book  
- learn to love literature and reading (storytimes and readings)  
- Ready to Read program (very involved), prepare students for kindergarten, informs parents & childcare providers, games and strategies to help their children  
- Find movies and websites, school project |
| 3. How do you serve the parents? | - Ready to Read program  
- Identify child’s reading level  
- Appropriate books for child’s life stage,  
- Identify ways child learns best (especially through storytime—every week they meet)  
- Help parents feel comfortable (not all parents are library users)  
- Pick out books for themselves  
- Help parents take part in memories—Saturday programs, storytimes, parents very involved |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | - Not as involved  
- Internet access for children, if students do projects, they can learn microfilm machines, OPLIN, internet access |
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media? | - In schools, books on CD, tape, play-aways, internet  
- Promote by making available all different types of media  
- Some come in just for computer and internet |
| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | - No  
- Less important: collecting book drop things, clerical work |
| 7. What is your favorite part | - Impacting the children and making memories with them |
| about being a children’s librarian? | for a lifetime  
*This is the reason I chose my job. I want to help children become successful adults through reading.* |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why? | • Biggest responsibility is being open and accommodating to all of the kids—so they have good associations with the library  
• See it as not just a building with books in it—a place for information, where they don’t need to be scared to ask for help.  
• Even if they are just coming to play, as long as they feel welcome  
• “Ambassador of goodwill”                                                                                                           |
| 2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library? | • Storytimes  
• Special collections for students—collaborate with teachers  
• Booktalks for all ages Elementary through High School  
• Classes come to library for programs  
• Summer reading programs  
• Art shows  
• Readers advisory                                                                                                               |
| 3. How do you serve the parents?                                         | • By making the library a place where their children want to come  
• Ready to Read program—emphasizing ways parents can work with ready to read at home  
• Early reading books are leveled for parents  
• Help parents choose books for their children  
• Readers advisory                                                                                                               |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | • Show students how to use computers and access the info in library  
• Actually show children how to find answers and find resources, instead of just finding them  
• Reliability of internet  
• Show children the value of books                                                                                               |
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?                  | • Growing collection of books on CD and tape, for all ages  
• Promotions for different types of media—i.e. reach out to families going on trips to take books on cd  
• Children’s games on computer (working on it) – limited access to games online because of filters  
• Displays of movies, etc. Not just popular, but quality as well! Up to date collection                                                                 |
| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | • Small rural library- pretty much do everything except cataloging!  
• At the circulation desk most of the time, drains time with children                                                                 |
| 7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian? | • Love working with the kids! Spending time with them and seeing their love grow for reading!  
• All ages—not just little kids! Teens as well!  
• Interactions with others | • Clerical interlibrary loan, etc. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most</td>
<td>• Most important: customer service, “face time with our patrons”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important? Why?</td>
<td>• Working in reference is great opportunity to talk to children and parents and get to know them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Able to hear what patrons want and make a connection with them so they feel valued—it’s important that the kids feel valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outreach to schools is also important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gives students a chance to meet librarian and what services library has to offer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage kids to come into library and bring parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build partnership between school and library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into</td>
<td>• Through our programs and our collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your library?</td>
<td>• programs are a way to show children a connection to books and to the library as a place to be a social gathering center and a fun place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• collection is a very important way to allow children to be introduced to and experience the world outside their community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do you serve the parents?</td>
<td>• Parent Collection in which we house books that deal with sensitive issues, such as grief, divorce, sibling issues, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• large collection that allows them to spend enjoyable and quality time with their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• programs serve parents as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• storytimes illustrate to parents just how easy it is to connect with children through literacy, encourage them to repeat the songs and finger plays at home with their child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to</td>
<td>• by providing computers with age appropriate games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information technology?</td>
<td>• also provide programming in the form of computer class for children and gaming tournaments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Internet access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?</td>
<td>• Early Literacy computers, which have games that focus on literacy and conceptual themes. Have a play area in which we provide puzzles, games, a kitchen area, a dollhouse, and puppets, which allow children to work on their storytelling and their phonological awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• offer a wide selection of movies, CDS and audio books that all promote literacy to children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | • Nope! Work in a small library; get a chance to see how all departments are connected.  
• Being responsible for reference work, outreach, collection development, programming, budget and staff helps better see what the needs of our patrons are and helps me better understand how to meet those needs. |
|---|---|
| 7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian? | • The Children!  
• *I love when I pull a book off the shelf that a child has been looking for or when I recommend a book and the child comes back later to tell me how much they loved it and that they want more just like it. I love going to the schools and reading to the students, they enjoy way my visits make them feel special; it is great to see them laugh at the books, to see them figure out the ending a few pages before you get there. I love when they do come into the library and say to me “you read to me at school, look I came to the library.”* It means a lot to me that I am making connections to them, that I might just be playing a role in turning them into lifelong readers, book lovers and library advocates. |

I
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why?** | • Youth Services Manager- 29 locations, don’t work directly with children, 47 communities, joint school districts  
• Facilitating and helping out staff so that they can serve children and families  
• Make it possible to have resources available to serve youth and families with excellence |
| **2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library?** | • Organizational Priorities  
• Helping Youth achieve max potential  
• Ensure children enter school ready to learn  
• 40 developmental assists for youth  
• All programs are driven by theoretical and philosophical research based practices  
• Every Child Ready to Read (6 early literacy skills)  
• Using multiple intelligences (K-5) in all programs...at least three in each program  
• Teens (6-12) Including 2 external and 2 internal assets in each program  
• Non-School time activities—camps, computer camps, arts academics and leadership training camp, entrepreneurship camp for teens- train students to developed business plan. Etc. Shipwrecks camps (Case Western)—technology and tools in context of ocean exploration  
• Goal is to help kids maximize potential, make these programs affordable and accessible (grant and organizational funding)  
• Outside of “traditional” practices—learning outside of classroom in fun and engaging way |
| **3. How do you serve the parents?** | • Build a support network directly and indirectly  
• 10 locations have homework sessions—support parents through supporting students  
• Many parents don’t have positive education experiences, library is a resource they can use when they can’t help their children  
• Family literacy night—all families in the community topics such as: “Great Books” presentations on the best books for kids to read, “Science Workshop” hands on science experiments (science fair prep), “Brain Fuel” national nutrition month—healthy eating, etc conflict management, talking with the schools, etc—dinner |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| included                                                                | • Can provide books for all children at these nights, build home libraries  
• Storytime: role modeling, integrating 6 early lit skills in daily activities  
• Parents choice library card: DVD ratings, etc.  
• Trying to offer no registration storytime, better for working parents                                                                 |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | • Never been a question raised  
• Teens under 18 need to have parental signature to access internet  
• Dedicated terminals—can access databases only, no internet  
• Youth services can always help and be there to facilitate  
• Children’s and teens reps on technology decision boards  
• Needs the same as the as adults                                                                                                                                 |
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media?                  | • Construction of programs—provide a variety of media – exposure model  
• Different kinds of learners have access to content in a variety of media  
• Camps: off a literacy component, 45 session of the staff to look at literacy—music literacy, electronic resource literacy, etc  
• Develop literacy of students in all areas  
• Computer camps: digital animation, video game creation, robotics  
• Literacy as a multidimensional concept                                                                                                                                 |
<p>| 6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility? | • Nope!                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian?         | • Most important thing: to know you are making a difference in kids lives for the future! Even if you don't know about it, you are making a difference. Look beyond the difficulties and become the extended family for the kids coming into the library. Being a stable influence for the kids. Providing a stable solid adult relationship with the kids who come in. Making a big difference in the future through kids lives. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Of all of your responsibilities, which do you think is the most important? Why? | • To get up to date informational and recreational resources for the children.  
• Important to keep up with popularity—movie tie ins etc. And the children need accurate information—easy reader all the way to young adults, resources  
• Collection development |
| 2. What are some of the main ways you serve the children who come into your library? | • Help them find what they are looking for, how to use library, help them find what they want, needs and wants, reference interview  
• Internet and online programs—upgraded computers  
• Programming—draws in patrons, families use library because of programs  
• Storytimes, movie and puppet nights, “tweens” workshops learn puppetry, arts and crafts, performers (singers musicians, magicians)  
• Summer reading club  
• Kindergarten screening |
| 3. How do you serve the parents? | • Prenatal programs w/ St. Rita Med Center (partnered with childbirth class), class with hospital staff + librarians for prenatal materials and early literacy  
• Parent/Teacher collection—how to materials for parents  
• Family oriented programs |
| 4. What are some ways that you are advocates for children’s access to information technology? | • Offer computers throughout the library with internet access and games and educational programs and software (all different age groups), kept updated pending budget situation  
• Do not need library card  
• Kids come in just for the computer |
| 5. How do you promote children’s literacy in all media? | • Helping students use reliable sources  
• Purchase reliable sources, accurate information  
• Leap Pad can be used at the library  
• Kindergarten screenings in the schools  
• Programs use all different types of media—themed night with books, activities, computer lab, movies  
• All avenues of the media  
• Movie and book tie ins  
• Variety of resources in all programs |
6. Are there any responsibilities you have that you believe should not be your responsibility?

- Parents use the librarians as a babysitting service
- Teaching people to read—not teachers
- Ready to Read project- pushing librarians to teach parents to teach their children to read
- Partnering with schools is important

7. What is your favorite part about being a children’s librarian?

- Matching a child with the perfect book and forming relationships with the student
- Getting to see and order the new book and build a library collection
APPENDIX E.

DATA TABLES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law of Children’s Librarianship</th>
<th>Core Belief</th>
<th>Relevant, practiced</th>
<th>Relevant, not practiced</th>
<th>Not relevant, not practiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Libraries serve the reading interests and information needs of all children directly.</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Libraries serve the parents and other adults who are involved with the lives of children.</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children’s librarians provide the right book or information for the right child at the right time in the right place.</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s access to books.</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s information technology.</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children’s librarians are advocates for children’s ideas.</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Children’s librarians promote children’s literacy in all media.</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Children’s librarians honor their traditions.</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Children’s librarians create the future.</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>