

Development, Learning, and Equity in Child- and Youth-Focused Courses in ALA-Accredited Master's Programs

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ABSTRACT

To support and empower the next generation of library and information science (LIS) practitioners, the LIS community must take seriously the opportunities and challenges that come with serving today's children and youth. While LIS educators are uniquely positioned to promote equity-oriented understandings of child development and learning in their courses, the extent to which they currently do so is unknown.

This poster presents in-progress findings of an analysis of child- and youth-focused course syllabi. The website of each ALA-accredited master's program was examined to identify those courses focused on children and youth (including courses in the areas of children and youth services and school libraries). For each course, the syllabi and reading list was obtained by downloading those available online and/or contacting the instructor of record to request these materials. In our analysis, we focus on the extent to which the following are evident in these courses' descriptions, learning objectives, readings, and assignments: 1) theories and concepts related to child development, learning, and equity; 2) emphasis on child- and youth-centered approaches to designing and delivering library programs and services; and 3) inclusion of emerging topics (e.g., library makerspaces) that reflect ongoing transformations within child and youth services.

An understanding of the current curricula in courses related to children and youth is necessary to help LIS educators identify existing gaps between research, education, and practice. This analysis will yield timely insights into the range of approaches and orientations to child- and youth-centered courses being offered by ALA-accredited master's programs.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

children's services; young adult services; public libraries; school libraries; curriculum

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

syllabi review; child & youth services curricula; school library curricula