

Services

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Our purpose in developing the services section of the Allerton Park Institute devoted to children's services of public libraries was to present an overview of what is currently being done in libraries for children, to raise questions about the philosophy motivating many accepted library practices, and to involve participants in a discussion of future directions in children's services.

It would be difficult to provide a comprehensive analysis of children's services in public libraries in terms of activities and programs because of the diversity of those activities and programs. As a means of resolving the difficulty, the subject is approached in terms of the library size, whether it be large, medium or small.

The writers of the following articles discuss library services to children as they are currently offered in large, highly organized systems; in medium-sized libraries, which may consist of two or more units; and in the small, frequently isolated library, which in itself is the sole purveyor of library services to a community. Within this framework, the authors identify special programs developed to serve preschool children, the handicapped child, ethnic groups and other services designed for special elements in each community.