



American Library Association

MEMORANDUM

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ALSC

Date: 5 July 86

To: YASD/ALSC Age Definition Task Force

From: Penny Jeffrey, Chair

Re: Activities at NYC Conference

Jane Botham, Sue Rosenzweig and I were able to meet on Friday morning with Mary Jo Lynch of ALA's Office on Research. We discussed the difficulty of gathering statistics with an overlapping population, while at the same time the overlap in service exists.

Mary Jo pointed out that PLA's draft of the revised Output Measures mentions collecting statistics ONLY on children and adult. We all agreed that young adults need recognition here, but since "young adult" has been used to describe people anywhere from 10 to 32, thought that "youth" should be inserted in the PLA draft. Mary Jo agreed to transmit this information to the PLA Committee, and suggested that the YASD Directors Board should also make this request of the PLA Output Measures Committee. Children and youth would encompass ages 0-17.

The US Census Bureau collects statistics on 0-4 and 5-17 years olds, so this would match their figures. Most libraries collect statistics to match their own configurations. Hopefully, they will begin to conform to census breakdowns for comparative purposed nationally.

Since we recognize the overlap, ALSC and YASD should then define their age groups with statements that recognize the overlap. We hope that such definitions would then encourage libraries to provide better planning and service for young clients in the 10-14 age group.

Between now and midwinter, I will draft an age definition statement for YASD. Copies of this statement will be sent to the Task Force for reaction and suggestions, I have asked Jane Botham to write a draft for ALSC and distribute it likewise. Redrafts can then be prepared (if necessary) and brought to Midwinter for finalizing. The drafts can then be submitted to the ALSC and YASD Directors Boards.

In addition, in our meeting with Mary Jo, she showed us materials prepared for a MARS survey on online searching. They had planned to ask whether libraries provide this service to youth. The breakdown was: elementary school, middle/junior high school, and senior high school. Jane pointed out that tying this to schools ignored dropouts. We suggested instead to use 9 and under, 10-14 and 15-18.

At the Task Force meeting in the afternoon, Christy Tyson, Sue Rosenzweig and myself were present. Christy agreed to

ask the YASD Board to pass a resolution asking the PLA Output Measures committee include youth in the document. The YASD Board subsequently decided that "young adult" was used enough in libraries to convey the message, and voted to ask PLA to include the traditional terminology.

I hope that Jane and I can establish a time frame for the definitions soon, and will keep all of you informed of developments.

pc: Botham, Rosenzweig, Tyson, Hodges, LiBretto, Bush, Davie, Shaevel, Roman