

*cc: E. Stepanian*  
*file*

August 30, 1993

Ms. Penny S. Markey

Dear Penny:

Enclosed is my first stab at the actual impact of children's services, with citations where I have them. I am not happy with all of it, because some of it still sounds like services provided rather than impact achieved. It is still much too easy to list the former rather than the latter because of the almost total lack of specified impact statements and evaluation research in children's services.

Also, given the audience for this, do we want to claim a lot of the same stuff that school librarians claim. One could argue, for example, that our public library support of formal education made better students, but besides the arrogance of that claim, with everything else we know that is influencing children these days, it is probably an unwelcome assertion to those who would like to distance themselves conceptually and politically from schools.

I think I need somebody other than myself to look at this critically. I still think the approach is a good one, but it will probably take longer than I anticipated. I would also appreciate any citations of actual impact/evaluation research in children's services anybody may know about.

I did post it on PUBYAC and only got one usable reply. Ironically, I also posted a message asking how people knew whether a summer reading club was successful, and of about 20 answers, only one person said anything about maintained reading skills and continued reading for pleasure. It was all registration percentages and game completion rates.

Feel free to share this letter and the draft with the committee for comment. I will not put my head in the over if everybody decides to change focus in some way other than the intended audience.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Chelton

cc: Needham, Roman ✓

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## DRAFT

### IMPACT OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES ON CHILDREN

#### Language Acquisition

Develops receptive language, i. e. becoming accustomed to the sound and organization of written language prior to the development of actual reading skills. (Carlson, Smardo, Kontos, Schickendanz)

Learns to enjoy playing with words.

#### Literacy/Reading Readiness/Competency/Motivation

Establishes routines and habits conducive to reading and learning. (Carlson, Kontos, Schickendanz)

Develops a sense of story, i. e. the fact that pictures have meaning; that pictures are different from words; that pages turn from right to left; that books have a front and a back and a right side up; that stories have a structure. (Carlson, Kontos, Schickendanz)

Associates pleasure with reading activities. (Carlson, Kontos, Schickendanz)

Acquires verbal skills. (Fasick)

Maintains reading skills over summer months when school is out, particularly for children from families with low socioeconomic status. (Heyns)

Inspires reading interest and the desire to learn. (Barass et al.)

Makes reading and library use as a lifelong habit. (Powell)

#### Formal Educational Support

Expands reading comprehension skills

Builds rudimentary research skills.

Fosters creativity through free, independent, and self-directed inquiry. (Rollack)

Experience with information technology.

#### Social Learning

Increases attention span. (Dowd)

Increases rapport with other children. (CYP5L)

Creates a sense of relationship to a larger community. (Burstyn)

Creates access to caring adults/positive intergenerational experiences.

Creates access to/familiarity with information technology.

Creates access to a multicultural learning environment.

Provides opportunities to volunteer service to community (service-learning).

### For Adults Who Have or Work with Children

#### Parents

Extends the family budget through free/inexpensive entertainment and information.

Identifies age-appropriate materials.

Improves use of materials with children.

Reinforces family incentives to read.

Provides shared family experiences.

Provides social learning with other children.

#### Daycare/nursery school providers

Extends institutional budget by providing free materials and programs.

Identifies/selects age-appropriate materials.

Improves use of materials with children.

Training in programming literary experiences with children.

#### Classroom teachers

Extends classroom collections and after-school access.

Improves use of materials with children.

Improves assignments given to children and completion rates by children.

#### Community youthworkers

Collaborates on youth issues

Informs youthwork community of new materials of interest.

Improves use of children's materials with youthwork clientele.

Stimulates inter-agency idea exchanges.

### Local Government Presence

Provides a [free] place to go after school if nobody is at home (Medrich)

Increases [perception of] quality of life in the community.

Serves middle class as well as poor {an "entitlement" for everybody!}.

Provides a cost efficient government service (per % of total local government budget)

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