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# Children's Services of Public Libraries

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*editor*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Graduate School of Library Science of the University of Illinois sponsors each fall the Allerton Park Institute. The twenty-third institute was held at Allerton Park from Sunday, November 13 through Wednesday, November 16, 1977. The topic selected for this institute is one that had not been treated at previous Allerton institutes and one that had not been addressed recently in an institute format. In the secluded setting of Allerton House, some of the leaders in the field were gathered to focus attention upon the totality that is children's services of public libraries. Viewpoints regarding the present status and future directions of children's services were shared in an attempt to answer the big and reflective questions a profession must retreat to ask itself once in awhile: What are we doing? Why? For whom? How? The sequence of the program and the simple but comprehensive speech titles reflect the intent of the institute to grapple with the major elements of children's services.

The institute was neither a how-to workshop (but pointed out the need to specify cogently the reasoning that underlies the proliferation of activities of children's services) nor a conference about a specific issue, but no issue of immediate concern to the profession was left untouched. The proceedings can serve as a self-assessment of the present status of the field and can be used to identify areas to be improved to strengthen the quality of children's services of public libraries.

Objectives for children's services were stated in 1953 by Harriet G. Long in *Rich the Treasure*<sup>1</sup> and presented again with minor changes in wording in 1964 in *Standards for Children's Services in Public Libraries*.<sup>2</sup> To date these objectives or goals have been neither rescinded nor formally

assisted with this institute. Associate professors Walter C. Allen and Cora E. Thomassen served on the planning committee. Herbert Goldhor, Director, provided the impetus for this institute and helped in many ways to develop its program and carry through its intent. Other faculty members chaired sessions and introduced speakers.

Alice Calabrese, Head, Children's Services, Schaumburg Township Public Library, and past president of the Children's Librarians' Section of the Illinois Library Association, presided at a session.

Edward Kalb and Mary Kennedy of the Office of Continuing Education and Public Service handled registrations and local arrangements.

James Ayars, Natalia M. Belting, Rebecca Caudill, and Sidney Rosen, all authors of children's books and living in Champaign-Urbana, graciously consented to appear at the social hours.

Linda Hoffman and Holly Wagner of the Publications Office coordinated the technical editing of the papers and production of this publication.

The speakers are to be commended for the time and effort they contributed to preparing their speeches and for their willingness to be available throughout the institute to lend their thoughts and reactions to the proceedings. The participants are to be commended for their commentary and questions during discussion periods and for making the out-of-session conversations lively and enjoyable.

SELMA K. RICHARDSON  
*Chairperson*

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1. Long, Harriet G. *Rich the Treasure*. Chicago, ALA, 1953, p. 15.
2. Public Library Association. Committee on Standards. Subcommittee on Standards for Children's Service. *Standards for Children's Services in Public Libraries*. Chicago, ALA, 1964, p. 13.