

Standards for the Visually and Hearing Impaired

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NINETEEN EIGHTY-ONE MARKS THE FIFTIETH anniversary of the Library of Congress network which provides service to blind citizens of the United States. This service has changed a great deal since it began in 1931; the services offered have been expanded and the eligible population has increased to approximately 1.4 percent of the total population. Provision of library service to this group and the development of standards for the libraries providing this service will be reviewed in the first part of this article. The second part of the article will discuss the development of guidelines for libraries serving the deaf and hard of hearing.

STANDARDS FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Library service for the blind in the United States began during the nineteenth century when a few progressive public libraries and schools for the blind began to build collections of embossed (brailled) books. The public libraries were primarily located in metropolitan areas and in schools for the blind which had a captive audience. Content of the libraries' collections depended upon space and the particular code in which the books were embossed.

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In 1928, the American Library Association asked the American Foundation for the Blind to make a study of the library needs of blind people and how they were being met. This study showed that:

1. Some blind persons were borrowing books from several libraries.
2. Less than 10,000 blind people in the United States were making use of any library.
3. Libraries were having a difficult time obtaining embossed books because there were so few sources of supply....

The American Foundation for the Blind, with the support of the American Library Association, recommended that the federal government undertake to supply free books for the blind to a [designated group] of geographically well-distributed libraries, on condition that these libraries circulate the books to readers in the assigned zones... whether or not these zones included an area larger than the taxing district maintaining the library.

This recommendation resulted in the passage of the Pratt-Smoot Bill, which was signed into law by President Hoover on March 3, 1931.¹

This law mandated that the Librarian of Congress:

provide books...for the use of the adult blind residents of the United States, including the several States, Territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia.

The Librarian of Congress may arrange with such libraries as he may judge appropriate to serve as local or regional centers for the circulation of such books, under such conditions and regulations as he may prescribe. In the lending of such books, preference shall at all times be given to the needs of blind persons who have been honorably discharged from the United States military or naval service.²

This law was amended by an "Act of March 4, 1933...[which] amended section 1 by adding after the word 'books' the following 'published either in raised characters, on sound-reproduction records, or in any other form.'"³ Initially eighteen libraries were designated as regional libraries for the blind. This network of regional libraries, with the Library of Congress as a central point for the production of books in embossed and recorded formats, still exists today.

From its beginning, this network was cooperative in nature. The Library of Congress provided regional libraries with books and equipment. The regional libraries' parent organizations assumed responsibilities for staffing ongoing operations. All books, embossed and recorded, were mailed free to and from readers under a 1904 law which provided free mailing privileges for blind individuals. Throughout the 1930s, talking-book machines were provided as a WPA (Work Projects Administration) project.

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The recorded books were produced on a specially developed long-playing disc which played at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. Familiar to everyone today, the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm record was originally designed by the American Foundation for the Blind for the purpose of recording books for the blind. Throughout the history of this service, publishers and authors have generously granted permission for their works to be recorded and/or brailled, and, in some cases, have even participated in the recording.

The Pratt-Smoot Act specified that books be provided for the adult blind. In 1952 this act was amended by deleting the word *adult*, which made juvenile blind eligible for service. In 1966 the act was again amended: "Public Law 89-522 extended books-for-the-blind service to all persons who are unable to read conventional printed materials because of physical or visual limitations."⁴

In the late 1960s, technological advances began affecting library service for the blind and physically handicapped more aggressively. For instance, a number of books had been produced on open-reel tape. This format proved unsuitable for a variety of reasons, but it did lead the way to the use of audiocassettes. Production of books on cassettes by the Library of Congress greatly expanded service capabilities of regional libraries. If a network library obtained tape duplication equipment, it could produce additional copies of a cassette book from a master tape to meet reader needs. With recording studios, the network libraries could produce books and magazines of local or regional interest read by volunteers.

At the same time, this library network was expanding and decentralizing. The concept of subregionalization was embraced by a large segment of the network. A subregional library is "a department or unit of a public library which provides services...[to] residents of a specified area of the regional library's total service area."⁵ The subregional library has a much smaller collection and depends on the regional library for backup support for books, equipment and, in some cases, recordkeeping. There are now 56 regional and 102 subregional libraries in the United States.

In the 1970s the Library of Congress contracted for the establishment of multistate centers (MSC). Each MSC (there are now four) serves as a resource point for books, equipment and supplies for the regional libraries within its service-specified area. In the 1970s, the number of readers increased so dramatically throughout the country that many regional libraries began looking for ways to improve their service. The need for automation of circulation, machine inventory and periodical holdings has been felt and, wherever possible, implemented by an ever-growing segment of the network.

It is against this historical background of service development that the development of standards for library service should be viewed. The period between 1956 and 1976 saw the first major study of libraries serving the blind. From this study general simplified standards were developed which gave way to the standards formulated in the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind (COM-STAC) Report. These standards were replaced by "guidelines" developed by LC's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, now the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS).

The first comprehensive attempt to survey the network and identify service problems and goals was the *Survey of Library Service for the Blind 1956* by Francis R. St. John, conducted under the auspices of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), with the encouragement of the Library of Congress. Robert Barnett, executive director of AFB, outlined the need for this study in a letter written to St. John:

The purpose of this study of library services for blind persons is to assess the administrative and professional effectiveness of the special library facilities and programs established to serve blind individuals. A basic corollary to this purpose is the ongoing objective of improving services for blind persons. To achieve these objectives it is planned to:

1. Survey the twenty-eight libraries responsible for the distribution of braille and talking books provided by the federal government. The survey will involve a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of both the professional and administrative aspects of these libraries.
2. Survey the more than fifty agencies and organizations currently responsible for the distribution and maintenance of talking book machines.⁶

Two other objectives, that of surveying the blind themselves to ascertain their needs, and the development of an "authoritative statement of principles and standards [which can be used] 'to measure and advance the professional level of library services for blind persons,'"⁷ were not addressed by the St. John study, but were left for future consideration. The Library of Congress's NLS has followed through with these objectives by providing funding for a reader survey and the standards. The latter was published by the ALA in 1979, and the former was conducted and published by the American Foundation for the Blind in the same year.⁸

The St. John survey, published in 1957, included not only results and recommendations, but attempted to draw a complete picture of the network by including a history of library service for the blind and a

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section on organization patterns. Recommendations were made in the following areas: finance; organization; staffing; physical conditions (of books, equipment, and libraries); records; book selection; communication; technical problems; and publicity. The survey also made recommendations for future study needed in the following areas: books for blind children, book selection, standards, and research. The two major conclusions drawn from this survey were that: (1) "The needs of blind readers and their best interests be the factors to be weighed most heavily in making decisions in respect to library service for the blind"; and (2) "Library service is a skilled and professional service. Those who are blind should have service at least as competent as service for the sighted."⁹ The recommendations in the conclusions of the St. John survey formed the basis for the standards and guidelines which followed.

In 1961, "Standards for Regional Libraries for the Blind" was prepared by the Library of Congress, Division for the Blind (now NLS), in cooperation with the ALA Round Table on Library Service to the Blind. These standards were prescriptive in nature, and minimally met the recommendations of the St. John survey to "develop an authoritative statement of principles and standards."¹⁰ These standards did, however, expand St. John's conclusions with the following philosophical statement: "A regional library for the blind is essentially a public library for the legally blind person residing in the geographical area it serves. It should also be a source of basic information for all persons living in that area on the subjects of blindness and services available to blind persons."¹¹

In 1966, ALA's Public Libraries Division incorporated the following statement into its standards: "It is to be expressly understood that each standard in this document applies to all ages and groups, and that a standard is not achieved if its provisions are met for one part of the population but not for another."¹² State library standards adopted by the American Association of State Libraries (AASL) in July 1963 included the statement: "Resources available within or near each state shall include a full range of reading materials for the blind and visually handicapped."¹³

In 1964, the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) created the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind. Financed by AFB, the commission maintained autonomy in procedures and policy-making. The two major accomplishments of the commission were: (1) the formulation of standards for agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped, which were published in 1966 as *The COM-*

STAC Report: Standards for Strengthened Services,¹⁴ and (2) the designation of a continuous entity which would be responsible for administering a method of accountability based on the standards.

ALA's Library Administration Division adopted the COMSTAC standards in July 1966, which were published in 1967 as *Standards for Library Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped*. Eric Moon wrote: "If [these standards find] sufficient enthusiastic support at all levels, [they] can do much to remove another group from the ranks of the 'under-privileged' library users."¹⁵

Unfortunately, these standards did not receive "sufficient support" from the network. It may be, as Donald John Weber, director of the Florida Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, suggested, "when these standards' quantitative elements were applied, most libraries found them deficient since their standards were so idealistic that their application was unpracticable."¹⁶ Or, as Katherine Prescott (former Regional Librarian of the Cleveland Regional Library, and chair of the ALA subcommittee writing the standards for the blind and physically handicapped) succinctly put it:

In [1966, the same year ALA adopted the COMSTAC library standards], the U.S. Congress passed the momentous Public Law 80-522 which extended the Library of Congress "books for the blind" program to physically handicapped persons unable to use conventional print...[This] introduced important factors for change, a new readership with the doubling of potential users, and dramatically accelerated growth which in turn generated a trend toward decentralization in service and administration. The climate in which the service operates [had] also changed greatly since 1966, with the rising expectations of users and their increasing determination to participate as full equals in shaping the structure of [library] services to meet their requirements.¹⁷

By the early 1970s the National Accreditation Council (NAC) of agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped, formerly COMSTAC, found itself in conflict with the National Federation of the Blind. As a result, ALA, because of its formal association with NAC, became embroiled in the conflict. Because of this ongoing problem, in 1973 "the ALA Round Table on Library Services to the Blind passed a resolution for new standards that would recognize and be responsive to" the blind and physically handicapped library situation.¹⁸ In 1975, at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco, the minutes of the Board of Directors of the Health and Rehabilitative Library Services Division (HRLSD) further defined the controversy:

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A resolution recommending that ALA withdraw its membership from NAC will be presented for discussion. It is the feeling of at least some members of the section that NAC as an accrediting agency for blind rehabilitation agencies is not the best agency to develop standards for library service to blind and physically handicapped persons. It is further the feeling that NAC is involved in a power struggle with the National Federation of the Blind and that it is inappropriate for ALA, HRLSD and the regional libraries for the blind and physically handicapped to become involved in this controversy.¹⁹

In July 1975, the following two resolutions were passed by the Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Section of HRLSD. Both were forwarded to the HRLSD Executive Board, and the latter resolution was submitted to the ALA Council at the 1976 Midwinter meeting.

WHEREAS, the primary concern of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped is the accreditation of rehabilitative and social service programs for the blind and visually impaired, and

WHEREAS, the current 1966 standards for library service are designed for special service agencies for the blind and are outdated and inapplicable to public libraries in general, and

WHEREAS, NAC regularly issues publicity indicating that ALA is an affiliate and supporter of NAC, and

WHEREAS, the American Library Association believes that *all* handicapped persons are entitled to integrated library service at *all* levels (state, regional, local),

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the American Library Association disassociate itself from the National Accreditation Council and formulate standards of library service for all handicapped persons and that the National Accreditation Council be informed of this action by the appropriate ALA official.

WHEREAS, the present Standards for Library Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, which were formulated by the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped and adopted by ALA in 1966, are not relevant to library services as being provided today, and

WHEREAS, said standards emphasize centralized services, while the trend is toward decentralization and provision of local library service to all handicapped individuals, and

WHEREAS, said standards are too limited in scope, applying only to library services for the blind and visually impaired, totally excluding service to over 80 percent of the handicapped—those with physical disabilities, and

WHEREAS, continued utilization and reliance upon the 1966 standards is a disservice to the library community,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Standards for Library Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, adopted by the Library Administration Division of ALA on July 14, 1966, be declared obsolete, and that continued distribution of said standards by ALA be discontinued.²⁰

In 1976, network libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped were again without standards. At this point LC's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (DBPH) did two things. First, it issued its *Guidelines for Regional Libraries*. These guidelines were prepared with input from the user community and network librarians. The general philosophy of these guidelines follows:

Reading occupies a significant place in our lives today. Reading for educational, vocational, informational, and recreational purposes begins in the early years of life, when a parent reads to his child, and continues through the senior citizen years. In a complex, rapidly changing environment, our understanding of the present, its relationship to the past, and what the future may hold, can be enriched through the use of books, magazines, and a variety of other information and media resources. The principal organization committed to the acquisition, arrangement, and dissemination of this material and information is the public library. The needs of the blind and handicapped reader are no different from those of other citizens. Differences may exist in the kinds of media and in the methods used for dissemination, but the range of subjects covered and the uses to which the material is put are the same.²¹

At the same time, DBPH followed through on the St. John survey recommendation for "authoritative standards" by beginning formal negotiations with ALA to expedite new standards for libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped.

In September 1977, a contract was signed by Robert Wedgeworth, Executive Director of ALA, and Frank Kurt Cylke, chief of LC's DBPH. DBPH agreed to subsidize the writing of the standards, provided they were completed within a two-year period. The contract required ALA: "to formulate the standards for library services to the blind and physically handicapped which are provided through the network administered by the Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, under Public Law 89-522. Specifically the standards shall cover services at the national, multistate, regional, subregional, and machine agency levels."²² In addition, this contract outlined future objectives encouraging ALA:

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to formulate the standards for library services to the blind and physically handicapped which are provided by state, public, school (elementary and secondary), academic (post-secondary), and institutional (hospital, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.) libraries. Also included shall be standards for organizations and agencies which are developing and maintaining print collections about visual physical handicaps.²³

With these objectives and time frame in mind, HRLSD (now the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies/ASCLA) appointed a committee of eight individuals to write the standards. Each member of the committee was assigned a section to develop. The committee was well chosen in that it included individuals with extensive backgrounds in library services to the handicapped, as well as representatives from other agencies serving the handicapped. Because of their dedication and hard work, in approximately six months the committee released a draft entitled *March 1978 Preliminary Draft Standards of Services for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped*. This draft was made available in braille, disc and print to the LC network, consumer organizations, and to all ALA division presidents and executive secretaries.

At the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago in June 1978, the program of the Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Section (LSBPHS) consisted of a forum on the proposed standards. The meeting was attended by approximately 250 librarians and consumers. As a result of the feedback from the forum and written comments, the committee completely rewrote portions of the draft standards document.

At this same conference, the LSBPHS membership voted that a revised draft of the standards should be provided to all members, and that a mail vote approving or disapproving the standards be effected before the 1979 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Washington, D.C. A revised draft was developed and mailed to the LSBPHS membership and was overwhelmingly approved by voting members. This revised draft was also presented as an agenda topic at the National Conference of Librarians for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, held in Washington, D.C., in October 1978. During the ALA Midwinter Meeting in 1979, the LSBPHS Executive Committee approved the proposed standards, as did the ASCLA Standards Review Committee, the ASCLA Board of Directors, and the ALA Standards Review Committee. These standards were published by ALA late in 1979, and the Library of Congress network finally had "authoritative standards."

The committee which wrote the 1977 standards was well aware that all relevant topics could not be included in these standards, and that the passage of time would change their focus. Therefore, under section 3.8 on future considerations, the following recommendations were included:

The ASCLA Standards for Library Service to the Blind and Physically Handicapped Subcommittee urges the immediate appointment by the ASCLA Board of Directors of a new committee to monitor the implementation of these standards with the goal of formulating new standards within five years. The charge to this committee should include a mechanism for user participation initially and periodically throughout the phases of standards formulation; one method would be an advisory council of users to work with the ASCLA committee.

The present subcommittee suggests that the new committee undertake the following tasks:

1. Cooperation with the LC/NLS Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in activities such as:
 - a. Testing the criteria used in the present standards; collecting factual data on costs, staffing patterns, space requirements, and production and duplication of library materials.
 - b. Research evaluating the present standards; relating criteria to program activities as well as to gross statistics such as circulation, users registered, and staff.
 - c. Documentation of user and network staff participation in planning and policy determination.
2. Investigation and evaluation of new developments in:
 - a. Services such as the radio reading service.
 - b. Technical advances such as automated circulation systems.
 - c. Impact of electronic reading aids.
 - d. Effect of new legislation on the use by blind and physically handicapped users of the resources in various types of libraries not linked formally in the LC/NLS Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.²⁴

In 1980 a subcommittee was appointed by ASCLA, which currently meets at ALA midwinter and annual conferences for the purposes of monitoring the implementation of these standards and receiving comments and suggestions which will be turned over to a committee with the responsibility of revising the standards.

At the 1980 National Conference of Librarians for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the NLS/BPH announced it would be soliciting proposals for a two-year study of the implementation of the ALA standards by the network. Specifically, the contract called for the following:

- a. to develop appropriate fact gathering tools, and a reporting format for consistent and accurate evaluation of NLS and network

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libraries in relation to the ALA Standards of Service...;

b. to identify an advisory group to review the products of paragraph (a); to convene the group, solicit comments and prepare a typed statement of the plan acceptable to all;

c. to implement the plan developed (a and b) by visiting NLS, four multistate centers, and the regional libraries (currently fifty-six) over no more than a two-year period, preparing reports on each agency, and preparing a consolidated report at the end of the period to reflect the overall status of NLS, the MSC, and the network when compared with the Standards;

d. to develop an agreement instrument which can be used between network libraries and NLS...;

e. to prepare a plan for ongoing monitoring of the Standards after the contract expires.²⁶

In December 1980, Battelle Memorial Laboratories of Columbus, Ohio, was awarded the contract for the study. In 1981 Battelle appointed an advisory committee consisting of four representatives from the NLS network and representatives from consumer organizations and the academic community.

The initial meeting of the Battelle Standards Advisory Committee was held February 1981 at NLS in Washington, D.C. Prior to the meeting, Battelle had prepared a questionnaire based on the standards. The advisory committee reviewed the questionnaire and made suggestions. The questionnaire was finalized and distributed to NLS, the regional libraries, and the multistate centers and their administering agencies. The questionnaire contained five parts and was designed to allow libraries to show whether or not they met individual standards (totally or in part), as well as whether, in their opinion, they were providing quality if they did not meet the individual standard. The questionnaires were received by the network libraries in the summer of 1981.

At the request of the ASCLA standards subcommittee on handicapped standards, a special section was added to the questionnaire to solicit network librarians' opinions of the standards. This section is being returned unsigned and will be turned over to the ASCLA Standards Subcommittee on Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped as feedback for future revision of the standards.

The results will be statistically compiled, grouping libraries according to several criteria, such as size, budget and circulation. The results will show which standards the network is meeting, and which standards need to be met: "The NLS Network participation in this project is a pioneering effort. Never before has a comprehensive review of libraries and their relations to a set of standards been attempted at the national level."²⁶

Sadly, the development of standards for library services to blind and physically handicapped individuals which are provided by public schools and by academic and institutional libraries has not proceeded at the same pace. In 1979 an ASCLA interest group formed to work with other ALA divisions to encourage integration of standards for the handicapped into their overall standards. To date there has been little interest from the other divisions. It is hoped that by the time the next *Library Trends* issue on standards is published, other divisions' standards will reflect sections on services to the blind and physically handicapped.

STANDARDS FOR THE DEAF AND HEARING IMPAIRED

Through the work of the Library Services to the Deaf Section of ASCLA (and its predecessor, the ad hoc Committee on Services to the Deaf) and numerous individuals, library services for deaf and hearing impaired patrons came to national attention in the latter half of the 1970s. When this author became librarian of Gallaudet College in 1972, there was a need to explore ways in which public libraries could serve deaf patrons. Gallaudet College sponsored a regional workshop on such services, and later a national workshop, with invitations extended to state library agencies, state deaf associations and public libraries. Two early influential papers need to be cited: Lee Putnam's "Information Needs of Hearing Impaired People,"²⁷ and Alice Hagemeyer's *Deaf Awareness Handbook for Public Libraries*.²⁸ Since 1976 these publications, as well as ALA preconferences and program sections (such as the ASCLA's Library Services to the Deaf Section and the Reference and Adult Services Division 1979 ALA program, "Working with Deaf Adults"), have increased awareness of the possibilities for services to deaf patrons, and they illustrate types of programs and services which have been tried.

As more and more libraries initiated services to deaf patrons, the need changed from informal sharing of programs and services that worked to the need to be able to evaluate these services on the basis of some standards. In 1978-79, the ASCLA Board appointed an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Standards for Library Services to the Deaf. Under the chairmanship of Lethene Parks, this subcommittee drew on the resources of the membership of the Library Services to the Deaf Section of ASCLA and input from libraries which had program experience with deaf patrons.

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Over a period of two years, this subcommittee worked on developing *Guidelines for Public Library Service to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons*.²⁹ Although still in draft form, the guidelines have been reviewed by the Library Services to the Deaf Section Executive Committee, and will be referred to the appropriate committees in ASCLA and the Public Library Division of ALA. These draft guidelines provide our best present source for program evaluation. The guidelines are divided into five sections: (1) introduction, (2) communication, (3) resources, (4) publicity and program, and (5) participation and staffing.

The introduction underscores the wide variety of hearing losses and of means of communication used by those who are deaf, as well as the legislative mandate to ensure that all these groups have reasonable access to all of the services of the public library.

The guidelines on communication recognize that communication with the deaf patron requires a consciousness of several facts:

1. For many deaf people English is a second language and sign language is their primary means of communication, so that public programs in the library will need sign-language interpretation.
2. Much communication for the deaf patron needs to be focused on the visual medium. Library signs should use the international symbol code as well as printed English. Video (especially with the use of closed-caption decoder) is another important information format for deaf patrons. Special attention needs to be paid to the lighting of meeting rooms so that deaf persons can see the interpreter or otherwise more easily read lips. All important signals (fire alarms, elevator, etc.) should be visual as well as auditory. In any emergency, the library staff should check to see that deaf and hard-of-hearing persons have received the alarm.
3. Auditory aids will help many hard-of-hearing persons who want to use listening stations or other audio formats. Audio equipment and at least one telephone should be amplified to a level where hard-of-hearing people can utilize them.
4. Deaf persons can make use of the telephone by means of telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD), and libraries should have at least one such device for references, information and referral service. Deaf patrons should be able to use the library TDD to contact other TDD locations.

The guidelines on resources emphasize that deaf persons have the same information needs as other people. English reading skills vary greatly among these patrons, and resources which are high interest/low vocabulary, heavily illustrated, or in film or video format will be useful.

Up-to-date resources which give information on deafness (medical, legal, educational, cultural, biographical) for all age levels should be collected and displayed by libraries. The library's information and referral file should provide information on persons and organizations who provide services for deaf persons.

The guidelines on publicity and programs urge inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons in all programs, services or classes of the library through publicity among local and state organizations serving the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Any special services (e.g., interpreters), resources or equipment (TDD, etc.) should be promoted by special publications and announcements. Library programs or promotions on local television should be captioned or interpreted for deaf people. Library film programs can regularly include unnarrated or captioned films.

The guidelines on participation and staffing remind libraries that deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons should be represented on advisory boards, trustees and voluntary groups related to the library. Any special programs for deaf persons should be cooperatively planned with those persons. Equal opportunity and affirmative action will be promoted as library staff members are trained to communicate with deaf persons and deaf or hard-of-hearing persons are considered for employment in the library.

Although still in its beginning phase, library services to deaf and hard-of-hearing persons have developed an amazing variety and depth of services and programs. The Library Services for the Deaf Section of ASCLA has cooperated with other ALA divisions and with deaf organizations, such as the National Association of the Deaf,³⁰ to develop guidelines for such services and programs.

CONCLUSION

Twenty-three years after St. John's survey, ALA has approved *Standards of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped*. While these are "benchmark" standards, they are not carved in stone. The committee which wrote these standards recommended a revision within five years. In the two years since approval, some standards have already become obsolete, and the need to address additional areas has become evident. These standards will be revised in 1985-86 based on input obtained from the LC network.

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Standards for service to the deaf and hard-of-hearing are beginning to emerge, as more and more libraries and organizations of deaf persons seek to communicate the library's potential to the deaf community. A major first step was taken with the publication of "Techniques for Library Service to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing."³¹ ASCLA will continue to encourage other ALA divisions to include library service to the handicapped in their existing standards, but resistance will not fade until service to the handicapped is perceived as more than simply the removal of architectural barriers.

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29. ASCLA Subcommittee on Standards for Library Services to the Deaf. *Guidelines for Public Library Service to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons*. Chicago: ALA, forthcoming.
30. The National Association of the Deaf Bookstore (814 Thayer Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910) has information on the "Friends of Libraries for Deaf Action" (a section of the NAD) and other helpful materials, including the Red Notebook, which provides up-to-date information on deafness, services for the deaf and library services for them.
31. ASCLA Subcommittee, "Techniques."