

Coping Assistance vs. Readers' Advisory

Are They the Same Animal?

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Do children's librarians provide services to help children cope with problems or issues? The provisional answer seems to be both "yes" and "no."

On one hand, anecdotal evidence suggests that public libraries have provided assistance with helping children cope with personal problems in the wake of national disasters, as is discussed in the following section. But very little research on coping assistance for children has been conducted.

Research relevant to children's services or service evaluations has largely focused on book selection and collection development, storytelling, reference service, and readers' advisory services. Although a few scholars have gently suggested that readers' advisory is not always for recreational reading and that it can be used subtly to solve personal problems,¹ there are still no empirical studies that address how or if readers' advisory—or any other library service—is used to help children with their personal problems.

What kinds of coping questions do librarians get? How do librarians interact with patrons when receiving this type of question? What do the librarians do in this coping context, and what resources do they use? The concept of coping service and



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the characteristics pertaining to it are simply unrecognized in the larger library community.

This exploratory study, therefore, aims to fill in some of the gaps in the studies of children's services in the public library by collecting evidence to document the existence of the coping aspect of service in the public library and to explore what librarians have done to help children cope.

Central Concepts and Research Questions

Readers' Advisory Service

Central to this study is the concept and practice of "readers' advisory service." Readers' advisory was heavily practiced in the public library between the 1920s and 1940s; after that, librarians' interest in it seemed to diminish. A renaissance came during the 1980s, and the renewed interest remains to the present day.

Interestingly, the historical picture of readers' advisory that practitioners and researchers have presented has not been static, but rather has kept evolving. Some major characteristics found across the documents are discussed as follows.

First, the scope of the readers' advisory service is constantly changing. Between the 1920s and 1940s, readers' advisory service promoted both fiction and nonfiction reading.² During the 1980s and 1990s, it focused specifically on fiction reading, and most recently, readers' advisory service found its place in meeting fiction and nonfiction readers' reading interests. For instance, in the current edition of Saricks' well-received book, *Readers' Advisory Service in the Public Library*, the author has expanded her definition of readers' advisory from "service for

adult fiction readers" to "service for adult leisure readers."

Saricks elaborates, adding that "a successful readers' advisory service is one in which knowledgeable, nonjudgmental staff help fiction and nonfiction readers with their leisure-reading needs."³

Secondly, the primary goal of readers' advisory has shifted more toward its recreational function than its educational one in the past two decades. During its early phases (the 1930s and 1940s), readers' advisory service had a moralistic, didactic tone, and it was considered to be one of the library's major contributions to adult education.⁴ Therefore one of the primary goals of past readers' advisory services was "self-improvement in the readers."⁵ Today, however, readers' advisory is perceived as promoting leisure or recreational reading.

Thirdly, the user groups of readers' advisory service expanded as well. Adults used to be the main users of such services, but currently the beneficiaries of readers' advisory guidance can include adults, young adults, and children.⁶

Finally, because of the interest in promoting reading, the librarian's focus, when interacting with a patron, is "to analyze the interests and tastes of readers" and to recommend books or audio books.⁷ Readers' advisory has thus evolved in its scope and focus and is today centered entirely on the reader, of any age, and his or her interests.

Coping Assistance: Some Anecdotes

Another critical concept for this study is "coping assistance" in the library. Although empirical library research about coping assistance is rare, there are some relevant anecdotes in the wake of two recent national disasters—the tragedy of 9/11 and the disaster of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005.

In the aftermath of 9/11, several discussion lists reported that people asked for books to soothe their sorrow for the loss of a family member or friend, teachers looked for stories to help children escape from a stressful reality, and parents searched for books to cope with their children's fear of flight.⁸ They sought out and read these books not only for the information they contained but also for the potential insights conveyed for solving personal problems.

In response to the tragedy, the American Library Association (ALA) provided a gateway website with a wide range of material—everything from how libraries could help Americans understand and cope with the tragedy to how to provide the specific information and books that different age groups needed.⁹

The New York Public Library launched a series of programs and extensive Web resources, including discussions of books and presentations on depression, anxiety, and grief.¹⁰ The Providence Public Library (R.I.) held a program, "Finding Safety in an Unsafe World," in November 2001 that aimed specifically to relieve teenagers' feelings of anxiety.¹¹

Similar coping assistance anecdotes at local, state, and national levels were found after Hurricane Katrina. For example, the State Library of Louisiana (SLL) created a website containing information about assistance evacuees might need.¹² The Association for Library Service to Children, the Young Adult Library Services Association, and the SLL assembled booklists of recommended books to help children cope with their feelings.¹³

Locally, public librarians reached out to temporary shelters to conduct story times and to provide recreational reading to evacuees.¹⁴ Many libraries created displays of books and audiovisual tapes aimed at helping children deal with their situations.¹⁵ Some libraries provided special read-aloud programs and book discussions, and even brought in counselors to help families.¹⁶

Librarians were not just librarians. "We're social workers here . . . we soothe and comfort."¹⁷ These examples indicate that American libraries have provided services to help their patrons cope with special needs, feelings, and difficulties during periods of large-scale public crises.

Since one could justifiably argue that the responses of libraries to 9/11 and Katrina were simply temporary and exceptional phenomena to national tragedies and that the public library does not provide these services regularly, the main goal of this study is to collect data during public libraries' regular working hours to test the anecdotal evidence to show that library service does involve coping assistance even in ordinary times. Several research questions, therefore, guided this investigation:

1. Do children's librarians provide services or activities to help children cope with personal difficulties during regular working hours? What is the evidence?
2. What are some of the frequently asked questions? What do these questions indicate?
3. What, after all, is this type of library service? To what level is it different from or similar to traditional readers' advisory?
4. How does the children's librarian provide assistance to help children cope?

Research Method

Background and Site Selection

The design of the study began with the question of how to demonstrate the existence of an unrecognized library service in a natural, unobtrusive way. It is a first step of constructing a foundation that could later support a more systematic study of this type of library service.

Because the focus was specific cases, contexts, and local experiences, this study was qualitative in nature, involving a small number of librarians in an intensive study. It examined the questions librarians receive every day and the interactions they

have with patrons, and extracted elements that were relevant to the “coping” aspect of children’s service.

To maximize variations in data rather than provide just one cultural story, the study attempted to reach out to libraries that served diverse populations. Three public libraries in southern California participated in this study because of their interest in this topic. There were four participating librarians, all white females with MLIS degrees. Since none of the libraries had current user profiles, user information was drawn from the Census Data 2000 and other secondary sources.

The population of the city of library 1 is 60 percent white, 25 percent Hispanic, 6 percent African American, 4 percent Asian, and 11 percent “other.” The population served by library 2 is especially diverse, capturing at least 25 percent of each racial and ethnic group’s population—white, African American, Latino, and Asian. Library 3’s population is approximately 62 percent white, 21 percent Hispanic, 18 percent Asian, and a very small percentage “other.”

Data Collection Strategies

This study used three qualitative methods to collect data—observation, log keeping (or journal keeping) by the librarians, and librarian interviews. Observations at the three public libraries lasted for approximately ten to fifteen hours each week for four months. The focus was to record queries or questions the participating librarians received and the ways they responded to the requests.

Each of the libraries had only one information desk open for patrons, meaning that both children and adults had equal opportunities and access to the librarians. The researcher observed participating librarians when they were at their desks (which is usually the point of initial contact) and also in the stacks as they accompanied patrons to locate materials. The researcher wrote down all verbal discourse librarians had with library users, documented sensory expressions and behaviors of the librarians and the users, and collected artifacts and relevant program records.

To compensate for the unavailability of the researcher’s direct observation, the participating librarians kept short logs for this study. Major elements required in the log included the user’s gender, age, and ethnicity, the questions asked, and the librarian’s interactions or responses.

A third and final strategy used in this study was the interview. Participating librarians were interviewed to help clarify data in librarians’ logs and to assess the process of coping assistance service from the librarians’ perspective. The interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim for data analysis.

Analysis Procedures

To analyze the data, it was necessary to identify which questions librarians received were “coping” questions. Coping questions usually involved looking for information or materials to

deal with personal challenges, difficulties, or problems—such as “I need some books for anger management for my kids,” or “my daughter needs to learn to cope with bullies.”

The questions were then categorized by user group—adult or child. Adults looking for information to satisfy children’s needs were placed under the “child” category because the end users were children. One such example was a mother looking for books for her eleven-year-old daughter about friendship problems.

During the course of this research, no instances emerged about children seeking information on behalf of adults. The researcher categorized the logs kept by the participating librarians and the contents of interviews with them in the same manner.

Findings

Question 1: Does the public library receive any requests to help children cope with their personal problems? What is the evidence?

During the observation period, there were forty cases that concerned coping-relevant issues. Of those cases, only one of them was for an adult; the other thirty-nine requests (98 percent) were for children. The only adult coping-relevant transaction occurred in library 1, where an adult looked for self-help books “to cope with obstacles.”

Given that each participating library had only one information desk open to everyone, and that children and adults had equal opportunities and access to the librarians, this substantial difference indicates that this type of coping service may be of importance, especially to children.

Question 2: What are some of the frequently asked questions?

Coping-relevant questions gathered from observations, the librarians’ logs, and interviews were all coded. Based on their themes or subjects, five major categories of queries emerged—behavior, emotion, relationships, achievement, and empathy.

- **Behavior.** This category contains behavioral issues and concerns and includes those queries related to helping children behave appropriately. A recurring request in this category was manners—stories to teach children to behave. One such example occurred at library 2:

A woman approaches the librarian and asks, “do you have children’s books about being different and needing attention?”

“Can you be more specific? What kind of difference do you mean?” the librarian asks.

“I want my kid to pay attention to what I said. He likes to be different to catch my attention. If I tell him to do this, he will do that. . . . He just doesn’t listen and is getting into trouble.”

Library patrons also looked for books to cope with misconduct. For example, one mother looked for books to help her daughter

Table 1. Coping Assistance: Coverage of Query Topics

Category	Query Topics
Behavior	Potty training—positive thinking Manners—listening to the parent Manners—personality building Stealing—money value Bullying Moral/ethics learning
Emotion	Grief—death Grief—saying goodbye Anger—anger management Anger—expressing anger Jealousy Fear
Relationships	Birth of a new sibling Adoption Absence of one parent Divorce Step-parent Blended family Friendship New classmate Teacher/student relationship
Achievement	Reading difficulties/differences Computer skill—typing Computer skill—filtering
Empathy	Injuries—empathy Physical disabilities—empathy

cope with bullies at school. Another relevant request was from a mother looking for stories to tell her son that “it is okay to wet the bed even if he is being potty trained.”

There were three cases involving requests for books to teach children moral or ethical values—from general ethics-teaching to teaching specific behaviors (such as the importance of “not stealing”). One such example was an elementary school teacher requesting “ethical stories or books” for his ten-year-old students to understand what they should do in certain situations and why. Along the same lines was a father looking for books about money for his four-year-old son because the child was in the bad habit of reaching for his father’s change at the store.

- **Emotion.** This category contains queries that have to do with helping children cope with various feelings or emotions, especially negative ones, such as anger, sorrow, jealousy, fear, anxiety, and so on. Requests for help with grieving for the death of a loved one appeared twice, once for the loss of a grandparent and the other for a pet. Requests for books to deal with anger or to express anger also appeared twice during the observations.
- **Relationships.** Relationship issues within the family, in school, and in society belong to this category. These include parent–child relationships, sibling rivalry, family structure and change (divorce and blended family), friendship problems, teacher–student relationships, new classmates, and

so on. One such example was from a mother. She looked for stories about divorce for her four-year-old daughter. But she did not want books that used the word *divorce* because she had not yet used the word with her daughter, and she felt it was “too much to explain at this point.” Another example was from a nanny asking for stories about little sisters because her charge was expecting a little sister, and she wanted books that would help them talk about sibling relationships.

- **Achievement.** Library patrons also pursued practical skills to accomplish certain achievements. Two issues that stood out in this category were reading difficulties or reading differences and computer skills. This study recorded ten requests that dealt with various problems regarding language or reading difficulties, including underachievement in reading, frustration dealing with learning English (for non–English speaking children), reluctance or resistance to learning English, and so on. Stress from the lack of computer skills, however, is a relatively recent by-product of technology evolution. One of the collected cases describes the following scenario.

The librarian was talking to a Latina girl, probably fifth or sixth grade, about the typing tutorial class. The girl didn’t say much and just looked down at the floor while the librarian was talking to her. She kept shaking her head. When the librarian finished, the girl made a shy smile. The librarian then talked to the girl’s mom, and then to another staff person working here. After she came back to the desk, she told me that she knew the girl and wanted to recommend her to the typing tutorial class because the girl had been frustrated with her slow typing, spending hours per page. But the girl insisted that she had taken it already. “She is unbearably shy and wouldn’t want to talk, so I asked a young staff person to talk to her.”

Another relevant request came from a mother who wanted to know “how to avoid unwanted materials online” because her daughter was “bothered by some nasty messages and pictures.” The librarian showed her how to use the function of a “safe filter” in some popular search engines such as Google and Yahoo!, while pointing out several drawbacks to filtering.

- **Empathy.** Two sub-categories emerged here—“treating people with disabilities” and “understanding injuries.” Issues like these are not concerned with treating or diagnosing illnesses. Instead, they are related to empathy and understanding. In the case of injuries, for example, a kindergarten teacher wanted stories about injuries because one of the girls in her class was injured and she wanted the class “to know how it feels when one gets injured and it’s okay.” The other example came from a Sunday school teacher who wanted books to discuss with children “how to treat people with disabilities.”

Requests like these two were geared to providing children with quasi-experiences—How does it feel if you are injured? How does it feel if you are a disabled person? How should we treat people with disabilities? How should we treat our friend when she got injured? These requests sought to relieve children’s

fear of illness due to misinformation or lack of information. For example, you don't get injured because you did something bad, and it is not contagious, so you won't get injured simply because your friend got injured.

These categories may not be comprehensive due to the small sample size of this exploratory study; however, they help build a framework of information needs to be tested in a follow-up, larger scale study.

Question 3: What do these questions indicate?

The topics generated from the queries collected here are varied, ranging from the specific—such as personal feelings—to the general, such as positive thinking. The topics cover different traditional and current issues children may encounter daily. They can probably be best understood as indices of the diverse information needs of children. As Walter and Kuhlthau suggest in their studies, children have information needs that arise not only from their school assignments but also from their personal lives.¹⁸ Topics collected in this study can be best understood as a set of children's information needs generated from their daily life activities—at home or at school—about themselves and about their relationships with others in society. In other words, what children need from this set of topics can be seen as stepping stones that help them proceed more smoothly with socialization and personal development.

Empathy depends upon the ability to truly respect and appreciate the inevitable differences between people. Being able to get along with others, including family, friends, humans, and nonhumans (for example, computing devices), will likely equip them to function properly in their particular living context. Children learning about how to respond to various emotions will hopefully begin to develop coping skills for dealing with strong feelings.

These cases reveal that our library patrons did make use of public libraries to pursue the ability to see things from different perspectives and to develop the skills to cope with frustrations derived from life challenges.

Question 4: How does the children's librarian provide assistance to help children cope?

Children's librarians displayed a wealth of information behaviors in this particular context. The participating librarians asked a variety of verifying questions during their interviews with patrons, consulted various sources, and provided different levels of recommendations.

Interview Questions

During the study, the librarians repetitively used several clarification or verification skills to pin down the patrons' problems and provide additional recommendations. Here are the three most frequently used interview questions:

1. *"How old is he/she?"* Not all adults brought the children with them, and not all of them identified the children's ages in the beginning. They simply said "I need a children's book about a friendship problem." But a friendship problem could concern any age group. Friendship books for a four-year-old are definitely different from those for an eleven-year-old in terms of format, genre, content focus, and so on.
2. *"Do you want books on this topic or books to cope with this topic?"* There is a huge difference between books "about or on death" and books "to cope with death." Some patrons seemed to be aware of the discrepancy and be certain of their queries; however, some patrons were unaware of the difference between the two and needed to be reminded. Asking leading questions helped clarify the patron's actual need.
3. *"Do you also want adult books on this topic?"* Often, adults sought children's books exclusively to help children cope with personal problems. But the librarians had a different understanding; they believed that adult books could provide additional assistance in many ways. One of the participating librarians commented that adult books gave comparatively more details about a child issue. They may help adults think through a tough family issue by giving pros and cons, they may provide adults with guidelines for the use of some designed activities when helping children, and they may offer new options for adults solving a problem, bringing more flexible solutions in crisis management.

But most adults did not seem to appreciate the possibility of a broader perspective on an issue. They declined the offer simply by saying "a child's book is just fine."

Sources

The librarians consulted five major resources—library catalogs, colleagues, online bookstores, personal experiences, and community resources. In most cases, the librarians were catalog driven. They began with their own library catalog system, the system in the nearby areas, and the systems in remote areas for interlibrary loan (if time permitted).

But not all subject headings or index terms were helpful for retrieving the desired items, especially fiction titles. In such situations, librarians sought advice from their colleagues and inspiration from online bookstores. Online bookstore databases might provide potential titles, and the librarians would come back to their local catalog systems to check availability.

For example, the functions of "similar books" or "people who bought this item also bought . . ." were used by two of the participating librarians, and these databases provided a quick catalog service that might, in fact, be more sensitive or pertinent than the online catalog services currently used by their public libraries. Although book sales might reflect only popularity and not necessarily quality, the librarians would prefer "at least having something" to nothing.

"The final decision is the patron's," commented Librarian A. Some librarians extrapolated from their personal lives and reading experiences. The following two cases illustrate such behavior.

My [the librarian's] daughter had the same kind of thing [ADHD]. . . So I think I know what books work better for kids like mine.

A white father in his late thirties wants books about money for his four-year-old son because the child is in the bad habit of reaching for his father's change at the store. The child is very bright, beginning to read already. . . . I look up "money-juvenile literature" and "money-juvenile fiction" and found several books . . . then I remember something I have read before: "The Money Tree," which I like a lot.

Finally, librarians sometimes consulted community resources or agencies for better solutions. It was just another aspect of reaching out, as one librarian pointed out.

We are an information resource here. It isn't just about the books. We certainly represent all the agencies in the city where we are employed. Even if I don't know something personally, I'll go to the phone book and look up the government agencies and make the call for somebody even if I have to say "is this the right agency? So the person [patron] is going to call you."

I want my patrons to be calling to the right places; this is the right number to get somebody. . . . I do have a list at my desk that's full of telephone numbers of city connections and things like that. And I think using that as part of my work as a librarian is what I need to do.

Recommendations

What the librarian provided varied, depending on the patron's request. In addition to library materials such as books, audiotapes, videotapes, and DVDs, librarians sometimes recommended a program or an institution to the patron.

In library 2, which has a large number of non-English speaking users, requests to help solve learning or reading difficulties were common. The library had a reading-tutor program created specifically to address this problem, so upon receiving this kind of question, the librarian referred the patron to the program.

Sometimes librarians recommended other city agencies. Librarian J shared one of her experiences of helping a patron successfully through program referral.

I had a patron, a mother, who had a child that didn't behave as a normal child [at] his age. She had another older child, whom she was trying to help in the library, who seemed like a normal-behaving child. But the woman could hardly cope with the smaller one . . . the kid was out of her control, like a wild animal, and she was in tears. I told her there was an infant and family support program, which was part of the school district. They worked with other city agencies and they could forward parents that come to them.

Discussion

What is this coping service then? To what level is the coping service similar to or different from the typical reference service or readers' advisory service? The three services share some common ground because of their nature as types of information services, but they also differ in many ways.

The coping service is not the typical reference service we understand because reference service focuses primarily on "factual information," but most coping-relevant requests, as this study has shown, look for stories and fiction books. This seems to draw coping service closer to the readers' advisory service. But a detailed comparison between the two types of library services reveals their distinctive characteristics.

Descriptions of the categories and comparisons follow.

The user. Both children and adults are the users of the traditional readers' advisory, but children, as discussed, are the main users of the coping service.

Query content. The traditional readers' advisory is interest-oriented. It is for pleasure reading, and oftentimes it deals with a patron's favorite fiction type or genre, author, or favorite book. Questions are along the lines of "I have read all the Harry Potter books; is anything else like it available?" or "I enjoy science fiction; what do you recommend?" But the coping service is problem-oriented—it deals with a patron's personal problem rather than serving his or her recreational needs.

The coping service interaction may be unpleasant, even painful, because the user wishes to cope with something stressful, or something currently beyond his understanding. Examples of questions are "I need children's books on divorce," or "our pet just died. What do you suggest us reading at this point?"

Interaction focus. In traditional readers' advisory, the interactions between the librarian and the patron focus on the understanding of the previous reading experiences of the patron to better grasp a patron's reading interest. "What have you read?" and "what do you like about the Harry Potter books?" are two typical questions used during the traditional readers' advisory. The librarian is trying to discover what the patron may read and enjoy from what the patron has read and liked in the past.

But with coping service the questions are more problem driven. The interactions are more focused on understanding the problems of the patron. A common question may be along the lines of "is this personal or is this for a class?," "can you be more specific?," and "do you want books on this topic or books to cope with this topic?"

Goal. The goals of the two services are also different. The traditional readers' advisory aims to satisfy readers' specific reading interests and needs; the goal of the coping service is to help patrons better understand a problem or direct them to potential solutions.

Table 2. Traditional Readers' Advisory vs. Coping Service

	Traditional Readers' Advisory	Coping Service
User	Adults and children	Primarily children
Query content	On leisure reading interests	On personal problems
Interaction focus	On user's reading experience	On understanding the problem
Goal	To satisfy a reading need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help understand a problem • To provide solutions to a problem
Librarian's recommendation	Content-driven: library materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library materials • Library programs • Other supportive groups
Book selection focus	On literary or artistic values	On the potentiality of problem-solving

Recommendation. Traditional readers' advisory offers reading guidance and advice, so the librarian's recommendation is most often composed of books or a list of books, or other formats of library materials such as audiotapes and videotapes, and is primarily content driven. The coping service, in contrast, is mainly solution driven. The outcome of the recommendation is employed as one of the methods to help patrons solve problems. How the problem can be solved, therefore, dominates the librarian's decision-making and selection of materials. If library materials work better for the problem, they are recommended, but if other agencies or community institutions are more appropriate for services, referrals can be given or a combination of options provided.

Book selection focus. In a traditional readers' advisory, book selection and recommendations are usually based on literary or artistic values. The librarian wants to give patrons the best quality books that meet their interests. But in coping service, literary and artistic values are not as important as the book's potential to help solve a problem.

Apparently, if coping service is another aspect of readers' advisory, the boundaries and expectations of readers' advisory appear to have expanded and have been more complicated than that for which current library literature has provided. This has placed increasing professional demands on children's librarians to advise and guide receptive patrons dealing with emotional, psychological, educational, and social challenges.

Suggestions for Provision of Children's Service

Coping assistance is not simply a temporary response to a national tragedy, and it should not be thus limited. Within the library, awareness must be raised among library staff and librarians about the benefits of this service.

Outside the library, publicity has to be generated to encourage greater awareness and use of this library service in communities, especially in institutions where children are the primary participating subjects. Since some personal problems can be

very sensitive, it is advisable to find partnerships to gain more experiences in collaboration and in setting up new advising programs. Some potential partners include mental health groups, abuse self-help groups, youth groups, families, and so on. They can help establish a similar project and help libraries gain (or expand) access to people who were formerly not library users.

Further, collaboration with other support groups may also help librarians build up better collections in the coping context. Professional library literature usually promotes collection development based on the community's needs and on the literary and artistic values of the materials. But books that deal with coping and healing values can often be overlooked and buried among quantities of unreviewed publications because they are less popular or less aesthetically pleasing.

Trying in vain to find appropriate books or stories for patrons with special needs can become the cause of a librarian's nightmares and disappointments. Children's librarians may acquaint themselves with different types of publications by working with other support groups.

Finally, it would be helpful for librarians to reexamine their duties and responsibilities in another context, that of providing information or reading as a healing tool and not just as an educational or recreational device. Their selection of materials could have a much greater impact on users than they might possibly expect. Through library activities such as storytelling, booktalks, and displays, books addressing sensitive issues could be shared more naturally. Ready-made annotated bibliographies or booklists not only help patrons browse but also support anonymity for those who would like to maintain a maximum degree of privacy.

Conclusion

A story in *The New York Times* reported about how parents approached a children's librarian in Parsippany, New Jersey, looking for books to help young children cope with various issues.¹⁹ This story seemed to be in accordance with the findings of this study.

Thus far, various attributes have been discussed that constitute the coping service in the public library—it exists in the public library, its major user group is children, and it deals with various coping issues in children's daily lives.

This study has shown that children's librarians provide coping assistance in a fashion different from what is defined in traditional readers' advisory. A necessary next step would be a study with a larger sample size. Identifying, naming, and defining this coping assistance service by librarians will help to place future studies of this phenomenon on common ground. ☺

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