

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

Theses and Dissertations

5-9-2005

Barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries: a survey of New Jersey librarians

Deborah A. Swierk
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Swierk, Deborah A., "Barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries: a survey of New Jersey librarians" (2005). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1085.
<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/1085>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact graduateresearch@rowan.edu.

BARRIERS TO YOUNG ADULT PATRONAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES:
A SURVEY OF NEW JERSEY LIBRARIANS

by
Deborah A. Swierk

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
May 2005

Approved by
Professor

Date Approved May 9, 2005

© 2005 Deborah A. Swierk

ABSTRACT

Deborah A. Swierk
BARRIERS TO YOUNG ADULT PATRONAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES:
A SURVEY OF NEW JERSEY LIBRARIANS
2004/2005
Dr. Marilyn Shontz
Master of Arts in Public Librarianship

The purpose of this study was to investigate how public librarians in New Jersey responded to the external and internal barriers to young adult patronage as identified by the 1995 National Center for Educational Statistics study and the 1999 Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative. The researcher conducted a purposive online survey of New Jersey public librarians who were members of the New Jersey Young Adult and Children's (NJYAC) listserv and served young adults. Responses to the online survey totaled 77 or 16%. Percentages were used to analyze the data and Microsoft Excel was used to generate charts and tables. The findings of the survey indicated that librarians who participated in the study no longer felt that lack of service and lack of resources were still barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries; however, many agreed that limited access to technology and lack of space were both still significant barriers. Furthermore, study participants did not indicate what steps they had actually taken to overcome the barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries, only steps that they would like to take or were planning to take.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
LIST OF FIGURES.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	v
I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	1
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	7
III. METHODOLOGY.....	14
IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	20
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	43
REFERENCE LIST.....	52
APPENDIX A – QUESTIONNAIRE.....	53
APPENDIX B – INVITATIONAL E – MAIL.....	64
APPENDIX C – REMINDER E – MAIL.....	66
APPENDIX D – THANK YOU E – MAIL.....	68

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Which of the following most closely describes the title of your position?	21
2. What level of education have you attained?	22
3. How many years experience do you have serving YAs in a public library?	23
4. What percentage of your time is spent serving YAs?	24
5. What is the approximate size of the population that your library serves?	25
6. Approximately how much of your library's total annual budget (dollars) is for YA materials and services?	26
7. Does your library maintain a distinct YA collection of books and materials?	28
8. Which of these materials are included in your library's young adult collection?	30
9. How would you rate your library's YA fiction and nonfiction collection?	31
10. Which, if any, of the reasons below do you consider to be a significant barrier to YA use of your library?	35
11. Does your library offer any of these other services/resources to YAs?	36
12. How do you market resources for YA school assignments?	38
13. Overall, how would you describe service to YAs at your library?	39

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Survey Question Number 34: Listed below are some reasons that YAs in your community may not use your public library. Please rank them from 1 – 10 in order of significance, with 1 being the most significant. If a reason does not apply to your library, please select n/a.	41

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Significance of the Topic

According to a study done in 1995 by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), young adults constituted the lowest percentage of public library users (23%) during a typical week (Heaviside, Farris, Dunn, Fry, & Carpenter, 1995). Young adults were “also the least enthusiastic of any age group about the importance of libraries in a digital future” (Benton Foundation, 1996, Executive summary section, ¶ 8). Yet, according to Jones, “by the year 2010 there will be more teenagers in the country than ever before” (2002, p. 21). If public libraries are to cultivate lifelong readers and supporters, they must begin now to respond in a more effective way to the needs of young adults.

One way of doing so may be by overcoming some of the external barriers that the NCES study identified in 1995, such as competition from other activities; lack of interest in library services, resources, and programs; and lack of knowledge about library services. Internal barriers identified by librarians that participated in the NCES study included insufficient services, resources, and programs; insufficient library staff; and insufficient hours of operation (Heaviside, et al., 1995).

Young adults themselves also perceived barriers to their use of the public library. According to teens interviewed in 1999 as part of the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative funded by the DeWitt Wallace – Reader’s Digest Fund,

libraries were not “cool” and were “frequented by nerds, dorks, and dweebs” (Myers, 1999, p. 42). Additionally, librarians were neither helpful nor friendly and did not even seem to like teens. Young adults interviewed also said they often came to the library to do research for school and became frustrated by the lack of assistance from librarians. Technology, the main reason teens come to the library, was often of poor quality and limited access. The teens also complained about the library’s lack of space for studying and socializing, noting that libraries were often silent, dreary places with uncomfortable furniture. As for the young adult collection, teens expressed disappointment with older reference materials that were not useful for school projects and the unavailability of more than one copy of a popular book. Another area that teens were asked to comment on was rules, regulations, and hours. Teens stated that the rule of being quiet in the library was too restrictive; that it was difficult to pay fines; and that the library’s hours were not always convenient (Myers, 1999).

Whatever the reasons for low young adult patronage, public libraries need to identify and respond to these issues. Recently, a study conducted by Keener (2004) compared results from the 1995 NCES study to young adult services currently being offered by public libraries in southern New Jersey. The results showed little overall improvement in public library services to young adults.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate how public librarians in New Jersey responded to the external and internal barriers to young adult patronage identified by the

NCES study in 1995 and the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative in 1999.

Research Questions

1. Which external and/or internal barriers to young adult patronage presented the most difficulty to New Jersey public young adult librarians?
2. What have public young adult librarians in New Jersey done to overcome these external and/or internal barriers?

Definitions

Public library: “Any library which provides general library services without charge to all residents of a given community, district, or region” (Young, 1983, p. 181).

Young adult: “An individual between the ages of twelve and eighteen years old” (Nilsen & Donelson, 2001). For purposes of this study, used interchangeably with YA or teen.

YA: An abbreviation for young adult. For purposes of this study, used interchangeably with young adult or teen.

Young adult librarian: A librarian responsible for developing a library’s young adult collection, as well as providing services and programming for young adult patrons. For purposes of this study, YA librarian includes all staff that provide service to young adults.

Young adult room, department, or section: A designated area in a library for the use of young adult patrons that often contains the young adult collection.

Young adult services: “Library services intended specifically for adolescent patrons ...including collection development, programming, and readers’ advisory” (Reitz, 2004).

Young adult programs: Programs offered specifically for young adult patrons, often designed and facilitated by a young adult librarian.

Librarian: “A professionally trained person responsible for the care of a library and its contents, including the selection, processing, and organization of materials and the delivery of information, instruction, and loan services to meet the needs of its users...

In the United States the title is reserved for persons who have been awarded the M.L.S. or M.L.I.S. degree, or certified as professionals by a state agency” (Reitz, 2004).

Public librarian: A librarian employed by a public library.

Patron: “Any person who uses the resources and services of a library, not necessarily a registered borrower” (Reitz, 2004). For purposes of this study, used interchangeably with library user.

Library users: “A person who uses library materials or services” (Young, 1983, p. 132).

NJYAC: An abbreviation for the New Jersey Young Adult and Children’s Listserv,

NJYAC is an electronic listserv maintained by Bonnie Kunzel, Youth Services

Coordinator of the New Jersey State Library. The listserv is available to librarians in the state of New Jersey with the capability to e-mail and desire to participate. The listserv currently has about 500 members (Kunzel, personal communication, October 7, 2004).

Listserv: ‘Mailing list management software that runs on a variety of platforms, designed to scan incoming e-mail messages for the words "subscribe," "unsubscribe," and other housekeeping commands and update the subscriber list automatically. Also used as a general term for any mailing list that runs on LISTSERV software’ (Reitz, 2004).

E-mail: “An abbreviation of electronic mail, an Internet protocol that allows computer users to exchange messages and data files in real time with other users” (Reitz, 2004).

Link: “A direct connection in a hypertext document...to the Internet address (URL) of another document or file” (Reitz, 2005).

URL (Uniform Resource Locator): “The unique address identifying a resource accessible at a particular location on the Internet” (Reitz, 2005).

Assumptions and Limitations

This research project assumed that some public librarians in New Jersey were aware of and responded in some way to the external and/or internal barriers to young adult patronage as identified in the 1995 NCES study and the 1999 Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative. The researcher also assumed that most public libraries in New Jersey had designated a staff member responsible for young adult services. Finally, the researcher assumed that participants responded accurately to the survey questions.

This study was limited to all public library personnel in New Jersey who served young adults and subscribed to the NJYAC listserv.

References

- Benton Foundation. (1996). *Buildings, books, and bytes: Libraries and communities in the digital age*. Washington, DC: Benton Foundation. Retrieved November 5, 2003, from <http://www.benton.org/publilibrary/kellogg/buildings.html>
- Heaviside, S., Farris, E., Dunn, C., Fry, R., & Carpenter, J. (1995). *Services and resources for children and young adults in public libraries. Statistical analysis report* (Report No. NCES-95-357). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386-218).
- Jones, P. (2002, Spring). New directions for serving young adults means building more than our collections. *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries*, 15(3), 21 – 23.
- Keener, L. (2004). *Young adult public library services in southern New Jersey*. Unpublished master's thesis, Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey.
- Meyers, E. (1999, November). The coolness factor: Ten libraries listen to youth. *American Libraries*, 30(10), 42 – 45.
- Nilsen, A. P., & Donelson, K. L. (2001). *Literature for today's young adults* (6th ed.). NY: Addison – Wesley Longman.
- Reitz, J. M. (2004). *ODLIS: Online dictionary for library and information science*. Retrieved October 11, 2004, and April 17, 2005, from <http://lu.com/odlis>
- Young, H. (Ed.). (1983). *The ALA glossary of library and information science*. Chicago: American Library Association.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

During the 1990s, two major studies were conducted that focused on public library service to young adults. In spring 1994, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) selected two national probability samples of 890 public libraries each for a study of public library service to children and young adults. Questionnaires were mailed in March: one sample received the *Survey on Library Services for Children in Public Libraries* and the second sample received the *Survey on Library Services to Young Adults in Public Libraries*. Of the 890 libraries selected to receive the young adult survey, 36 were determined to be out of scope for the study. Data collection was completed in June with 800 public libraries in the young adult sample, establishing a 93 percent response rate (Heaviside, et al., 1995). Results of the study were published in 1995.

The second study, the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative (referred to in this Review as Partners), was conducted in 1998 and funded by the DeWitt Wallace – Reader’s Digest Fund. In October 1998, the fund awarded planning grants to 10 public libraries located in urban areas: Brooklyn Public Library; Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore; Free Library of Philadelphia; Oakland (Calif.) Public Library; Tucson – Pima (Ariz.) Public Library; Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Fort Bend County Public Library, Richmond, Texas; King County Library System, Seattle; San Antonio (Tex.) Public Library; and

Washoe County Library System, Reno, Nevada. Between November 1998 and May 1999, these ten libraries serving diverse communities interviewed young adults about their opinions of the public library (Meyers, 1999).

External and Internal Barriers

The 1995 NCES survey, *Services and Resources for Children and Young Adults in Public Libraries*, identified several external and internal barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries. Of the libraries surveyed, 74% listed competition from other activities as the primary reason for low library usage rates by young adults. The two other primary reasons were lack of interest in library services, resources, and programs (38%) and lack of knowledge about library services (31%). “Lack of transportation, although reported in only 13 percent of libraries as a frequent or primary reason, was seen as sometimes a reason by another 37 percent” (Heaviside, et al., 1995, p. 56). In the same survey, 61% of librarians listed insufficient services, resources, and programs as the primary internal barrier to increasing services to young adults, while 58% listed insufficient library staff and 32% listed insufficient hours of operation.

Limited Access to Technology

In the Partners study, young adults were asked to respond to questions about the “quality of...public library services in the areas of technology, staff service, space, and materials” (Meyers, 1999, p. 43). The young adults interviewed expressed surprisingly similar opinions. Many felt that public libraries offered limited access to technology, which was one of the main reasons that teens used the library (Meyers, 1999). The NCES 1995 study found this to be true as well: 75% of libraries reported moderate to heavy usage of CD-ROM software by young adults even though only 32% of libraries had such

software available; 73% reported such usage of computer software even though only 23% of libraries reported such software available; and 72% reported such usage of personal computers even though only 29% of libraries surveyed reported personal computers available (Heaviside, et al., 1995). In the Partners study, “teens in all 10 planning – grant libraries criticized library access to computers, as well as the quality of computers and software” (Meyers, 1999, p. 43). Often, teens found that access to library computers required long waiting times for short usage periods on inferior machines. Teens stated a need for “more and better quality computers and software, including graphics capabilities, Web site development tools, and a multimedia studio” (Meyers, 1999, p. 43).

Lack of Service

Another frustration voiced by the young adults in the Partners study was the lack of service they received from librarians. Teens complained that library staff was neither helpful nor friendly. The librarians “always have something better to do than help a student” and many say that they “don’t have time to help them” or do not “work in that section” (Meyers, 1999, p. 44). This perceived lack of service was also reported in Chelton’s *Behavior of Librarians in School and Public Libraries with Adolescents: Implications for Practice and LIS Education* (1999). Chelton conducted “a study of service encounters between adult library staff and adolescent users” (1999, p. 99) and found many of the same complaints mentioned by teens in the Partners study.

Adolescents expressed more unanimous frustration over being ignored, marginalized, restricted, treated with discourtesy, regarded as stupid, or tricked outright than did the adults. Both point out that being adolescent brings on stereotypic expectations by adults of being stupid or of being trouble, except

possibly where service staff are young themselves or “think young.” From the perspective of the adolescents specifically, being a teenager is to be stereotyped and categorized as part of a group that is underestimated, suspect, watched, restricted, or ignored. Personal appearance is “read” negatively by adults through adolescents’ clothing or style, and seems to trigger stereotypic expectations (Chelton, 1999, p. 103 – 104).

The teens interviewed in Chelton’s study appeared to agree with those interviewed in the Partners study. It was interesting to note that in Chelton’s study, the adults interviewed acknowledged that stereotypic expectations were common among library practitioners. Chelton warned “library practitioners would do well to note that users remember more how they are treated in a service encounter than what they get from it” (Chelton, 1999, p. 109).

Lack of Space

In the Partners study, teens interviewed also complained about the library’s lack of space for studying and socializing, as well as uncomfortable furniture and unwelcome atmosphere. Many respondents suggested libraries provide specific areas for young adults that are “bright, cheerful, filled with music and varied activities, informal, and welcoming” (Meyers, 1999, p. 44). According to the NCES study, 58% of public libraries offered a separate young adult room or area for the young adult collection (Heaviside, et al., 1995). In the case study, *A Teenage View of the Public Library: What are the Students Saying?*, Fisher asked teens to describe their idea of the perfect public library: “make a special section for teenagers/high school kids – the children’s section is for little kids and the adult section has an adult atmosphere and we don’t fit” (2003, p. 10).

Lack of Resources

Finally, one other barrier identified by both the NCES study and Partners study was the lack of resources or materials for young adults. In the NCES study, 61% of librarians listed insufficient services, resources, and programs as the primary internal barrier to increasing services to young adults. In the Partners study, “teens described frustration at collections that did not allow them to complete school projects and research” (Meyers, 1999, p. 44). Older reference materials and the lack of more than one copy of a desired book were also mentioned; however, Fisher reminded practitioners “that students are very demanding – they often want a single title which answers all of their needs for the current assignment. They are likely to be highly critical of the library which cannot supply this” (2003, p. 8). Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that a collection development program attempting to follow the many recent curriculum changes would have about a year’s time lag. Combine that with students often waiting until the last possible moment to complete an assignment when most available titles were gone and it would understandably be difficult to meet their needs (Fisher, 2003).

Recent Research

In 2004, Keener conducted a study of public librarians in southern New Jersey to determine whether public library services to young adults had improved since the 1995 NCES study. Keener e-mailed questionnaires based on the NCES study to 84 public libraries that were listed in the membership directory of the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative’s Web site or listed on county library Web pages. The researcher also contacted the New Jersey Young Adult listserv for young adult librarians who would also like to be included in the study and were located in the southern New Jersey region.

The response rate was 45%. Results of this 2004 survey showed that librarians still felt that the main external barriers to young adult patronage remained competition from other activities; lack of knowledge of services; lack of interest; and lack of transportation. Results of the survey did show an increase in available PCs, from 30% in the NCES study to 79% in Keener's study; however, only 18% of respondents listed the computers available just for young adult use and 41% indicated that there would often be waiting periods for usage. As compared with the 1995 study, the 2004 survey results showed a decrease in the number of libraries with a separate young adult area, down from 58% to 16%. The amount of resources and materials available to young adults was basically the same in the 2004 survey as the 1995 survey; however, the librarians surveyed stated that young adults would often have to wait for a popular book (68%) or school assigned book (62%) (Keener, 2004). Keener concluded that there was little improvement in South Jersey public library service to young adults since 1995.

Summary

It was clear to this researcher that a number of these barriers still existed. Technology is more frequently available but still at low levels of quality. The number of libraries offering young adults a separate area to gather and socialize has decreased in the South Jersey area. Resources and materials for young adults have not significantly increased. Further research is needed to determine if young adult librarians in New Jersey public libraries have addressed these barriers and what they have done to overcome them.

References

- Chelton, M. K. (1999, Spring). Behavior of librarians in school and public libraries with adolescents: Implications for practice and LIS education [Electronic version]. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 40(2), 99 – 111.
- Fisher, H. (2003, March). A teenage view of the public library: What are the students saying? [Electronic version]. *Australas Public Library Information Service*, 16(1), 4 – 16.
- Heaviside, S., Farris, E., Dunn, C., Fry, R., & Carpenter, J. (1995). *Services and resources for children and young adults in public libraries. Statistical analysis report* (Report No. NCES-95-357). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386-218).
- Keener, L. (2004). *Young adult public library services in southern New Jersey*. Unpublished master's thesis, Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey.
- Meyers, E. (1999, November). The coolness factor: Ten libraries listen to youth [Electronic version]. *American Libraries*, 30(10), 42 – 45.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overall Design and Justification

In 1995, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) conducted a survey of public library service to young adults and found that young adults accounted for 23% of public library users (Heaviside, et al., 1995). The study also identified several external and internal barriers to increasing young adult patronage. In 1999, the results of the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative (Partners) were published. This study found many of the same barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries as the 1995 NCES study (Meyers, 1999). The conclusion drawn from both studies was that in order to increase young adult patronage of public libraries, these identified barriers needed to be addressed and overcome. The literature review revealed that other researchers have also realized the significance of overcoming these barriers in order to increase young adult patronage. This study investigated how New Jersey public young adult librarians have responded to these barriers and what they have done to overcome them.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate how public young adult librarians in New Jersey have responded to the external and internal barriers to young adult patronage

identified by the NCES study in 1995 (Heaviside, et al.) and the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative in 1999 (Meyers). The researcher was interested in knowing whether New Jersey young adult librarians were aware of these barriers; whether they addressed them; and how they attempted to overcome them. The researcher explored the librarians' views on public library service to young adults and inquiry included questions on young adult staff, resources, and services.

Research Questions

1. Which external and/or internal barriers to young adult patronage presented the most difficulty to New Jersey public young adult librarians?
2. What have public young adult librarians in New Jersey done to overcome these external and/or internal barriers?

Population and Sample

The population and sample for this study were New Jersey public librarians who were members of the New Jersey Young Adult and Children's Listserv (NJYAC) and served young adults. NJYAC is an electronic listserv maintained by Bonnie Kunzel, Youth Services Coordinator for the New Jersey State Library. The listserv is available to children's and young adult librarians working in either public libraries or school media centers in New Jersey. Members must have the capability to e-mail and desire to participate. The listserv currently has about 500 members (Kunzel, personal communication, October 7, 2004).

The researcher chose to use the NJYAC listserv because it seemed to be the most expedient way to reach a large number of New Jersey public librarians who serve young

adults, some of whom may not have been otherwise contacted because alternative sources would not have listed them as serving young adults.

Variables

The dependent variable in this study was public library staff perceptions of young adult patronage of public libraries and the independent variables were their perceptions of barriers to that patronage. The independent variables included competition from other YA activities; YA interest in YA services; YA knowledge of YA services; transportation for YAs; YA access to technology; and the availability and quality of YA service, YA space, and YA collections. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) also included the following perception variables: YA waiting periods for access to technology and library restrictions on YAs.

Method of Data Collection

In order to reach the largest number of respondents, the researcher conducted a purposive online survey of New Jersey public librarians who were members of the NJYAC listserv and served young adults. The survey questionnaire (Appendix A) was accessed through a link to a URL included in an “invitation to participate” e – mail (Appendix B). The questionnaire was created and stored in SurveyMonkey.com. SurveyMonkey.com is a Web site that allows the user to create professional online surveys. Because the researcher assumed that some libraries would not have a young adult librarian, the e – mail and questionnaire were addressed to the librarian(s) who served young adults. If the person receiving the invitational e - mail was not the librarian who served young adults in her library, the researcher requested that the recipient pass the e – mail on to the librarian(s) who did.

The invitational e – mail containing the URL for the online survey was posted to the NJYAC listserv on February 2nd, 2005. After two weeks, the researcher posted a reminder (Appendix C) on the listserv. All completed questionnaires returned before February 24th, 2005, were included in the study. The researcher posted a “thank you” e – mail (Appendix D) on the listserv on February 24th, 2005. The researcher then utilized the “analyze” function provided by SurveyMonkey.com to summarize the results of the survey.

An inherent weakness of this method was that the researcher only contacted librarians who had access to e-mail and felt comfortable using it, as well as participating in an online questionnaire. However, by using an online questionnaire, the researcher did not have direct contact with respondents, avoiding bias and protecting respondent anonymity.

Questionnaire

To conduct this survey, the researcher designed the questionnaire (Appendix A) based upon items identified in the 1995 NCES study and the 1999 Partners initiative. Both closed and open – ended questions were included in the questionnaire. Factual questions 1 – 6 gathered information about the librarian completing the questionnaire and the librarian’s public library. Questions 7 – 34 specifically addressed the barriers to young adult patronage of public libraries. Filtering questions were used when appropriate. Opinion questions were used when a response based upon measurable data could not be employed; such as the estimated YA wait time for computers and the quality of YA service. The last question was a ranking question designed to elicit a more detailed response from the respondent about barriers to YA service.

Reliability and Validity

To develop the questionnaire, the researcher studied the results of the 1995 NCES study and the 1999 Partners initiative. The questions in the survey were based upon items identified in these two studies. The researcher pretested the questionnaire in January with three individuals, a MLS librarian in a university and two public librarians who serve young adults.

References

- Heaviside, S., Farris, E., Dunn, C., Fry, R., & Carpenter, J. (1995). *Services and resources for children and young adults in public libraries. Statistical analysis report* (Report No. NCES-95-357). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386-218).
- Kunzel, B. (personal communication) received October 7, 2004.
- Meyers, E. (1999, November). The coolness factor: Ten libraries listen to youth [Electronic version]. *American Libraries*, 30(10), 42 – 45.

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF DATA

Response Rate

On February 2nd, the researcher posted the survey as a link in an introductory e – mail (Appendix B) on the NJYAC listserv. Because the researcher assumed that some libraries would not have a young adult librarian, the survey was addressed to the librarian(s) who served young adults. On February 14th, after 59 respondents completed the survey, a reminder was posted on the NJYAC listserv. On February 24th, the researcher closed the survey in SurveyMonkey.com.

Overall, the researcher received 81 responses to the survey; however, 4 surveys were deleted because it was determined that the respondents were not public librarians serving young adults. Based upon the number of listserv participants as of October 2004, this resulted in a response rate of 16%. As it was not impossible to determine beforehand how many of the 500 listserv members served young adults in public libraries, the researcher was satisfied that the number of responses was adequate for purposes of this study.

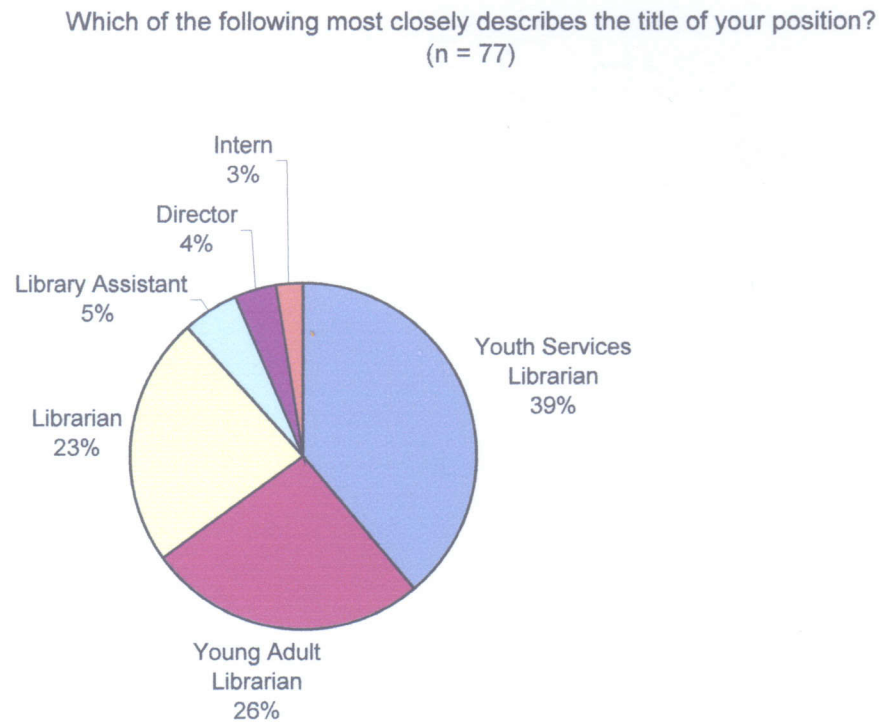
Presentation of the Results

The questionnaire was based upon the results of the 1995 National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) study (Heaviside, et al., 1995) and the 1999 Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development (Partners) initiative (Meyers, 1999), both of

which identified external and internal barriers to public library service to young adults. The researcher used Microsoft Excel to create charts and tables.

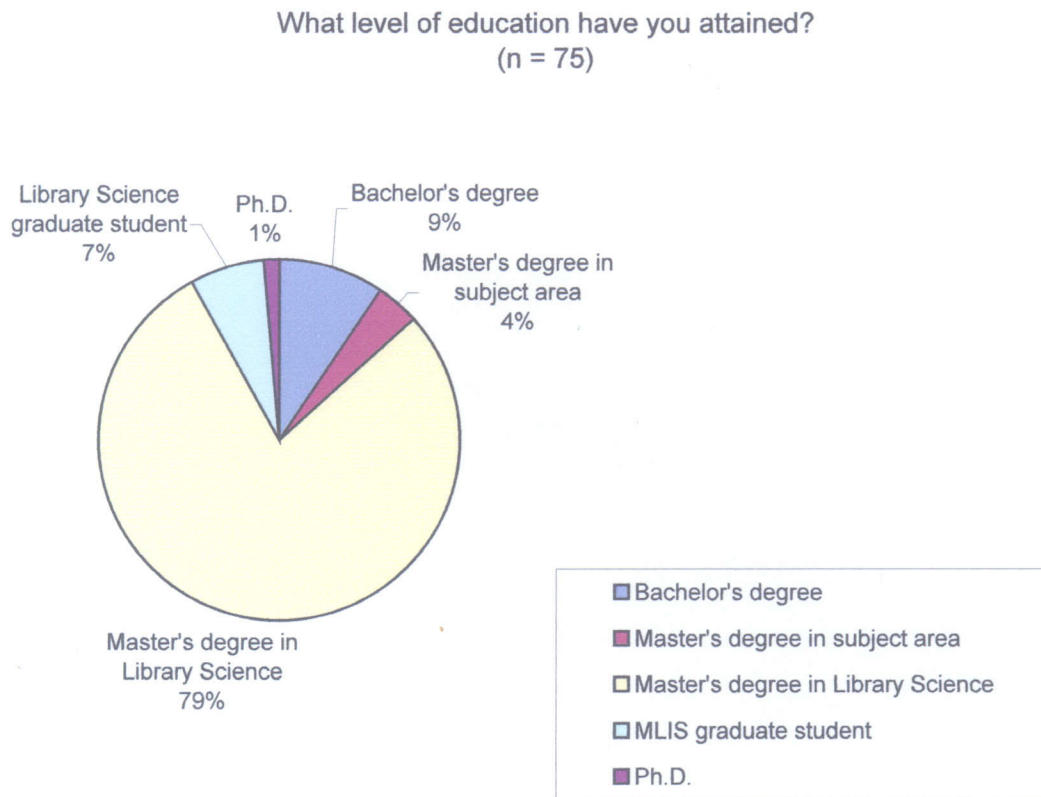
The first question required an answer and was designed to filter out any respondents who did not provide public library service to young adults. The question also identified the various titles of librarians serving young adults in New Jersey public libraries. Of the 77 respondents to this question, 39% held the title of Youth Services Librarian; 26% held the title of Young Adult Librarian; 23% held the title of Librarian; 5% were Library Assistants; 4% were Library Directors; and 3% were Library Interns. Results are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1



The second question determined the level of education attained by each respondent. Of the 75 respondents to this question, 79% held a Master's degree in Library Science; 9% held Bachelor's degrees; 7% were Library Science graduate students; 4% held a Master's degree in a different subject area; and 1% held a Doctorate's degree. Results are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

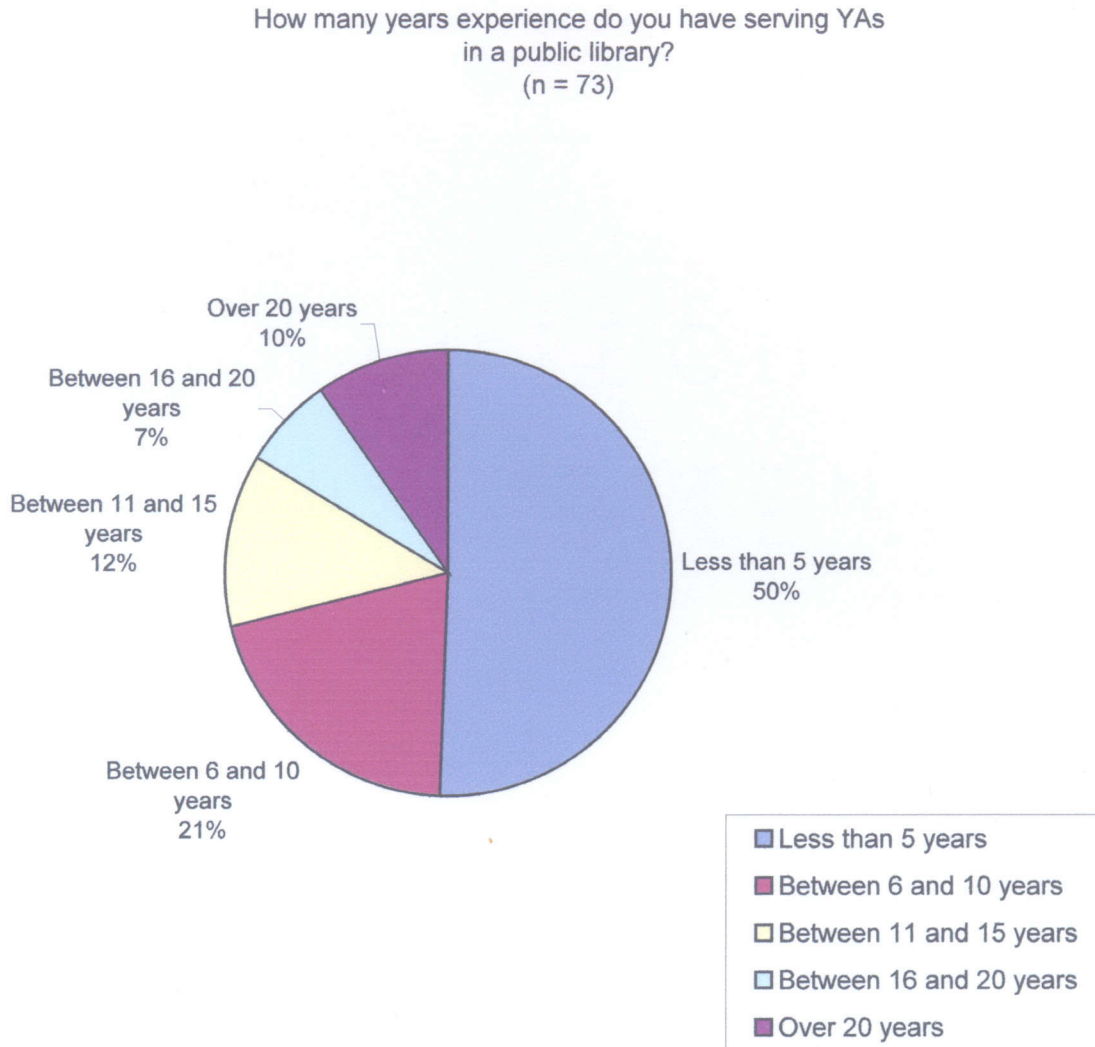


The third question determined the amount of experience that the respondent had serving young adults in a public library. Of the 73 respondents, 50% had less than 5 years experience serving young adults; 21% had between 6 and 10 years experience; 12% had

between 11 and 15 years; 7% had between 16 and 20 years; and 10% had over 20 years.

Results are shown in Figure 3.

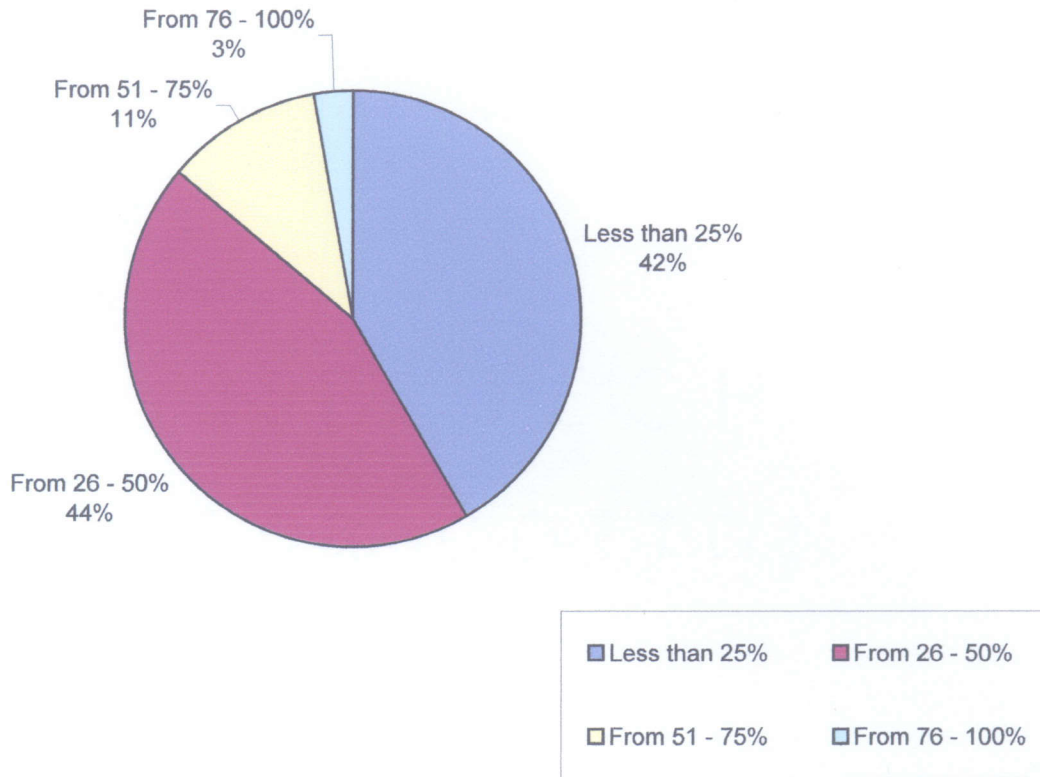
Figure 3



The fourth question determined the approximate amount of the respondent's time spent serving young adults in a public library. Of the 72 respondents, 44% spent between 26 and 50% of their time serving young adults; 42% spent less than 25%; 11% spent between 51 and 75% of their time; and 3% spent between 76 and 100% of their time serving young adults. Results are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4

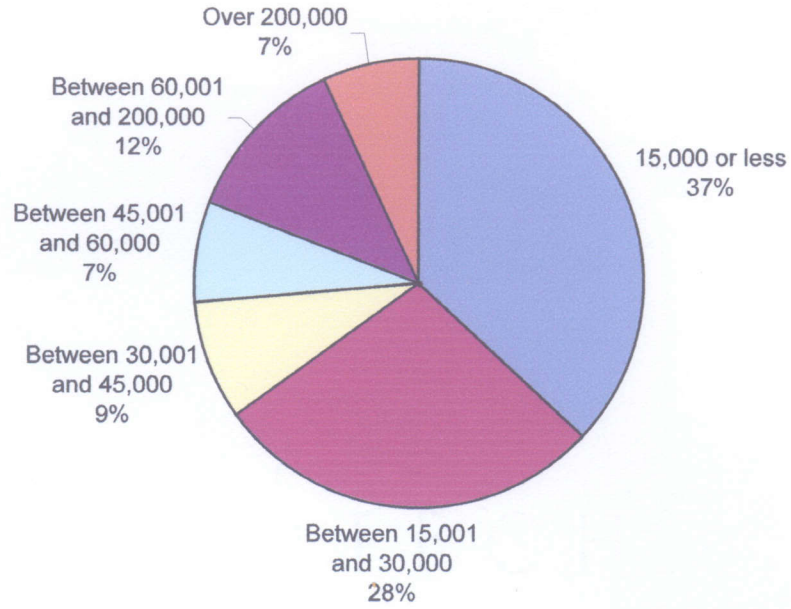
What percentage of your time is spent serving YAs?
(n = 72)



Question 5 attempted to determine the size of the population that the respondent's library served. Of the 57 respondents to the question, 37% worked in public libraries that served a population of 15,000 or less; 28% worked in libraries serving between 15,001 and 30,000; 12% between 60,001 and 200,000; 9% between 30,001 and 45,000; 7% between 45,001 and 60,000; and 7% worked in libraries serving a population over 200,000. Results are shown in Figure 5.

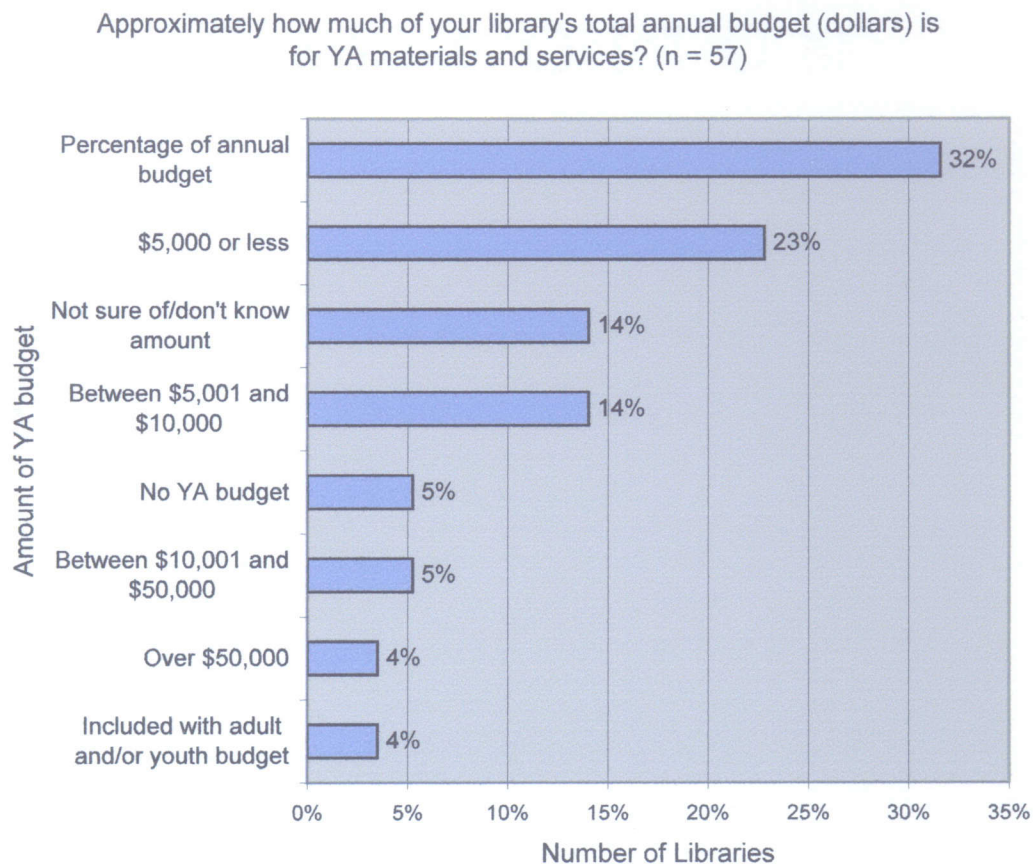
Figure 5

What is the approximate size of the population that
your library serves?
(n = 57)



Question 6 asked how much of the respondent library's total annual budget (in dollars) was for YA materials and services. There were 57 respondents to this question: 32% of respondents indicated that the YA budget was a percentage of the library's total annual budget; 23% indicated that it was \$5,000 or less; 14% weren't sure of the amount of the YA budget; 14% stated that it was between \$5,001 and \$10,000; 5% of respondents indicated that their library did not have a YA budget; 5% indicated that it was between \$10,001 and \$50,000; 4% stated that it was over \$50,000; and 4% of respondents stated that their library's YA budget was included with the adult and/or youth budgets. Results are shown in Figure 6.

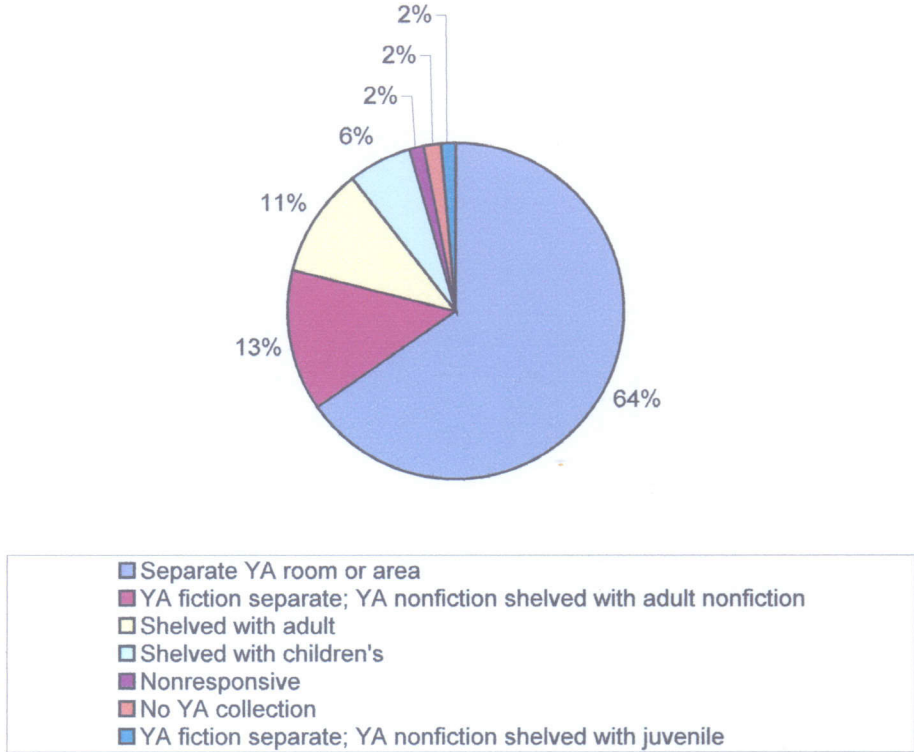
Figure 6



Beginning with question 7 of the survey, the researcher's questions began to focus on the external and internal barriers to public library service to young adults as identified in the NCES and Partners studies. Questions 7 – 14 centered on resources for young adults. Question 7 asked the respondent if their library maintained a distinct young adult collection of books and materials. Of the 66 respondents, 64% indicated that their library did maintain a distinct YA collection shelved in a separate YA room or area; 13% shelve YA fiction separately but shelve YA nonfiction with adult nonfiction; 11% shelve the YA collection with the adult collection; 6% shelve the YA collection with the children's collection; 2% shelve YA fiction separately and YA nonfiction with juvenile nonfiction; 2% don't have a YA collection; and 2% were nonresponsive. Results are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Does your library maintain a distinct YA collection of books and materials?
(n = 66)



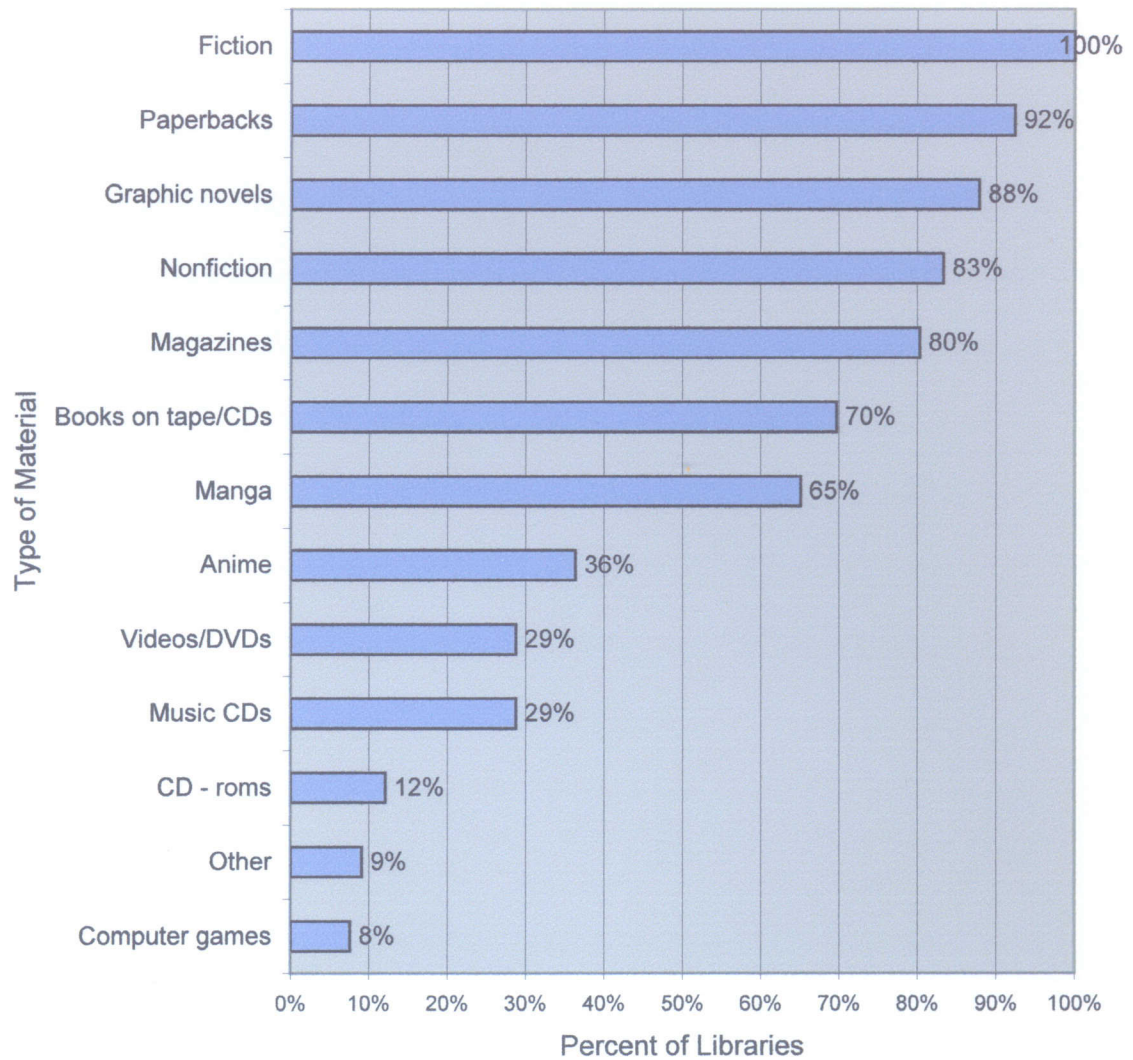
Question 8 asked librarians responding negatively to question 7 whether or not they felt that the lack of a distinct YA collection at their library was a significant barrier to YA use of their library. Of the seven respondents, 29% indicated that they did feel this was a significant barrier to YA use of their library, while 71% did not. Question 9 asked what steps the respondents had taken to address this barrier. Six librarians responded: one stated that their library was planning a separate YA area with furniture and shelving but did not have space for an actual room; another librarian stated that their library's YA area was separate but not an inviting or

appropriate space; one stated that they would like to shelve YA nonfiction with YA fiction; another librarian stated that their library was being renovated and the new space would include a separate YA area; another stated that they were attempting to move their YA area to a better location; the final respondent stated that they shelved YA fiction in the YA area and YA nonfiction with adult nonfiction. Of the 6 respondents, only 2 responded accurately to the question. The other 4 confused YA space or room for YA collection.

Question 10 asked the respondent to identify the types of materials that were included in their library's YA collection. Of the 66 respondents, 100% included fiction; 92% included paperbacks; 88% included graphic novels; 83% included nonfiction; 80% included magazines; 70% included books on tape/CDs; 65% included manga; 36% included anime; 29% included videos/DVDs; 29 % included music CDs; 12% included CD – roms; 9% included other items; and 8% included computer games. Results are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Which of these materials are included in your library's young adult collection?
(n = 66)

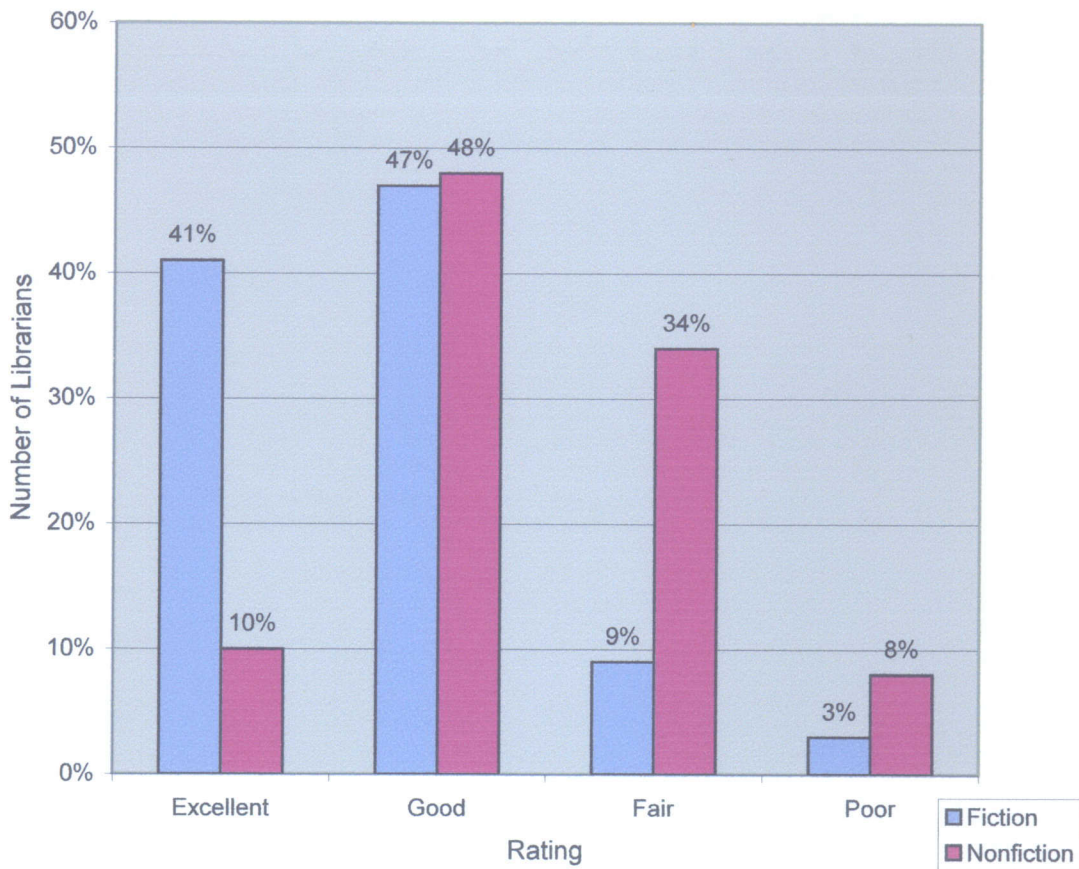


Question 11 asked respondents if their library offered more than one copy of popular YA books. Of the 66 respondents, 74% indicated that their libraries did offer more than one copy of popular YA books, while 26% did not.

Question 12 asked respondents to rate their library's young adult fiction and nonfiction collection. Sixty – six librarians responded: 41% of librarians rated their fiction collection as excellent; 47% rated it as good; 9% rated it as fair; and 3% rated it as poor. As for nonfiction, 10% of respondents rated their YA nonfiction collection as excellent; 48% rated it as good; 34% rated it as fair; and 8% rated it as poor. See results in Figure 9.

Figure 9

How would you rate your library's YA fiction
and nonfiction collection?
(n = 66)



Survey question 13 asked respondents if they considered the quality of the YA collection at their library to be a barrier to YA use of their library. Sixty – six librarians responded: 18% responded yes and 82% responded no. Of the 18% who responded yes, question 14 asked these same librarians to list the steps they had taken to address this barrier. Two librarians stated that they were building up their library’s YA collection; 2 responded that they intended to include teens in the collection development process; 1 stated the intent to purchase more than one copy of popular YA titles; another planned to purchase sequels in a more timely manner; yet another added graphic novels; 2 librarians were updating the collection; 1 was ordering newly released titles sooner rather than waiting for reviews because new titles were already available in the bookstores; another librarian indicated that collection development was reviewing the YA collection; 1 librarian intended to apply for grants to supplement the YA materials budget; another intended to increase the YA materials budget; and finally, 1 respondent planned to purchase more award – winning books.

The next section of the survey, questions 15 – 17, focused on library space for young adults. Question 15 asked respondents if their library maintained a distinct and separate YA room or area with space available for YAs to gather and/or socialize. Of the 65 respondents, 51% indicated their library did offer such a space, while 49% did not. Question 16 asked the 49% of respondents that did not offer a separate YA space whether or not they felt this to be a significant barrier to YA use of their library: 58% responded yes and 42% responded no. Of those responding yes, question 17 asked what steps they had taken to address this barrier. Of the total respondents, 5 were planning a separate YA room; 4 were relocating the YA section; 2 were purchasing

teen furniture for the current area; 2 indicated that their library was currently under construction and a YA area was designated for the new library; 2 planned to expand the YA area soon; 1 tried to make the small area where the YA collection was currently shelved more inviting with posters; 1 was redesigning the current area; 1 was trying to find room for a YA space; and 1 respondent indicated that no steps had been taken.

Questions 18 – 26 of the survey concentrated on young adult access to technology. Question 18 asked whether or not the respondent's library maintained a separate YA computer section. Of the 65 respondents, 12% said yes, they did have a separate YA computer section, while 88% said they did not. Those respondents that indicated their library did not maintain a separate YA computer section were automatically routed to question 24 as the SurveyMonkey software allowed for this feature. Of the 12% that responded yes, question 19 asked how many computers their library's YA computer section offered. Of the 8 respondents, 4 indicated that their library's YA computer section offered 4 computers; 1 library's YA computer section offered 6 computers; another offered 5; and the last two offered 4 and 3, respectively. In question 20, these same respondents were asked the approximate ages of the computers in their library's YA computer section. Three respondents indicated that most of the computers were over 2 years old; three indicated that most of the computers were over 1 year old; and two indicated that the computers were less than 1 year old.

Question 21 asked if there was usually a waiting period for computer usage in the YA computer area at each respondent's library. Six respondents indicated that

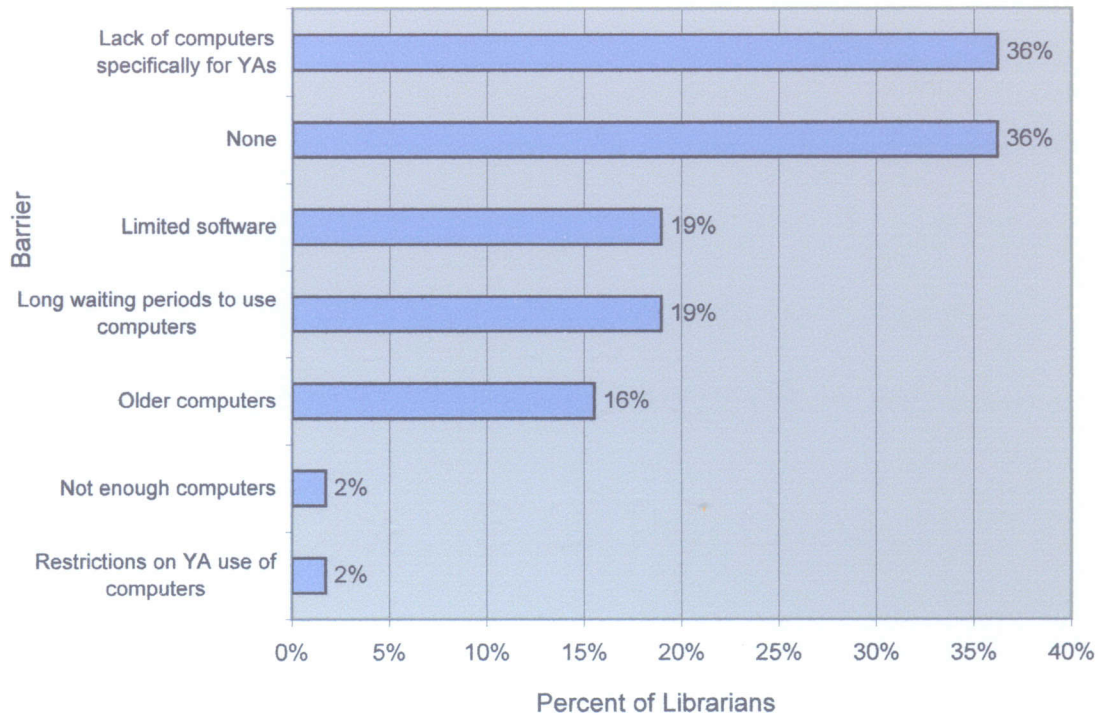
there wasn't, while two indicated that there usually was a waiting period. Question 22 asked the respondents from question 21 how long the waiting period usually lasted: those that responded all indicated 15 minutes or less.

Survey question 23 asked respondents to indicate which software/services were offered by their library on the computers in the YA area. Of the 8 respondents, 100% stated that their libraries offered Internet access on the computers in the YA area; 88% offered word processing and spreadsheet software; 75% offered presentation software; 63% offered online databases; 25% offered database programs; and 13% offered both Web site design software and computer games.

Question 24 asked respondents to consider whether some of the reasons listed were significant technological barriers to YA use of their libraries. Of the 58 respondents, 36% indicated that they considered a lack of computers specifically for YAs to be a significant barrier to YA use of their library; however, the same percentage indicated that there were no technological barriers to YA use of their library. Another 19% of respondents felt that limited software was a barrier; 19% indicated that long waiting periods to use computers was a barrier; 16% indicated that older computers were a problem; 2% stated that not enough computers and restrictions on YA use of computers were both barriers. See results in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Which, if any, of the reasons below do you consider to be a significant barrier to YA use of your library? (n = 58)

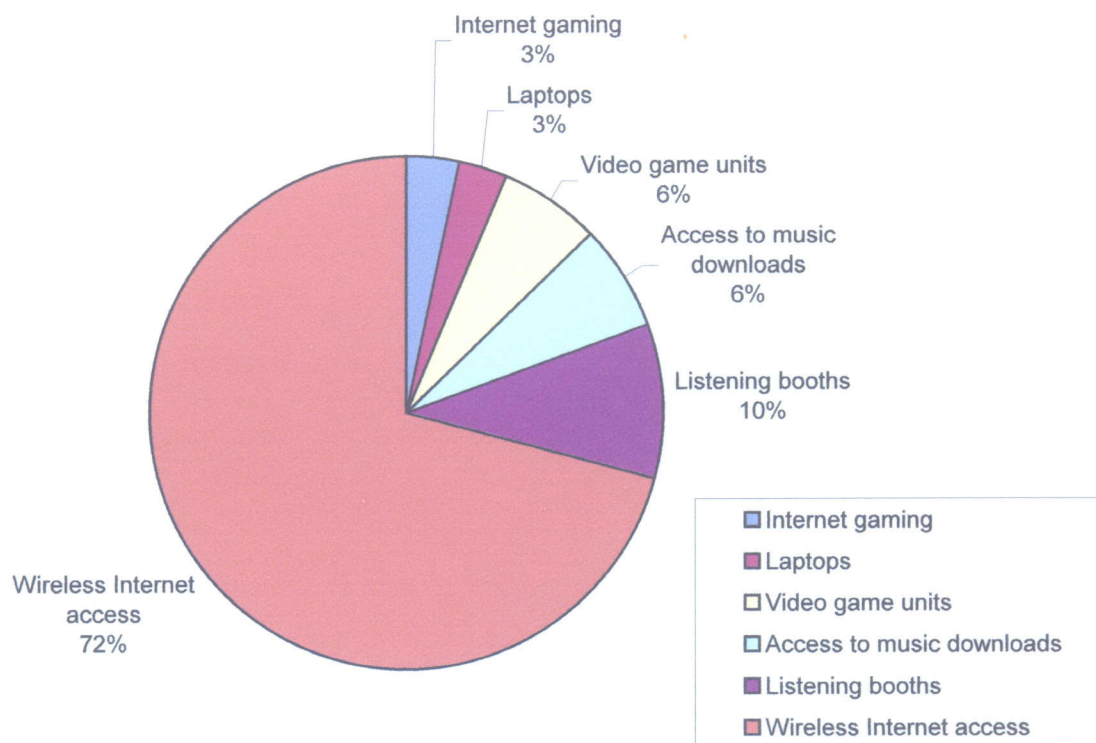


Question 25 asked respondents to list what steps they had taken to overcome these technological barriers. Of the 27 respondents, 3 planned to add more computers; 2 were going wireless soon; 2 were budgeting for more computers; 1 was adding more software; 1 intended to provide wireless laptops; 1 planned to move the YA computer section to an area of the library more conducive to wiring for computers; 1 was going to try using chat software to communicate with teens; 1 was going to begin offering computer classes for teens; and another respondent was going to increase the usage period on the computers. The researcher noted that 14 of the respondents to question 25 were nonresponsive.

Survey question 26 asked respondents to indicate what other services/resources were offered to YAs at their library. An overwhelming number of respondents, 72%, indicated that their libraries offered wireless Internet access; 10% offered listening booths; 6% offered access to music downloads; 6% offered video game units; 3% offered laptops; and 3% offered Internet gaming. Results are shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Does your library offer any of these other services/resources to YAs?
(n = 29)



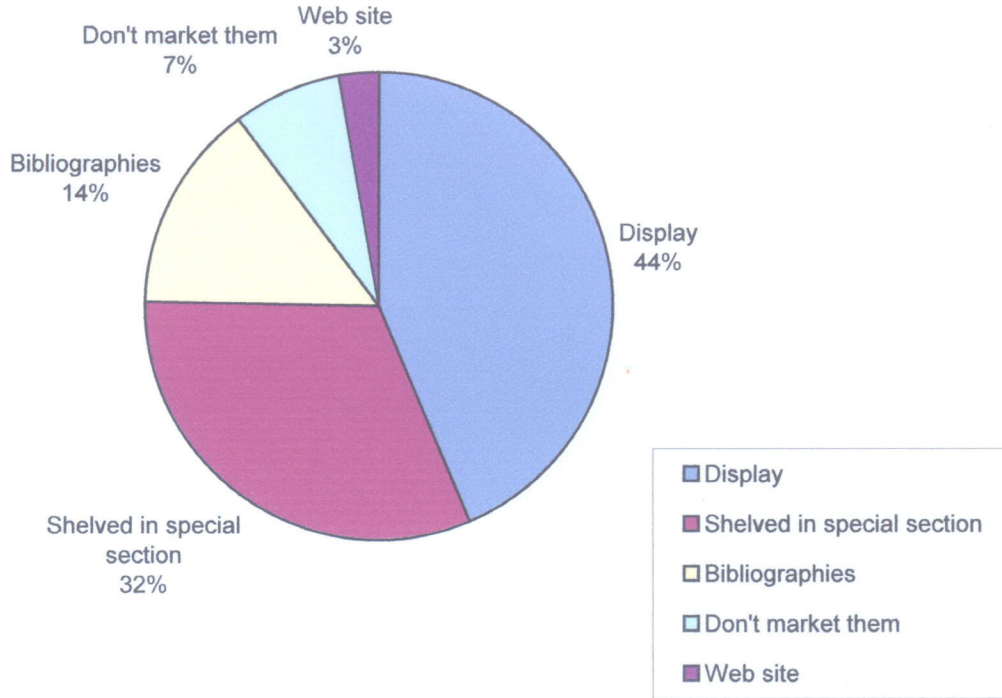
The final section of the survey, questions 27 – 34, focused on the quality of public library service to young adults. Question 27 asked respondents if their library

placed any restrictions on library use by young adults: 49% responded yes and 51% responded no. Question 28 asked the 49% responding yes to indicate which restrictions applied at their library. Of the 42 respondents to this question, 86% indicated that YAs were not allowed to eat or drink in the library; 36% indicated that Internet time was limited; 31% indicated that parental permission was required to use the Internet; 21% indicated that age/rating restrictions were placed on video/DVD borrowing; 7% indicated the number of checkouts were limited; 5% indicated that no e – mail, instant messaging, chat room, or Internet games were allowed; 2% filtered Internet access; 2% did not allow socializing; 2% did not allow cell phones; and 2% indicated that YAs must be accompanied by an adult during evening hours due to board concern over YA safety. It must be stated that some respondents indicated many of these restrictions, such as no eating/drinking or cell phone usage, applied to all library patrons, not just young adults.

Question 29 asked respondents if their library identified resources available for school assignments. Of the 60 respondents to this question, 75% said yes and 25% said no. Question 30 asked how these resources were marketed to young adults. Forty – six librarians responded to this question: 44% indicated that they displayed such resources; 32% shelved these resources in a special section; 14% created bibliographies; 7% don't market them; and 3% list these resources on their library's Web site. See results in Figure 12.

Figure 12

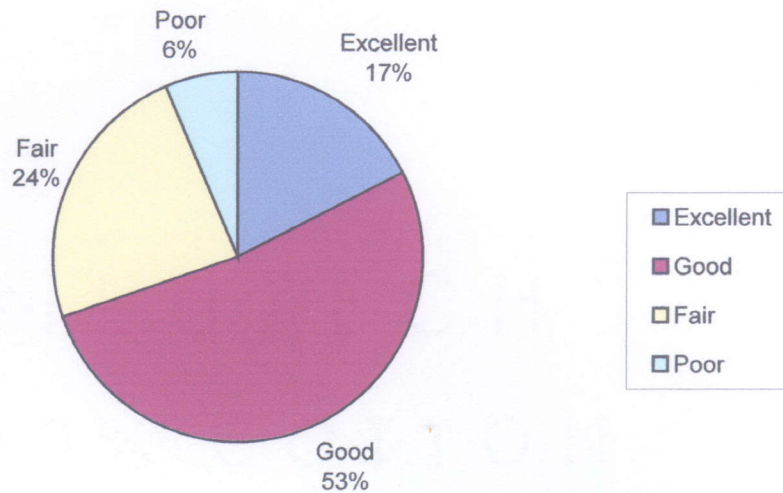
How do you market resources for YA school assignments?
(n = 46)



Question 31 asked respondents to describe overall service to young adults at their library as either excellent, good, fair, or poor. Of the 63 respondents, 17% said that service to young adults at their libraries was excellent; 53% said good; 24% said fair; and 6% said poor. Results are shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13

Overall, how would you describe service to YAs at your library?
(n = 63)



Question 32 asked respondents if they considered the quality of service provided to YAs at their libraries to be a significant barrier to YA use of their library. Of the 60 respondents, 22% said yes and 78% said no. Question 33 asked what steps had been taken to address this barrier. Of the 14 librarians that responded to this question, 3 planned to introduce more YA programs; 2 planned to add more resources; 2 planned to hire more professional librarians; 2 planned to add a new YA section; 1 planned to attend training for better YA programs; 1 planned to join professional committees; 1 planned to update the YA collection; 1 planned to market the library to teens; and the final respondent planned to offer workshops for staff dealing with teens.

The final survey question asked respondents to rank a list of reasons why YAs in their community may choose not to use their public library. Of the 59 respondents, 38% listed competition from other YA activities as the most significant reason; 21% listed lack of interest in library resources and services; and 18% listed lack of transportation. Lack of knowledge of library resources and services was listed as the second reason by 23% of respondents, while another 21% listed lack of interest in library resources and services as the fourth significant reason. Sixteen percent of all respondents listed dissatisfaction with library services as the sixth, seventh, and eighth most significant reasons. Of the respondents selecting n/a, 22% of respondents listed limited access to technology as not applicable at their library; 23% listed insufficient staff; 38% listed insufficient hours of operation; 19% listed lack of space for young adults; and 18% listed lack of materials and resources. The researcher was not pleased with the results to this question and realized that it should have been handled differently and that the n/a column should not have been included. Results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Survey Question Number 34: Listed below are some reasons that YAs in your community may not use your public library. Please rank them from 1 – 10 in order of significance, with 1 being the most significant. If a reason does not apply to your library, please select n/a. (n = 59)

Reason	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	n/a
Competition from other YA activities	38%										
Lack of knowledge of library resources and services		23%									
Lack of interest in library resources and services	21%			21%							
Limited access to technology											22%
Dissatisfaction with library services						16%	16%	16%			
Insufficient staff											23%
Insufficient hours of operation											38%
Lack of space for young adults											19%
Lack of materials and resources											18%
Lack of transportation	18%										

References

- Heaviside, S., Farris, E., Dunn, C., Fry, R., & Carpenter, J. (1995). *Services and resources for children and young adults in public libraries. Statistical analysis report* (Report No. NCES-95-357). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386-218).
- Meyers, E. (1999, November). The coolness factor: Ten libraries listen to youth [Electronic version]. *American Libraries*, 30(10), 42 – 45.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

In 1995, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) conducted a survey of public library service to young adults that identified a number of external and internal barriers to service (Heaviside, et al., 1995). In 1999, the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development (Partners) initiative found many of the same barriers (Meyers, 1999). In this study, *Barriers to Young Adult Patronage of Public Libraries: A Survey of New Jersey Public Librarians*, the researcher was interested in knowing which external and/or internal barriers to young adult patronage presented the most difficulty to New Jersey public librarians and what these librarians had done to overcome these barriers.

In order to reach the largest number of New Jersey librarians serving young adults, the researcher posted an invitational e – mail on the New Jersey Young Adult and Children’s listserv (NJYAC). The e – mail contained a link to an online survey created and stored in SurveyMonkey.com. The researcher received a total of 81 responses; however, four were discarded, as the librarians did not serve young adults.

The online survey was divided into two main sections: the first section consisted of questions that compiled demographics and the second section consisted of questions that addressed the barriers to service as identified in the NCES and Partners studies. While the second section addressed most of these barriers, emphasis was placed on four main

internal barriers: lack of resources for young adults, lack of space for young adults, limited access to technology for young adults, and lack of service to young adults. Subsets of questions within the second section specifically addressed these four main barriers.

Barrier: Lack of Resources

The first subset of questions, questions 7 through 9, focused on the first barrier, lack of resources for young adults. Question 7 asked respondents if their library maintained a distinct young adult collection of books and materials. Of the 66 respondents, 43 worked in libraries that did maintain a distinct young adult collection of books and materials in a separate YA room or area; 9 respondents shelved YA fiction separately, but shelved YA nonfiction with adult nonfiction; 7 shelved YA books with the adult collection; 4 shelved YA books with the children's collection; 1 shelved YA fiction separately, but shelved YA nonfiction with juvenile nonfiction; 1 answer was nonresponsive; and 1 respondent's library did not have a YA collection. Question 8 asked those respondents working in libraries that don't maintain a distinct young adult collection of books and materials if they considered this to be a significant barrier to YA use of their library: 2 librarians did consider this to be a barrier, 5 did not. Question 9 asked those respondents that did feel this was a barrier to indicate what steps had been taken to address it. Of the 6 respondents, only 2 responded accurately to the question: one stated that they would like to shelve YA nonfiction with YA fiction and the other shelved YA fiction in the YA area and YA nonfiction with adult nonfiction. The other 4 confused YA space or room for YA collection.

The next subset of questions, questions 13 and 14, also addressed the barrier of lack of resources for young adults. Question 13 asked if respondents considered the quality of the YA collection at their library to be a barrier to YA use of their library. Sixty-six librarians responded: 12 responded yes while 54 responded no. Of the 12 librarians that responded yes, question 14 asked these same librarians to list the steps they had taken to address this barrier. Eleven of the 12 librarians answered and responses varied, ranging from passive to traditional to more proactive ideas. For example, one respondent indicated that collection development was reviewing the YA collection; others planned to add graphic novels and purchase more award – winning books, as well as purchase more than one copy of popular YA titles. Some, however, planned to attempt a more proactive approach, such as purchasing sequels in a more timely manner; ordering newly released titles sooner rather than waiting for reviews because the titles were already available in the bookstores; and including teens in the collection development process.

Barrier: Lack of Space

The third subset of questions, numbers 15 through 17, focused on the barrier of lack of space for young adults. Question 15 asked respondents if their library maintained a distinct and separate young adults' room or area with space available for YAs to gather and/or socialize. Of the 65 total respondents, 33 answered yes and 32 answered no. Of the 32 respondents with libraries that did not have a distinct and separate YA room or area, 19 felt this was a significant barrier to YA use of their library, while 14 did not (question 16). Question 17 asked those respondents that felt it was a barrier to list what steps had been taken to address it. Twenty – one librarians responded: several indicated that they were planning a separate YA room or that their library was currently under construction

and a YA area was designated for the new library. Those respondents working in libraries that already had a YA room or area generally answered in one of two ways: either they planned to relocate or expand it; or they planned to redesign it somehow, such as by purchasing teen furniture or making the area more inviting with posters.

Barrier: Limited Access to Technology

The fourth subset of questions, questions 24 & 25, address the barrier of limited access to technology for young adults. Question 24 asked respondents to identify which of the listed reasons they considered to be a significant barrier to YA use of their library. While 21 respondents considered none of the reasons listed to be barriers, an equal number considered the lack of computers specifically for YAs to be one. Eleven respondents considered both limited software and long waiting periods to use computers to be barriers. Nine respondents felt that older computers were also a problem. Finally, one respondent felt that not enough computers were a barrier; while another felt that restrictions placed upon YA computer usage was one. Question 25 asked these same respondents what steps they had taken to address these barriers. Some respondents were planning proactively: to add more computers (3); to add more software (1); to provide wireless laptops (1); to try using chat software to communicate with teens (1); to begin offering computer classes for teens (1); and to increase the usage period on the computers (1). Others stated that their library would be going wireless soon (2) or moving the current YA area to a section of the library more conducive to wiring for computers (1).

Barrier: Lack of Service

The final subset of questions, questions 32 and 33, focused on the lack of service barrier. Question 32 asked respondents if they considered the quality of the service

provided to YAs at their library to be a significant barrier to YA use of their library. Of the 60 respondents, 13 said yes and 47 said no. Question 33 asked the 13 that responded yes to indicate what steps had been taken to address this barrier. The responses varied but all were in the planning stages; no respondent had actually completed any of the steps. For example, respondents planned to introduce more YA programs and add more resources; to hire more professional librarians; to add a new YA section; to attend training for better YA programs; to join professional committees; to update the YA collection; to market the library to teens; and to offer workshops for staff dealing with teens.

Ranking of Barriers

The last survey question addressed both external and internal barriers to YA use of the public library. Respondents were asked to rank the barriers from 1 – 10, with 1 being the most significant. It is interesting to note that 22 respondents considered competition from other YA activities as the number one barrier to YA service; however, 12 ranked lack of interest in library resources and services number one and 10 ranked lack of transportation as number one. Thirteen librarians ranked lack of knowledge of library resources and services as the second most significant barrier to YA use of the public library. Another 12 librarians ranked lack of interest in library resources and services as the fourth most significant barrier. Nine librarians ranked dissatisfaction with library services as the sixth, seventh, and eighth most significant barriers. Surprisingly, many respondents felt that some barriers did not apply at all to their specific situations: limited access to technology (12); insufficient staff (13); insufficient hours of operation (21); lack of space for young adults (11); and lack of materials and resources (10) were all ranked

as n/a or not applicable. This did not entirely agree with the responses to some of the questions. For example, question 16 showed that 14 respondents felt that lack of space was not a significant barrier, while only 11 did in question 34. Question 13 indicated that 54 respondents did not feel the quality of their YA collections to be a barrier, while only 10 did not in question 34.

Conclusions

Results of the researcher's 2005 survey indicated that 78% of librarians disagreed that lack of service was a barrier. The 13 librarians that agreed with the teens listed several steps that they planned to take to overcome this barrier. However, all of the responses indicated that the steps, while impressive, were in the planning stage.

As for limited access to technology, the researcher's 2005 study showed that some librarians (54) agreed that this was still a problem and were planning steps to address it. Once again, the steps appeared to be in the planning stage and were not described as goals that had been achieved.

Lack of space continues to be a significant barrier as the 2005 survey showed libraries almost evenly divided with 33 having a distinct and separate young adults' room or area and 32 not. Fifty – eight percent of librarians working in libraries that don't have such a space did consider it a significant barrier to YA use of their libraries and were, again, either planning a new YA space or trying to improve the one available to them.

As for lack of resources, most librarians (82%) participating in the 2005 study did not feel that the quality of the YA collection at their libraries was a barrier to YA usage. Indeed, 18% ranked this barrier as not applicable to their libraries.

Overall, it appears that librarians still believe the key external barriers as identified in the 1995 NCES study, competition from other YA activities; lack of interest in library services, resources, and programs; and lack knowledge of YA services, are significant barriers to YA patronage of public libraries. Internal barriers identified in the NCES study, such as insufficient services, resources, and programs; insufficient library staff; and insufficient hours of operation, were not considered key barriers by librarians participating in the 2005 survey. However, respondents still considered limited access to technology and lack of space for YAs significant internal barriers. The researcher did note that there appeared to be a core group of respondents that offered knowledgeable and enthusiastic suggestions for overcoming many of the barriers in the study; however, few indicated steps that they had taken to overcome them, only steps that they would like to take or were planning to take.

Recommendations for Use of Results

The goal of the researcher was to determine which of the barriers identified in the NCES and Partners studies were still considered to be significant by librarians serving young adults today and how these librarians were attempting to overcome them. Results of the study showed that the many of the librarians who participated in the study, while aware of the barriers, had not overcome them and had not taken steps to do so. The researcher recommends further study, involving a larger sample, on the opinions and suggestions of librarians serving young adults and facing these barriers. Interviews or focus groups with full – time young adult public librarians discussing and possibly drafting the specific steps needed to overcome the barriers to YA patronage of public

libraries would be extremely beneficial. Additionally, a longitudinal case study of a public library that addressed and overcame the barriers to young adult patronage would also be helpful. The goal of these research suggestions should be to emphasize results, not planning. Furthermore, as the 2005 study indicated that librarians consider some of the barriers identified in both the NCES and Partners studies to still be significant, the researcher suggests that further studies encompassing young adult opinions and suggestions would be useful to the profession, such as updating the Partners study with emphasis placed on technological changes since 1999.

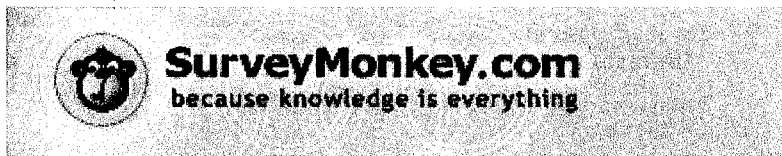
References

- Heaviside, S., Farris, E., Dunn, C., Fry, R., & Carpenter, J. (1995). *Services and resources for children and young adults in public libraries. Statistical analysis report* (Report No. NCES-95-357). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386-218).
- Meyers, E. (1999, November). The coolness factor: Ten libraries listen to youth [Electronic version]. *American Libraries*, 30(10), 42 – 45.

REFERENCE LIST

- Benton Foundation. (1996). *Buildings, books, and bytes: Libraries and communities in the digital age*. Washington, DC: Benton Foundation. Retrieved November 5, 2003, from <http://www.benton.org/publilibrary/kellogg/buildings.html>.
- Chelton, M. K. (1999, Spring). Behavior of librarians in school and public libraries with adolescents: Implications for practice and LIS education [Electronic version]. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 40(2), 99 – 111.
- Fisher, H. (2003, March). A teenage view of the public library: What are the students saying? [Electronic version]. *Australas Public Library Information Service*, 16(1), 4 – 16.
- Heaviside, S., Farris, E., Dunn, C., Fry, R., & Carpenter, J. (1995). *Services and resources for children and young adults in public libraries. Statistical analysis report* (Report No. NCES-95-357). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386-218).
- Jones, P. (2002, Spring). New directions for serving young adults means building more than our collections. *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries*, 15(3), 21 – 23.
- Keener, L. (2004). *Young adult public library services in southern New Jersey*. Unpublished master's thesis, Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey.
- Kunzel, B. (personal communication) received October 7, 2004.
- Meyers, E. (1999, November). The coolness factor: Ten libraries listen to youth. *American Libraries*, 30(10), 42 – 45.
- Nilsen, A. P., & Donelson, K. L. (2001). *Literature for today's young adults* (6th ed.). NY: Addison – Wesley Longman.
- Reitz, J. M. (2004). *ODLIS: Online dictionary for library and information science*. Retrieved October 11, 2004, and April 17, 2005, from <http://lu.com/odlis>
- Young, H. (Ed.). (1983). *The ALA glossary of library and information science*. Chicago: American Library Association.

APPENDIX A



Design Survey

Show All Pages and Questions

<< Back

Preview

To change the look of your survey, select a choice below. Click 'Add' to create your own custom theme.

Theme: Blue Metal Add

Survey of NJ Public Librarians Serving Young Adults

Edit Title

Edit Num

Add Page

1. Demographics

Edit Page

Delete Page

Copy/Move

Add Logic

Please complete this survey only if you work with young adults in your library. purposes of this survey, young adults (YAs) are defined as between the ages and 18. Your responses will remain completely anonymous.

Add Question

Add Page

Edit Delete Copy/Move Add Logic

*** 1. Which of the following most closely describes the title of your position?**

- Librarian
- Youth Services Librarian
- Young Adult Librarian
- Library Assistant
- Other (please specify)

Add Question

Add Page

2. Untitled Page

Edit Page

Delete Page

Copy/Move

Add Logic

Add Question

Add Page

Edit Delete Copy/Move Add Logic

2. What level of education have you attained?

- High School
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree in Subject Area
- Master's Degree in Library Science
- Other (please specify)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

3. Untitled Page

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

3. How many years experience do you have serving young adults in a public library?

- Less than 5 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 11 - 15 years
- 16 - 20 years
- Over 20 years

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

4. Untitled Page

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

4. What percentage of your time is spent serving young adults?

- Less than 25%
- 26 - 50%
- 51 - 75%
- 76 - 100%

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

5. Untitled Page

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#)

5. What is the approximate size of the population that your library serves?

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#)

6. Approximately how much of your library's total annual budget (dollars) is for YA materials and services?

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

6. Resources for Young Adults

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

7. Does your library maintain a distinct young adult collection of books and materials?

- Yes, shelved with the children's collection
- Yes, shelved with the adult collection
- No
- Yes, in a separate young adults' room or area
- Other (please specify)

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

8. If not, do you consider this to be a significant barrier to YA use of your library?

- Yes
- No

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move**

9. If you answered yes to question 8, what steps have you taken to address this barrier?

Add Question **Add Page**

7. Untitled Page **Edit Page** **Delete Page** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

10. Which of these materials are included in your library's young adult collection? Check all that apply.

- Anime
- Paperbacks
- Computer Games
- Videos/DVDs
- Music CDs
- Manga
- Nonfiction

- Magazines
- Books on tape/CDs
- CD-Roms
- Graphic Novels
- Fiction
- Other (please specify)

8. Untitled Page

11. Does your library offer more than one copy of popular YA books?

Yes

No

9. Untitled Page

12. How would you rate your library's young adult fiction and nonfiction collection?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Fiction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nonfiction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Untitled Page

13. Do you consider the quality of the YA collection at your library to be a barrier to YA use of your library?

Yes

No

14. If yes, what steps have you taken to address this barrier?

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

11. Space for Young Adults

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

15. Does your library maintain a distinct and separate young adults' room or area with space available for YAs to gather and/or socialize?

Yes

No

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

16. If not, do you consider this to be a significant barrier to YA use of your library?

Yes

No

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#)

17. If you answered yes to question 16, what steps have you taken to address this barrier?

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

12. Young Adult Access to Technology

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

18. Does your library maintain a separate YA computer section?

Yes

No (Skip to question 24)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

13. Untitled Page [Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#)

19. If your library does maintain a separate YA computer section, how many computers does it offer?

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

20. Approximately how old are the computers in your library's YA computer section?

- Most are less than 1 year old
- Most are over 1 year old
- Most are over 2 years old

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

14. Untitled Page [Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

21. Is there usually a waiting period for computer usage in the YA area?

- Yes
- No

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

22. If there is a waiting period, approximately how long does a YA usually have to wait to use the computers?

- 15 minutes or less
- About 1/2 hour
- Over 1/2 hour

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

15. Untitled Page [Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

23. What software/services does your library offer on the computers in the YA area? Check all that apply.

- Word Processing Software (i.e. Microsoft Word)
- Spreadsheet Software (i.e. Microsoft Excel)

- Database Programs (i.e. Microsoft Access)
- Internet Access
- Online Databases (i.e. EbscoHost)
- Web Site Design (i.e. Microsoft FrontPage)
- Presentation Software (i.e. Microsoft PowerPoint)
- Other (please specify)

16. Untitled Page

24. Which, if any, of the reasons below do you consider to be a significant barrier to YA use of your library? Check all that apply.

- Lack of computers specifically for YAs
- Older computers
- Long waiting periods to use computers
- Limited software
- None
- Other (please specify)

25. If you checked any of the reasons in question 24, what steps have you taken to address these barriers?

17. Untitled Page

26. Does your library offer any of these other services/resources to YAs? Check all that apply.

- Listening booths
- Wireless Internet access
- Video game units
- Laptops
- Access to music downloads
- Other (please specify)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

18. Service to Young Adults

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

27. Does your library place any restrictions on library use by young adults?

- Yes
- No

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

28. If your library does place restrictions on YAs, which of the following restrictions apply to your library? Check all that apply.

- Parental permission required to be in library alone
- Parental permission required to use the Internet
- Limited Internet time
- No eating or drinking in the library
- Limited number of checkouts
- Other (please specify)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

19. Untitled Page

[Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

29. Does your library identify resources available for school assignments?

- Yes
- No

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

30. If so, how do you market these resources to YAs? Check all that apply.

Don't market them

Display

Bibliographies

Shelved in special section

Other (please specify)

Add Question **Add Page**

20. Untitled Page **Edit Page** **Delete Page** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move**

31. Overall, how would you describe service to young adults at your library?

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Service

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

32. Do you consider the quality of the service provided to YAs at your library to be a significant barrier to YA use of your library?

Yes

No

Add Question **Add Page**

Edit **Delete** **Copy/Move**

33. If you answered yes to question 32, what steps have you taken to address this barrier?

Add Question **Add Page**

21. Untitled Page **Edit Page** **Delete Page** **Copy/Move** **Add Logic**

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

Edit	Delete	Copy/Move
<p>34. Listed below are some reasons that YAs in your community may not use your public library. Please rank them from 1 - 10 in order of significance, with 1 being the most significant. If a reason does not apply to your library, please select n/a.</p>		
		Rank
Lack of knowledge of library resources and services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Competition from other YA activities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Lack of space for young adults	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Lack of interest in library resources and services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Insufficient hours of operation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Dissatisfaction with library services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Limited access to technology	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Lack of materials and resources	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Lack of transportation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Insufficient staff	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

22. Untitled Page [Edit Page](#) [Delete Page](#) [Copy/Move](#) [Add Logic](#)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Deborah Swierk
Rowan University
Glassboro, NJ
rowancoffeebuzz@yahoo.com

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

Edit	Delete	Copy/Move
<p>35. Please type your e-mail address here if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey.</p>		
<input type="text"/>		

[Add Question](#) [Add Page](#)

[<< Back](#) [Preview](#)

APPENDIX B



Print - Close Window

To: njyac@ns1.njstatelib.org
Subject: [NJYAC] Online Survey
Date: Wed, 02 Feb 2005 18:57:20 -0500
From: "Deborah Swierk" <dswierk@franklintownship.com>

Dear Public Librarian and NJYAC Member:

I am a graduate student at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey, and a fellow listserv member. For my master's thesis, I am researching public library service to young adults. Please help me by completing an online survey. You can access the survey by going to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=56020837227>.

Your responses will be completely anonymous; however, if you would like to receive a copy of the results of the survey, please type your e-mail address in the space provided at the end of the survey. If you do not serve young adults at your library, please pass this e-mail on to the librarian who does.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Deborah Swierk
Rowan University
Glassboro, NJ
rowancoffeebuzz@yahoo.com

APPENDIX C



Print - Close Window

To: njyac@ns1.njstatelib.org
Subject: [NJYAC] Reminder
Date: Mon, 14 Feb 2005 12:08:53 -0500
From: "Deborah Swierk" <dswierk@franklintownship.com>

Dear Public Librarian and NJYAC Member:

Recently, I posted an invitation to complete an online survey about public library service to young adults. I am a graduate student at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey, and a fellow listserv member. I am conducting the survey as part of my research for my master's thesis.

I was very pleased to receive many responses to my initial posting of the survey; however, for those of you who may not have had the opportunity to complete the survey, I invite you to do so. You can access the survey by going to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=56020837227>. Your responses will be completely anonymous; however, if you would like to receive a copy of the results of the survey, please type your e-mail address in the space provided at the end of the survey. If you do not serve young adults at your library, please pass this e-mail on to the librarian who does.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Deborah Swierk
Rowan University
Glassboro, NJ
rowancoffeebuzz@yahoo.com

APPENDIX D



Print - Close Window

To: njyac@ns1.njstatelib.org
Subject: [NJYAC] Online Survey
Date: Thu, 24 Feb 2005 14:24:24 -0500
From: "Deborah Swierk" <dswierk@franklintownship.com>

I would like to thank all of you who participated in my online survey, NJ Public Librarians Serving Young Adults. I received many responses and am looking forward to analyzing the results. As someone who is new to the profession, it was extremely gratifying to receive such willing assistance from my colleagues. Thank you again.