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# The Yellow Sheet

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## Little readers wanted,

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When I go to the library, passing through either door, I always make a right hand turn. That's because everything I need is in that direction. The circulation desk is there, the DVD's are there, the dailies are there, the new releases are there and, of course, the non-fictions are there. By the time you add the computers to the mix, you might say the center of gravity at the library is to the right of the entrance doors. It's also true that being an adult I don't go to the left, where the children section happens to be.

So when the librarian asked me if I had seen the new look of the children section I obliged and went to visit the section. The first thing I noticed was how dull my own adult mind, compared to a child's mindspace is. When I think of libraries I think of 'serious' readings and the brown and gray everything. But here I was looking at light, openness and a kaleidoscope of vivid colors, not to mention a good splash of utter cuteness. Every adult should once in a while seek solace in his or her library children section. But the solace should not be just to sit there. Not reading those lovely books is like not listening to children when they talk. What's written in those pages, like what's spoken by the 'little' people, carry a great deal of wit and wisdom. So I dug in. Thank god one of my all time favorite writers, "uncle Shelby", Shel Silverstein, was a face out. I stood and read ( I figured I couldn't quite fit in those cute chairs) and read more. It was like drinking something sweet and wholesome, yet delightfully whimsical. "All you need in here are a whole tribe of children." , I said to the librarian.

But even if a scant few were to come, their presence would somehow change the atmosphere of the place; they would turn it into far less of a placid but more of a joyous and even raucous space, something our library could use. It's hard to imagine a better investment in a child than becoming acculturated in the ways of a library. It goes far beyond mere reading. The true payoff is soaking of the culture, where you commune with other readers and seekers, you tease your natural curiosity, you learn the value of common goods and of course, you fall in love with books and form the blessed habit of reading. Children love to learn but they have a problem; they want it to be fun. The library culture can help in that. Turn the kids loose in a library and expect a whole lot of education flowing.

And besides, the libraries need the children. In the battle to keep the public libraries open, the children might be the last and perhaps the most powerful block of citizens in the line of defense.

The lesson is obvious: For everybody's sake, more kids at the library, please.