



## Editor's Note Redefining Normal

By Sharon Verbeten

If there's one phrase that sticks out for me about the pandemic, it's "the new normal." What exactly is that? Is it trying to come to terms with the way our lives have changed over the last year—for better or worse? Or, as it more likely should be, *redefining what normal should be.*

We've all found ourselves pivoting—*there's another pandemic-inspired word!*—over the past months. Sometimes it has worked—as in the many successful ways children's librarians have met their patrons' needs, with everything from virtual storytimes, outside storywalks, take-home bags, and more. Sometimes it hasn't—how many of us have had Zoom malfunctions, online interruptions, upset patrons, overflowing bookdrops, and mandatory quarantine periods.

We've also contended with the absence of in-person meetings and conventions—for me, as well as for many of you, attending the ALA conferences virtually. And while I know things will change going forward, there's just no substitute for seeing all of our colleagues in person, sharing stories over coffee, fan-girling over our favorite authors, and nabbing swag on the exhibit floor.

While we may not see each other in person for quite some time, I'm proud of how our ALSC committees have continued to do their hard and important work—especially those working toward fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) throughout our division and our profession—via phone, email, text, chats, blogs, and other virtual venues.

Read more about some of those initiatives, including the EDI task force and its Equity Fellows, along with some excellent articles on the LGBTQ presence in books and libraries and other diversity measures, in this issue.

Maybe our new normal is to constantly get used to "new normals." I'm just hoping that our next new normal feels a bit more comfortable. &

# Children & LIBRARIES

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