

# ALSC Member Profiles

### Brianne Mintz, Children's Librarian, Springfield (NJ) Free Public Library

**What prompted you to join ALSC?** I love the sense of community as well as the amazing opportunities ALSC offers to grow in my professional journey. I love learning from such a diverse community of children's librarians!

**What made you want to be a children's librarian?** I've been an avid reader all my life, and I've loved books since I was a little girl, but because of my dyslexia and dyscalculia, I had no idea what I wanted to do in regards to my career, and to be frank, I never thought I would earn more than my high school diploma. I thought a bachelor's degree was beyond my capabilities. But after completing high school, I decided to further my education at a community college. While it was a little rocky to start... after two years, I decided to go for it and work up to my Bachelor's degree. I eventually graduated with a degree in English literature and writing with a minor in psychology. I was so proud of myself, and I started to really think about what kind of career path I wanted to pursue, and what a career as a dyslexic individual would look like. When my Grandma mentioned our local library was looking for circulation clerks, I thought it sounded like a wonderful position. That job changed my career trajectory and my entire life. Within a few weeks, I was asked to cover the children's department while they were looking to hire a new librarian. After a while, a reference supervisor recommended I look into getting an MLIS. It was almost like a fire was lit within me. I finally found a career that allowed me to combine my passion for literature and children, while making an impact on young lives and showing them that even if you're dyslexic or neurodivergent, you can do anything you set your mind to. I find it so rewarding to help children discover their love of reading and learning, and this continues to inspire me to create engaging and unique programs while fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all children who visit.



**What project are you excited to be working on?** I have been giving a lot of talks and webinars about dyslexia in public libraries, and I love when I get opportunities to speak to librarians and professionals about how we can better serve this community. I hope to begin a Dyslexic Librarian's Alliance to provide a safe, welcoming space for dyslexic librarians to have a community where they can connect, share experiences, and receive support.

**What is your favorite book(s) to share with children?** One of my all-time favorite children's books is Andrea Beaty's *Aaron Slater, Illustrator*. I love to share that book because I think every child needs to hear that what makes you different is what informs who you are and is what makes you so special. I also love to share books by Mo Willems, Ryan Higgins, and Jory John because they know how to create funny, loveable characters that can deliver stories about kindness, love, acceptance, while still being approachable for kids.

## Sarah Clarke, Head of Children's Services, Great Neck (NY) Library

**What prompted you to join ALSC?** I joined when I started in library school at my professor's suggestion. I wanted to dive right into process committees and get networking with other librarians right away!



**What made you want to be a children's librarian?** I actually had no interest in becoming a children's librarian at first; I wanted to be an archivist. I started working as a page in a local library during my undergrad degree, and the children's librarian there was so influential that she convinced me to change my whole career path. I loved the storytimes, the displays, and of course seeing the wheels turn in the kids' heads as they learned new things.

**What project are you excited to be working on?** I'm serving on my first award committee (2025 Geisel) this year; I'm so excited to start reading and getting to know my fellow committee members.

**What has been your favorite part of serving in ALSC?** I was part of the pilot Early and Family Literacy Committee, which was really fun to start from almost scratch. I also really loved serving on Quicklists; I had to read so much to stay up to date.

**What is your favorite book(s) to share with children?** My go-to book for storytimes is *The Watermelon Seed* by Greg Pizzoli. It's

so fun to act out and seeing the relief when the little crocodile burps is just so funny!

## Ashley Bressingham, Librarian II/Children's Room Assistant Supervisor, New Rochelle (NY) Public Library



**What made you want to be a children's librarian?** I basically grew up in my hometown library. In high school, I was a page in the children's room there. I was a voracious reader with a thirst for learning and a love of books. While I worked on obtaining my MLS, I had the opportunity to work at a few public libraries, and I fell in love with working in a children's room.

**What project are you excited to be working on at work or in ALSC?** I'm currently serving as Co-Chair of the Membership Committee and am excited to work on reviewing and revamping the ALSC Mentoring Program. I did the program three times—twice as a mentee and once as a mentor—and think it has a lot of positive benefits for those in our profession.

**What is your favorite book(s) to share with children?** Two of my personal favorites are *Echo* by Pam Muñoz Ryan and the Making Friends series by Kristen Gudsruk. &