tips on how to look past stereotypical labels and see young patrons who can benefit from library services, just like any other teens. The authors successfully organize the book into chapters on related themes. Chapters 1 through 3 focus on advocating for outreach, understanding the special needs of at-risk teens, and recognizing the common factors that can place all teens at-risk. Chapters 4 through 6 focus on how to provide outreach, specifically focusing on the benefits of partnerships with community organizations (such as juvenile detention centers, alternative high schools, foster homes, counseling centers, etc.) that serve at-risk teens. The final three chapters focus on actual programming ideas, including real-life examples of successful programs held at libraries and/or with a partner facility and tips on how to successfully evaluate such programs (and help further advocate for their importance).

The one disappointment of this book lies in the examples of programs. Although the descriptions are very detailed and the authors are very encouraging, these examples might seem dauntingly difficult for a librarian new to serving at-risk teens. These are programs that require a level of planning and funding that might be unrealistic for a library just beginning to reach out to at-risk teens. This reviewer would have liked to see some smaller-scale examples of introductory initiatives that librarians could try out at first that, if successful, could lead to more ambitious and spectacular event programs.

The authors include two appendixes—a collection of the sample forms discussed throughout the text and a list of organizations that specifically work with youth. They also include an annotated bibliography of core titles, organized by theme, that are recommended for purchase in a collection serving at-risk teens. Overall, this is a recommended book that will encourage many teen librarians to begin outreach programs for at-risk teens if their library currently does not offer such services.—Lindsey Tomsu, Teen Coordinator, La Vista Public Library, La Vista, Nebraska


Serving At-Risk Teens presents one of the first guidebooks for librarians who want to provide outreach to at-risk teens. Craig and McDowell do an excellent job of defining what “at-risk” means. They show readers that the A+ student whose family has a history of alcohol addiction is just as “at-risk” as the teenage mother with a newborn baby. They provide a history of how the term has been used, mostly with negative connotations, and how it can “have a detrimental effect upon how they [teens] perceive themselves and how the world perceives and reacts to them” (vii). The authors provide