I can't help you myself, but I would recommend getting in touch with the Ames Free Library in Easton, MA. They have their Children's Department up on the second floor of a gorgeous building donated by the Ames family. Their circulation desk is indeed on the ground level first floor.

Rockport has the Children’s room on the 2nd floor and if I had the chance it would be one of the first things I would change. It makes it awkward for parents with strollers who need to take the elevator and I can at least one complaint a week about the noise that the kids make. It has really caused an unnecessary and uncomfortable divide between our seniors and young families.

Thank you,

Cindy Grove

Director

**Rockport Public Library**

17 School Street

Rockport, MA  01966

Hello!!

We share a building with town offices and we are on the 2nd floor! Unfortunately, I get lots of complaints especially during my programs that the kids are too loud and we disturb the people working directly below us. I have been working around it by doing programming when less people are downstairs, or trying to use our auditorium more. I would advise against it if possible! Just my opinion!! Good luck in your new building!!

Kate Rumplik

Hampden Public Library

Our children’s area is upstairs and so is the teen area.  I think the teen area should be closer to the adult area. The children’s area tends to make their own rules about cards and circulation and stuff, but I think that’s the same everywhere.

They have their own circ desk and because of the arrangement of the building people can go right upstairs without us knowing.  Before I started the children’s staff would just put up signs to checkout downstairs but now I insist that it be staffed.

If you have a flu epidemic, sometimes it’s difficult to cover the entire building.

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Marie Mueller

Director

Bigelow Free Public Library

(978) 365-4160

Hello,

If you don't hear from Foxboro, you might want to ask directly. It's a fairly new config so someone is likely to be able to tell you about before and after.

Thanks,

Jennifer Woodward  
Assistant Director  
Falmouth Public Library  
300 Main Street  
Falmouth, Ma 02540

Hi Lisa,

  The NAPL children’s room has always been located on the second floor. While undertaking the renovation 14 years ago, the powers that be (and citizens’ input) decided it should remain up there. We like it. In this historic building it does get a little noisy at times but we relish the liveliness of kids having a good time. As with all two-story buildings, communication among departments that are physically separated this way requires effort. Oh, and an elevator comes in handy for parents with strollers, diaper bags, book bags and other kid luggage.

Mindy Hackner

North Adams

Bolton's children's room us on the upper floor by design, and we're very happy with it.  There is a circulation desk in the room. Removing kids from exit doors adds a measure of safety (and was endorsed by our police chief when we were in design phase), keeping kids out of the sight and reach of strangers. It also distributes staff evenly between the 2 floors.  Our children's room has its own glass entry doors to contain noise, and a dedicated restroom. It takes a few extra steps to get up there but no one seems to mind.

I've looked at designs with the children's room on the ground floor. Seems like there would be a lot of extra stuff for children's staff to deal with, including directional inquiries, deliveries, etc.--whoever pops in off the street. Why give an open invitation to people you might not want around kids?  Also having both the children's and adult desks on the main floor leaves the upper floor essentially unstaffed which is potentially dangerous. Staff distribution (and their ability to supervise the public) in your building is key.

Almost 9 years on, I wouldn't change my mind about locating kids away from the main entry and on the upper floor. Come visit if you like.

Kelly

Lisa,

One concern I would have is adults taking their children to the second floor and leaving them (I'm referring to young children) there while they go to the first floor.  Congratulations and your future new library!

Diane

Diane Caruso  
Director  
Southwick Public Library

Our children's room is on the top floor. It usually works quite well, and we have a parade of folks walking past the front desk on their way up to the children's area. We are sometimes able to entice Adults who don't think we have anything here for them because they walk past our program signup sheets and our displays.

I think it gives parents some peace of mind knowing that their kids can roam around a little without worrying that runners will make a dash for the exit. It also helps to make sure that the people who are in the children's area actually belong in the children's area.

We've had a little difficulty with noise- our play area is directly above our quiet reading room, and little feet are shockingly loud. However, most adults are pleased to know that there are happy children in the library. We have more complaints about conversations and folks talking loudly than we do about noise from the Children's area.

good luck!

Anna Shaw, M.S.  
Library Director  
Beaman Memorial Public Library  
8 Newton Street  
West Boylston, MA 01583

Hi Lisa!

I just worked at a library like this in Pelham, NH and one thing you really have to keep in mind is acoustics. The biggest program we had was that the kids would be... well kids, and it would carry through the whole library.

Also, as for your circ desk being only on one floor, I don't think that's a huge problem as long as the collections are accessible (elevator). Arlington has four floors and one circ desk.

Katy

Hi there,

The Oxford Library has the Children's Room on the 2nd floor and the Adult on the 1st.  They are self contained meaning that both areas have their entire collection on their floor, bathrooms, circulation is on each floor and staff are trained for that particular floor.

There is more of a safety feel having the children's room not on the street level.  Parents are not always on top of their children while in the library, but it is a few extra steps for little ones to actually make it to the street from the second floor.

I'm not sure it impacts the adult circulation numbers at all.  Each floor has different needs, it's easier to accommodate the patrons that are here for their families on one floor (and it's a little noisier) without disrupting the older population downstairs.

Hope this helps,

Cathleen M. Sullivan  
Assistant Director | Oxford Free Public Library  
339 Main Street, Oxford, MA 01540

Sorry I'm responding so late.  The Children's Department at the Boyden Library, Foxboro is situated on the second floor.  We opened our renovated/expanded building 5 years ago.  While planning, we knew we would be confined to the same site.  So a lot of creativity went into considering the use of space.  When the idea of a Children's Room on the second floor was presented to us, we weren't sure.  We were always located on the ground floor as many Children's Rooms are.  But we visited libraries with the second floor configuration and learned that it was not an issue for those places.  So we made our decision and never looked back.  Many people were surprised to find us in the "tree house," but we've never had an issue or a complaint.

The room can be entered from the staircase or by elevator.  And we keep the room secured by closing the (glass) doors to the main stairs.  Little ones usually love the elevator so we have to watch the children who are tall enough to reach the button.  The only problem we have is that on the elevator, the emergency button (wired directly to Police/Fire) is at toddler level and it gets pushed by mistake all the time.

We have our own circulation desk.  There is much coordination with the Adult circ desk.  We follow the same policies and we do our best to keep our procedures the same.

Patrons can check out or return their materials to either desk.

Our entire children's collection is on this floor.  There is also a family bathroom and a Story & Craft Room where Story Times and different children's activities take place.

Let me know if you have any other questions or concerns.  Or  please feel free to visit.

Hope this helps.  Good Luck!!

Margi

I am way late on this, but in case it's still useful - we opened our renovated building one year ago, with a children's room on the second floor. I wasn't around during the design process, but my sense of why this happened is that our children's room has always been on the second floor, and staff and residents have a strong attachment to certain things remaining the same or similar. Originally, this was going to be a two-floor building with Children's, Young Adult, and Reference/Nonfiction all upstairs, but changes were made before construction and now it's only Children's and staff areas upstairs.

The primary issue we've had with the location is that our elevator has been iffy (currently has been out of commission for nearly a month!), and that poses a problem for adults who come in with multiple kids and strollers, mobility impaired patrons seeking to use the Children's Room, and staff who have to lug a lot of materials upstairs by hand (Children's materials are probably 1/3-1/2 of our total circulation). Otherwise I'm unaware of other complaints. We do have the occasional kid having a tantrum who gets brought through the main floor area on his or her way outside, but you're going to get that anywhere unless you build in a separate entrance.

Best,

Heather

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Heather Backman

Library Director

Hopkinton Public Library