

buy huge quantities of them for my school library.

At home, it's a different story. However, the teacher-librarian in me still manages to make the most of it. My smart girl and I wrote the publisher of the *My Little Pony* books to point out that the illustrations clashed with the text (Rainbow Dash had Sunny Daze's "cutie mark" for instance – if you have no clue what I am referring to, then you probably do not have a pre-school girl living in your house). I didn't notice the mistakes – she did. I also squeeze in some well-written fare between the fluff pieces, for example, we've just finished an excellent novel called *Starring Prima: The Mouse of the Ballet Jolie*, by Jacquelyn Mitchard.

Using my role as a parent

Mary entered kindergarten this September, in another school board. Her school is staffed by a library technician, but for only one day a week as the position covers five schools. The teacher-librarian in me wants to march in, research in hand, asking tough questions about collection management and program delivery. The mother in me wants to ensure my daughter is not labelled as "the child with the obnoxious parent" and so I want to be as positive and supportive as possible. I've chatted with friends of mine who teach in that board, and they have advised me that change will take time but might be facilitated more quickly through my role as a parent than my role as a teacher-librarian. In this case, advocacy is no longer perceived as self-interested concern for teacher-librarians, but as concern for my child and her education. I'm now the vice-chair of the School Council at Mary's school, a council which recently voted in favour of spending a recent influx of funding on improvements to the layout of the school library. So, my role as a mother has affected how I advocate for school libraries.

Working with pre-school programs

Peter has entered pre-school for the first time and is attending the program two days a week. This YMCA preschool program is located in the school and has an agreement which allows the pre-school students to borrow books each week and so become familiar with the school library. I liked this idea

so much that I borrowed it and began implementing it in my school, however, I've since changed schools and my new school doesn't have a daycare/pre-school program.

These examples help illustrate why I think parenthood has made me a more creative, realistic, and generally better teacher-librarian. I know being a mother has made me take being a teacher-librarian even more seriously. Mary has said things to me that have helped me understand how children view teacher-librarians and I am more determined than ever not to disappoint either my children or my students. Her most challenging statement? "Mom, you're a teacher-librarian. That means you know things." ■

