

NLLN Continuing Education Scholarship Reports for 2007/2008

**Helen Goodin
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PLA HAD A COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT TRACK THAT HAD MANY WONDERFUL SESSIONS. I ATTENDED SESSIONS ON USING DEWEY TO CREATE COLLECTION NEIGHBORHOODS, 21ST CENTURY LIBRARY DESIGN AND READERS' ADVISORY. THIS SESSION ON WEEDING WAS PARTICULARLY GOOD AND HAS APPLICATION FOR BOTH SCHOOL AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

***WEEDERS ATTRACT MORE READERS* WEEDING WITH THE CREW* METHOD**

**Belinda Boon, MLIS, PhD
Kent State University School of Library & Information Science**

Our presenter, Bonnie Boon, used a garden analogy to highlight the importance of weeding library collections – you get rid of the unwanted plants! You have room to grow the good stuff! Weeding in libraries, as in gardens, is never done, but it is the best thing you can do to make collections more appealing and to save space. If shelves are only ¾ full, you have room for informal display space. Freshly weeded collections enhance your library's reputation for reliability and up-to-datedness. The weeding process also provides feedback on the collection's strengths and weaknesses.

There are obstacles to weeding. It is time-consuming; replacement costs must be considered; library collections are “sacred” to some; staff may have fears that they don't know particular subject areas well or that someone might ask for a weeded item tomorrow. There is also the common belief that something on the shelf is better than nothing, even if it is outdated! EVERY item in the library should justify its shelf space.

What to weed? Items with poor, outdated content and items that have poor physical appearance. Seldom or never used items as well as materials on topics that are no longer important to the collection should be discarded. When multiple copies exist of a previously popular item, weed out the extra copies.

How often should weeding be done? While it is a continuous process, Boon suggested entire library collections be weeded every five years, with every two to three years an even more desirable goal. If you incorporate weeding into your routine, it simply becomes part of the process. Establish a weeding schedule and adhere to it. Certain areas date quickly – watch for outdated titles in science, technology, medicine and finance.

***CREW - Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding**

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