Weeders Advisory: Training for Your Library
WLA Conference, May 1, 2014

Contact Information:
Kim Storbeck, Timberland Regional Library
kstorbeck@trl.org
360-704-4558

Timberland Regional Library
• 27 physical library locations, 3 Kiosks, 2 Cooperative Libraries (elementary school and tribal community library) and 1 administrative service center
• 5 counties (Thurston, Mason, Pacific, Lewis, Grays Harbor)

Weeding Push
• Staff Issues: Memories of lean times; Removing the wrong items/a patron’s favorite; Explaining the process to patrons; Books are sacred.
• Practicalities - What to weed, where to start, making time to weed.
• Reviewed the information already available: CREW guidelines, collection evaluation schedule and collection policy. Issued periodic emails, did library visits and offered personal assistance.

System-Wide Decision
Goals:
• Staff learning/engagement and staff hearing the same message.
• Communicate our expectations around weeding and collection maintenance.
• Get as many staff as possible on board with weeding and involved in the process.
• System-wide knowledge of weeding.
• Administration priority.

Training:
• The training itself includes PowerPoint, small group exercises, handouts, hands on exercises with weeded items from the collection.
• Collection life cycle, why we weed, what/how we weed, barriers/benefits to weeding, potential trouble spots, resources & tools (CREW Weeding guidelines, TRL weeding lists, statistics, collection evaluation schedule).
• Staff responsibilities.
• Staff Question FAQ: last copies, shared collections, leased books, patron questions, weeding vs. mending, where does it all go?

Training Best Practices
• All library staff should be involved - the more staff the better.
• Address the emotional aspects of weeding.
• Give them the knowledge and tools and make it practical.

Training Pitfalls
• Lack of administration support, which will lead to/reinforce lack of staff support.
• Lack of overall collection or weeding goals or a system to keep staff on track.
• Not making it easy for staff to request replacements and communicate needs.
• Not keeping training up-to-date and relevant.

Weeding Best Practices
• Have an up-to-date collections policy that includes the weeding process.
• Determine goals and targets through the year.
• Set expectations on how the collection should look.
• Give staff the tools they need to make weeding as easy and productive as possible/
• Don’t forget high use items.
• Address staff questions and concerns as they arise.
• Collection weeding/maintenance on performance reviews.
• Ensure staff knows how to talk to patrons about weeding.
• Don’t forget your electronic content!

Weeding Juvenile/Young Adult
• Condition is easy
• Cover Art
• Story/Topic – Is it outdated? Is it relevant to teens/children right now? Keep clearing out items that are not circulating.
• Series – Maintain popular series as needed.
• J/YA Classics - These books will be re-issued with new covers.
• Award winners should be treated like any other book if they are not circulating.

Changing Formats & Usage
• Re-purposing library areas for new tasks.
• Changing formats impacts initial selection and weeding of existing items.
• Circulation of physical items is dropping in many libraries, but is it when you add in ebook/eaudio circulation?
• Do physical items get a shorter lifespan in these days of competing demands?
• We have to make peace that information is being consumed in different ways.
• Don’t forget about weeding electronic titles.

Resources
• CREW Weeding Guidelines
• Booklist - Weeding Tips series