The Dewey Dilemma: What Happens to Classification When We Put Children First?

Presented by Sue Giffard
Created jointly with Tali Balas Kaplan, Andrea Dolloff and Jennifer Still-Schiff
Ethical Culture School, New York, NY

THE PROBLEM:
We wanted our student users to feel confident and empowered in the library, and to be able to grow as readers and library users. We worked hard to provide developmentally appropriate books in child-friendly spaces, but when we used the Dewey Decimal Classification System, our collection was organized in a fashion that was not child-friendly or developmentally appropriate, and this worked against the independence of our students.

OUR SOLUTION:
We spent time researching the issue, looking for alternatives and for guidelines. We decided to create our own system, Metis, which is based on the principle of putting the users, i.e. children, at the center of the process. We aimed to make our system flexible, searchable (using the online catalog), browsable, and most of all, child-friendly.

INFORMATION ON METIS:
You can find our website, Metis Innovations, at http://metisinnovations.com. Our full schedules are available on the website once you register.

Further details can be found here:


While we were creating Metis, we blogged about a number of issues at *Musings on Metis* at [http://eye-fours.blogspot.com](http://eye-fours.blogspot.com).

**WHAT HAVE OTHER LIBRARIES DONE?**
Further resources will be provided in the Powerpoint presentation that will be made available to participants after the Forum.