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Issue 48, May 2006

Irish Youth Work Scene

inside this issue...

*media perceptions of young people
cultural awareness & young people activities supplement
identifying & responding to dyslexia
new resources, notice board & round-up*

Magazine for Youth Workers

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Editorial

by
Diarmuid Kearney
Chief Executive - Youth Work Ireland

It looks like we are, within a matter of weeks, going to be in a position to have all prospective staff and volunteers vetted by the Gardaí. An important and long overdue development to support the protection of children who avail of our services. It does raise the question however, of how we want to see child protection addressed within our work. Do we want to see it emerge as a discrete and independently resourced and developed branch of our work, peopled by specialists and experts who police our service? Or do we want to see child protection as integral to best practice where we develop our competencies in tandem with those of participative practice, developmental group work, creative programming, good governance et al. I know where I stand on this one. Child protection is part of what we do to ensure that young people receive the best possible service. It's one of the many components that contribute to 'quality youth work'. I feel strongly that as things develop in the coming months and years we must ensure integration rather than separation

On another front the Taoiseach's new Task Force on Active Citizenship has been established with a focus on volunteerism. Something we know an awful lot about (or claim to at any rate). But perhaps we may be stimulated by this initiative to reflect on what volunteerism does or could mean to youth work. The National Children's Advisory Council has been asked by Minister Brian Lenihan to advise on 'young people as volunteers' and this is a particular area where we could make a useful contribution. Volunteerism is an important and precious characteristic of youth work in Ireland. Our neighbours in the North, Scotland, England and Wales are rightly envious of our robust and committed volunteer base and we need to hang on to this.

We need to be clear about why volunteerism is precious, we need to recognise how it roots our work in the heart of the community, how it creates leaders in the community, how it adds enormous value to our work and multiplies it's impact and how it brings a vitality and freshness to much of what we do. But we also need to recognise that the world is changing, that work patterns and lifestyles are different than they were a decade ago and that young people have different expectations. Add to this equation the fact that increasing numbers of professional and trained staff has created a 'theoretical' gulf in the workforce and we can be sure that the volunteering core of our work is under threat. The Taoiseach is right, we need to engage in discussion, consult, research and be creative in our responses in order to protect the voluntary core of what we are.

I heard the news today Don't Panic!

Thoughts on the influence of the media perceptions of young people and fear of crime

By Clive Stone

Introduction

Open a newspaper, turn on the radio, switch on the TV, look at the shelves in the bookstore and you will discover our fascination with crime. The power of the media has never been stronger in influencing government policy, swaying policing strategies and ultimately allowing the reader or listener to guesstimate the current state of social health in Ireland.

I heard on the radio today that a recent crime survey amongst citizens in Ireland identified that there is an increased fear of being a victim of crime, but more importantly, young people are being identified as an amorphous group to be afraid of. Statistically however young people are most at risk of being a victim of crime, not the committers of crime. How did that happen? It doesn't make sense and yet the media cycle continues to emphasis and play on these fears. I didn't hear that we should be afraid of middle age people, or elderly people, or corporate businesses, or white-collar workers. No, the emphasis was on violent crimes and fear of crime in public places.

Now don't get me wrong, young people do commit crimes and victims of these crimes need the law to protect them, and support them, but I don't agree with the picture being presented that young people are potential criminals, thugs, violent members of our society and we should fear them.

Moral Panic

I believe that Ireland might be in the initial stages of a moral panic, a fear that young people are a threat to societal values. This is leading to an increased demand for greater social control and could escalate. For example, the Anti Social Behaviour Orders are a taster of the moral panic cycle beginning to spin.

Do modern day moral entrepreneurs, be they politicians, community representatives or active citizens exaggerate a problem in order to identify a personal

interpretation of declining morality and standards? I use the example of young people choosing to socialize in a public area to highlight my point, the so called 'street gangs'. The hot political potato is being juggled to try address the issue of young people meeting in public places and decrease the public fear of violent street crime. My fear is that this will escalate and create a *deviancy amplification feedback loop* (Wilkins 1964, p90).

Less tolerance of young people meeting in public spaces - leads to....



More acts being defined as crimes, or socially unacceptable - leads to....



More actions against young people, (ASBOs) - leads to....



More alienation of young people, and increased fear of crime - leads to....



More crime, or anti-social behaviour by young people (as a result of new definitions of what constitutes anti-social behaviour) - leads to....



Less tolerance of young people by conforming groups...



And back round we go...

What could be created is a self-fulfilling prophecy, and unfounded social acceptance to fear the untested, accept the unproven, and promote the invalidated myth that young people are violent and threaten the very fabric of a healthy society.

The application of stereotypes is a characteristic of crime reporting, complex social events are distorted into simple questions of right and wrong and little historical data provided to set out a framework for debate. Public concern will influence political response. Political response to the social control agenda will influence the allocation of police resources. The moral panic argument helps to identify the role media exaggerations can have on innocent groups.

An Garda Siochana Annual report 2004 shows interesting facts with regard to offences committed by children:

- Total number of public order offences in respect of which children were referred totaled 1,616 (7.84% of overall total in 2004)
- Total number of Robbery offences in respect of which children were referred totaled 218 (1.06% of overall total in 2004)
- Total number of assault offences in respect of which children were referred totaled 1,173 (5.69% of overall total in 2004)
- Total number of serious assault offences in respect of which children were referred totaled 448 (2.17% of overall total)
- Total number of public mischief offences in respect of which children were referred totaled 103 (0.5% of overall total for 2004)

Risk and Fear of Crime

The fear of crime is as big a problem as crime itself, however fear of crime appears to have an inverse relationship with the statistics, in other words people are most fearful of the crimes they are least likely to experience. Young men express the least fear; yet it is young working class inner city males who are

most likely to be victimised.

It is found that the impact of the mass media in promoting fear differs amongst readers. Those that read papers, which sensationalise and present crime in a dramatic fashion have the highest levels of fear of crime (Williams and Dickinson, 1993).

Fear can be generated from any number of variances, including personal, social, cultural or environmental factors. For Taylor (1999),

'Fear of crime is but one element of a generalized reality of political, cultural and economic insecurity that has come to characterize modern free market societies....excluded populations are increasingly perceived as the other and are set apart through the development of fortress of drawbridge mentalities'.

Folk devils – fact or fiction?

Young people are increasingly being categorised as a threat to societal values, and thus given the title 'folk devils'. They are being presented by the media as the new threat to social order in urban environments and increasingly seen as a threat to rural tranquility.

The media offers immediate imagery showing pictures of young men wearing hooded tops, and reporting stories of real fear of intimidation. As a result in England young people who wear hooded tops are banned from certain shopping malls. Other examples include the increased policing in areas with higher than average populations of young black men.

In both examples the creation of the folk devil, based solely on fear of crime, has resulted in measures being introduced to reduce fear of crime rather than actual crime. However the message given is that there was a crime problem to begin with, and clearly there may not be.

Young People and the Media: The Facts

- One in three articles about young people are about crime (*Young People and the Media, Mori*). 26 per cent of young people in school admit to committing a crime but only seven per cent of that group have committed crimes leading to Garda involvement (*Mori/ YJB*)

- 71 per cent of press stories about young people are negative and only 14 per cent are positive (*Young People and the Media, Mori*)
- Young people are only quoted in eight per cent of stories about them (*Young People and the Media, Mori*)
- Two-thirds of 11-18 year olds would not trust a journalist to tell them the truth (*Mori/ Nestle Family Monitor 2003*)
- Young people see the press as finger wagging and authoritarian, telling them what they “should and shouldn’t be doing” They also see journalists as prone to exaggeration. “They’ll get anything to put in there if they’re short of something to write. They don’t care if it hurts someone’s reputation.” said one young person
- 90 per cent of youth workers believe that tabloid newspapers give a negative impression or very negative impression of young people. 69.2 per cent believe local papers are negative or very negative, and 61.5 per cent think broadsheets are negative or very negative. (*Young People Now reader survey 2004*)
- 93 per cent of youth workers believe that youth groups should be more proactive in promoting positive stories about young people, while 41 per cent say that young people should be taught media literacy and campaigning. (*Young People Now reader survey 2004*)
- Young people were referred to as thugs 26 times and jobs 21 times in a survey of 74 tabloid and broadsheet articles about young people and crime. Other descriptors included evil, lout, monsters, brutes, scum, menace, heartless, sick, menacing and inhuman. (*Shape the Debate campaign, 2002 - 2003*)

Don’t get me wrong

My observations are not intended to question the validity of the fear of crime, nor to suggest that young people don’t commit crime. The issue is not whether fear has any rational basis, but more to do with how the public’s fascination with crime is used for ideological or political motives through media representation.

Next time you look through your papers or watch the news and come across an article highlighting the problem of youth crime ask yourself the question, ‘is another folk devil being created?’.

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If you are interesting in commenting or responding to this article please get in touch as we would like to hear readers views.

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The Risk Of Not Being At Risk: Youth Work Interventions

by Stephen Sharpe

INTRODUCTION

In my day-to-day work with young people I often wonder to myself am I a youth worker or a tool of social control. I hear very little any more about youth work in terms of adolescence and puberty; it seems to be all about at risk and now the new buzz work "*the most at risk*". It seems that if you are young person living in Ireland today with any level of balance in your life there is no room for you at the local youth centre, because you don't get into an enough trouble. Well I ask you what kind of message is this giving to the future, of this at present very confusing country.

AT RISK

Only last week I found myself involved in making a decision that a group of young people from the local community could not become involved in any of our current youth work programmes because they did not qualify under the funding criteria as at risk. It only struck me later that day that this kind of at risk racism has become a common feature of my work.

It seems that youth work is now longer for all young people who are facing up to what G. Stanley Hall described as the storm and stress of adolescence and is instead as suggested by Brudell (2005) being "predominantly for at risk young people living in areas agreed as marginalised". Hall (1904) describes adolescence as a state of "*emotional turmoil, sexual confusion and self doubt*" which he seen as a "*potentially distressing time for all young people*".

It was my belief that the purpose of youth work was to support young people through this difficult time of their development and not as Young (1999) describes, "*to control young people nor to coerce or even win their acquiescence to the social and political status quo*". It seems that

many in Irish Society would have you believe that youth workers are social doctors who can affect social problems at community level.

"Youth work is defined as a planned programme of education that is designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation and which is complimentary to their formal academic or vocational education and training and is provided primarily by voluntary youth work organizations". (The Youth Work Act, 2001)

This definition of youth work gives a clear picture of the role both the youth worker and the process of youth work should aim to achieve and not once is the word 'at risk' motioned. This definition is in relation to the social and personal development of young people and that includes all young people. It is suggested by Gaffney (2003) that adolescence "*offers a window of opportunity for young people's empowerment through a process of social and personal exploration*".

I believe that youth work in Ireland today has become a casualty of what Infed (2005) describes as "*the states desire to manage the public behaviour of young people*" Youth work in Ireland has in a very short time changed from a activity carried out by local people on a voluntary basis in communities to its current state where it has become totally reliant on funding from many government agencies.

This in turn has handed power to the state that now set the criteria for who should receive funding which in turn is decided by the "risk factor". This risk factor is exactly why I find myself refusing young people the opportunity to participate in the youth work process.

There is no doubt that issues such as alcohol,

drugs, crime, sex and culture are areas that can create problems for young people but they also cause problems at every other stage of human development. It may also be true that a young person's current life circumstances can determine their resistance to these problematic areas.

It is also true that the process of youth work can enhance a young person's resistance to social turmoil but we must be clear that this is not the purpose of our work with young people. Young (1999) agrees that lifestyle changes such as returning to school or crime prevention may be an outcome of youth work. But she goes on to say that "this is a kind of side effect" that it "is not the main purpose of the work".

Those who maintain that youth workers can deliberately stop young people from stealing cars, taking drugs, getting pregnant, truanting from school and all the rest of it are quite frankly, unrealistically optimistic (Young 1999). So it seems clear that youth work is not for at risk young people but for all young people and it may also be worth reminding ourselves that all young people are at risk, at risk from the label "at risk"

CONCLUSION

During my participation on a Youth Work Interventions module I couldn't help but notice how targeted youth work had become. Just take the word intervention and you are straight away attempting to intervene in something. The fact that there is a need to intervene would suggest that there is something wrong. Even the word youth carries a negative air about it, loitering youth, youth crime, marginalised youth, disaffected youth it goes on and on.

So now to make matters just about unbearable we have the state dictating with the sword of funding who we can and can not work with, and they accomplish this with their at risk labelling technique. This has resulted in youth projects around Dublin receiving no funding unless they can prove that the young people they are working with are "at risk". One of the ways this is done is through the risk characteristics that funders lay down that young people involved in youth projects must

meet.

This is resulting in youth workers being viewed as tools of youth control and if you find an area where the state believe young people are in control you will find no youth workers. What's the solution you ask; well I am with Kerry Young who views it as:

Not so much a case as back to the future, but back to the past-a return to first principles. A return to the concept of youth work as educative and developmental, not because young people are 'in trouble' or 'cause trouble' but because they are young people in the process of creating themselves and the meanings which underpin their 'being' and guide their actions in the world. (Young 1999, p. 2)

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DYSLEXIA

Keeping Your Eye on the Ball

by

Anne Hughes

INTRODUCTION

Have you noticed that in the past few weeks there have been several programmes on British radio and television about the 1966 World Cup? Probably because it's the 40th anniversary of England's great win over Germany at Wembley. How many of that famous team are still remembered? In Ireland, of course we remember Big Jack Charlton. Then there was his brother Bobby Charlton, the golden boy Bobby Moore who died so young, and that wonderful goalie Gordon Banks. Banks was deemed to be the best goalkeeper in the world at that time. He may well have been, but he was undoubtedly a great sportsman and a truly kind and generous man.

Gordon Banks was the childhood hero of a young boy in Derry called Don Mullan. A lot of boys have sporting heroes, and as Don played in goals for his club, Banks was a natural choice. There was nothing unusual about that, but Don Mullan had a learning problem, which nobody recognised. Reading was very difficult for him, and spelling was even worse. His teachers decided, as a result, that he was not very bright. He was laughed at when he said he would like to do the Eleven Plus exam and his name was not entered.

Many boys with reading problems get discouraged and give up. All too many of them decide school is a waste of time. They become disruptive, play truant, drop out, and get into trouble. That could well have been the route for Don Mullan, but Don had a mission. He wanted to learn everything he could about Gordon Banks. This involved reading the sports pages, soccer magazines, books in the library, everything he could lay his hands on.

Don had a reason for reading, and that motivation

kept him going, even when it was a long, hard, effort. He kept a scrapbook on Gordon Banks, pasting in every article he could clip from the papers and magazines. When Gordon Banks came to play a match in Ballybofey, Don's father managed to show that scrapbook to him and Don got to meet his hero. Even though he was about to play a game, Banks took the time to talk to Don and to give him practical advice on how to improve his goalkeeping skills. He took the young lad seriously and treated him with great respect.

That meeting had a profound effect on Don Mullan. It gave him self-belief and it provided him with a role model. An admired adult had taken an interest in him and that sustained him through the difficult times in Derry in the '70s. At the age of 39 Don Mullan was diagnosed with dyslexia and, incidentally, he discovered that he had a very high I.Q. This gave him the confidence to become a writer, an investigative journalist and a filmmaker. He has won honours and awards and has published eight books.

How could it be that such a bright and talented person was 39 years old before anyone realised that he had dyslexia? Quite easily is the answer to that. It happens all the time. It is happening today in Ireland and not all stories have a happy ending like Don Mullan's. The truth is that there is not sufficient awareness of dyslexia amongst people who should know. Parents, teachers, youth workers, Gardaí, special needs assistants, doctors, community health workers, indeed anyone who works closely with young people should know about dyslexia.

IDENTIFYING DYSLEXIA

A recently published book *Dyslexia – An Irish*

Perspective could help to change that. This book, which comes from the Dyslexia Association of Ireland, is designed to give practical information about dyslexia in plain language. It explains just what dyslexia is – a specific difficulty which some people have learning to read, write and spell.

It describes the different theories for the causes of dyslexia and gives basic information on how dyslexia can be diagnosed. It lists the indicators or symptoms of dyslexia, describes the conditions that can co-exist with dyslexia such as ADHD, Dyspraxia and Asperger Syndrome. It has chapters on maths and on the use of assistive technology. It contains information on adults and a lot of useful resources.

But, the most important part, particularly from the point of view of youth workers and leaders, is that it gives common sense advice on how to support a young person with dyslexia. It offers advice on helping with homework, on building self-esteem, on how to access the supports offered by the education system such as special accommodation in state exams. It also provides advice on how to choose the most appropriate subjects to study, and on how to deal with applications to third-level and future careers.

Dyslexia is a complex condition. It can affect people in any walk of life and with any degree of intelligence. It is surprisingly common – between 6% and 8% of the population experience it to some degree. It is an inherited condition and so it is life-long. It does not go away if ignored, and if the problem is not identified and appropriate remedial help offered the consequences could be very serious. As this book points out, dyslexia affects the self-esteem of young people. If a child experiences constant failure at school, if his/her best efforts do not succeed, then frustration sets in and a whole additional set of problems arise.

THE ROLE FOR YOUTH WORKERS

This is why youth workers and youth club leaders/volunteers need to be aware of the problem, to

keep their eyes on the ball, so to speak. Youth club leaders, volunteers and project youth workers enjoy a close relationship with club members. The club or project is part of the young person's leisure activity and is not associated with formal learning. The worker/leader is unlikely to be seen as a threatening authority figure.

Therefore, a young person may more readily confide in a club or project worker that he or she is experiencing difficulties. The worker/leader is very well placed to help in a discreet way, but he or she must be informed. In addition those involved in running Homework Clubs, which many youth service agencies do provide, are well placed to notice members who seem to have difficulties in completing homework, or who are becoming angry and frustrated with schoolwork.

There are many indications that something is wrong in an adolescent's life. It may be that parents, or teachers, report that a young person is opting out, or is reluctant to stay in school to complete exams. Young people with dyslexia are vulnerable to bullying, because they are different. They learn differently and the process information in a different way.

Equally, young people with dyslexia may become the bullies. They may prefer to play the "hard man" in the classroom or club, or the playing field, rather than admit to a reading or learning difficulty. They may play the role of "class clown", hoping their peers are laughing with them rather than at them.

In severe cases young people may turn to alcohol or substance abuse as an escape from the reality of a difficult school life. Many of the students whose learning difficulties are ignored are bright and capable, and could, with the proper help achieve their full potential.

So what can youth workers and club leaders do? Surely education is the responsibility of the schools and the psychologists? Shouldn't the parents be looking after their children's welfare? Yes indeed, but life is never that simple. The fact is that many Irish people reach adulthood without having their dyslexic difficulties acknowledged.

Sometimes it falls to the person on the spot, perhaps the youth worker or leader, to step in and offer support.

If a youth worker or leader has cause to believe that a particular young person may be experiencing difficulties because of dyslexia, he or she will of course have to proceed with caution. However, there are many ways of addressing the topic and fortunately there is a lot of information now available.

The Department of Education and Science has produced an excellent Video and CD-Rom, called *Understanding Dyslexia*. This is available from the Government Publications office at a cost of €10.00. A showing of the video and/or selected clips from the CD would be extremely useful, not only for the youth workers and leaders but also for the young people themselves. It could lead to an entire discussion on learning difficulties and open the way for anyone with a problem to seek help.

Once the problem has been brought into the open, the process of seeking psycho-educational assessment and remediation can begin.

CONCLUSION

Providing appropriate remedial help for a young person with dyslexia is a job for a trained professional, but there are very many ways in which the support and encouragement of a youth worker could be invaluable. Self-esteem takes a real battering when a young person has learning difficulties. Finding ways to emphasise the non-academic skills and abilities, the sporting, musical, civic, social and inter-personal achievements of students is hugely beneficial.

Helping a young person to set realistic goals, encouraging them to stay in education, to persevere despite difficulties, to assure them that they can achieve and that it is important to strive for their own sakes, could make all the difference.

Don Mullan, at a crucial point in his young life, met someone who gave him a sense of purpose

and provided him with an aim. Youth workers and leaders are in a unique position to do that for the young people they work with. Some need that positive support more than others, and young people with specific learning difficulties are certainly in that category.

Not everyone can block the ball like Gordon Banks, but surely all can keep an eye on the ball and note that there may be an underlying cause, such as dyslexia, for the difficulties a young person is experiencing.

The book Dyslexia - An Irish Perspective is available from:

***Dyslexia Association of Ireland,
1 Suffolk Stree
Dublin 2.***

Tel: 01 6790275/01 6790276

Fax: 01 6790273

Email: info@dyslexia.ie

or from any good bookshop.

Cost: €17.95.

***Anne Hughes is Director of the
Dyslexia Association of Ireland.***

Cultural Awareness & Young People

This activities supplement looks at positive youth work practice with young people of different ethnic backgrounds. Young Irish people now vary in colour, religion, culture and language. This poses a challenge for the youth worker. Awareness and respect of the various ethnic races and religious backgrounds that make up Ireland today is vital for a cohesive and inclusive society. Here are some activities to both educate and foster cultural awareness.

Activities

ASIA / AFRICA

Aim: This game can be used as a warm up or ice breaker. It is also a good way of developing geographical and cultural awareness among young people.

- In a large space split the group into two equal teams called “Asia” and “Africa”. The teams line up side by side in two straight lines down the centre of the room.
- When the youth worker calls out the name of one of the teams, all members of that team run to touch a wall (the one nearest to them) before a member of the other team taps them on the shoulder.
- When tapped that runner becomes a member of the other chasing team.

- After each round the new teams line up and get ready to run again.
- Continue to call team names until there is only one team left

Cultural Variations

To increase cultural awareness instead of simply calling the continent names, call out cultural references particular to a continent, such as Victoria Falls, Mount Kilimanjaro, River Nile, Ethiopia, Nelson Mandela (Africa); or Ankor Wat, Thailand, River Mekon, Buddhism (Asia) and so on. The young people will have to work out if it's their turn to run and it may increase their knowledge of other cultures.

Review Questions

- What do you know about your team name?
- Which team do we know the most about?

Source: Body, Mind & Society

ALL DIFFERENT BUT ALL EQUAL

Objective: To help young people recognise and appreciate some ways in which they themselves are different from other people in their group, and to appreciate how others are different from them.

Age group - all

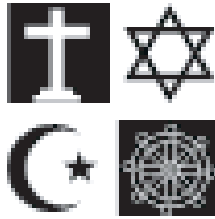
Materials: Each person taking part will need a potato and a recent photograph of themselves that they are proud of plus post-its and markers.

Part One

- Ask everyone to look closely at their potato, to become aware of all its lumps and

bumps, its shape and its size.

- Now put all the potatoes in a large bag, mix them up and pour out onto the floor. Ask everyone to try and identify his or her own potato!!



- Discussion can follow the game on how each potato, even though very different in its own way, still remained a potato inside.

Part Two

Ask each participant to think about themselves. In what way are they proud to be different from everyone else in the group.

Encourage them to think about:

1. Physical appearance, talents, personality
2. Religion, beliefs
3. Ethnicity
4. Culture
5. Ways in which their backgrounds differ from everyone else in the group

Ask them to write down two statements relating to the above categories on a sticky badge. Their statements can be read out and directly placed with their photograph on a display.

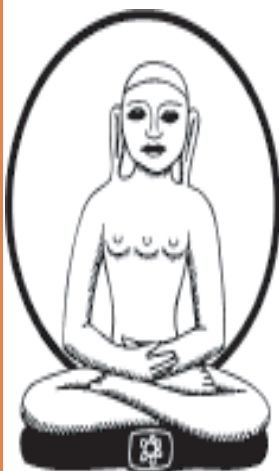
or

The participants can swap badges, mix them all up and then try to match the statements to the photograph on the wall.

Part Three

Assign one smaller group to the task of using the badges to list all of the cultures, abilities, religions, talents, attributes, ethnic groups, experiences and skills that are present in the group.

The whole group then works on a giant poster or display to celebrate how differences enrich the whole group.



Discussion

- Invite everybody to name a way in which they admire differences expressed by other people present.
- What have they learned about different cultures, religions and ethnic races?
- What way do they want others to regard their differences?
- What attitudes does the group want to have to other people's differences?
- Why do we pick on people who are different?

Source: *Exchange House*

CULTURE AND GENDER

Objective: To review cultural and gender differences through role-play



Materials: 2 scenario cards, a large room

Card 1: A 14 year old Asian girl has been playing truant from school. On one of the days she is seen by her older brother in the park with a young man. What happens next....

Card 2: As above but with a 14 year old white girl.

Divide the group in two and present them each group with a scenario card.

Youth workers should facilitate discussion within the groups to develop a story line. Allocate roles and devise a role-play.

Get each group to perform their role-play in front of the other group and afterwards facilitate a group discussion with some review questions such as:

- What were the main similarities and differences in the role-play?
- Would the outcome have been different if it had been a young man playing truant?
- How much did you know of the culture you

were portraying?

- Did anything surprise you?

Cultural Variations

This format can tackle any culture/gender issue you or your group want to explore

Source: *Body, Mind & Society*

QUIZ

Quizzes are one of the more successful activity types that can get young people interested in learning new information about different cultures and religions. For example, look at the simple true/false quiz about Ireland below.

Answer true or false to the following questions.

- Ireland is totally dark during the winter.
- There is little snow except in the mountains.
- The population of Ireland is less than that of Aichi Prefecture.
- Islam is the fastest growing religion in Ireland
- Ireland is about the same size as the island of Honshu.
- The United Kingdom includes the Republic of Ireland.
- The Coors, the Cranberries, U2, the Beatles and Enya are Irish musicians.
- Some Irish people think the Shinkansen connects Tokyo to Hong Kong.



The youth worker should ask the young people to answer true or false to each of the questions in pairs or groups. It is not important whether the young people get the right answer or not so long as they become more interested in finding out the right answer.

Here is a different type of quiz that can be useful for introducing the differences and similarities across cultures.

Choose the odd one out of the following items:

- a) Earthquakes
- b) Sushi restaurants
- c) Snow
- d) High level of education

The correct answer is 'earthquakes' because you can find all the others both in Ireland and in Japan, but there are no earthquakes in Ireland. Again, getting the correct answer is less important than thinking about the two cultures.

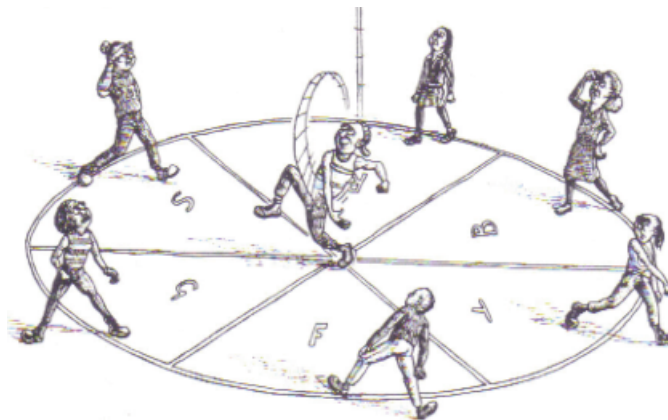
Source: <http://nacabstripod.com/culture/#clusters>

ROMANIA / BULGARIA

Material: Paper/ribbon, soft foot ball

Background: This is an energetic outdoor activity game originating in Romania, which is idea for a small group of 7-10 participants.

Play starts from a circle in a playing area which should be marked out in half a dozen segments (as below, you can use paper or ribbon marking). Each segment is allocated to a particular country.



- Place one player in each segment with one foot in their own segment and the other foot outside the circle.

- In the centre of the circle is a player (caller) with the soft football. The aim of the game is to be the last person or country to be eliminated.
- Begin with the caller throwing the ball high into the air from the centre of the circle and calling out the name of the country e.g. Bulgaria. "Bulgaria" must try to catch the ball before it lands. All other players must run as far as they can from the circle before Bulgaria catches the ball & shouts STOP".
- All players must stop instantly, and Bulgaria has one throw to try to hit another player to eliminate them from the game.
- If a player is hit, they & their country are out of the game and the remaining players continue with another throw and call from the centre spot.

Source: *World Youth Games*

CULTURAL FESTIVALS

Festivals are common to all cultures and religions, and therefore they provide a perfect way to introduce young people to the diversity and differences around the world.

Here are some of the most important festivals

Chinese New Year

These celebrations begin on the 23rd day of the 12th moon. The Kitchen God ascends to the heavens to report on each member of the family. The festival is an occasion where the family gather together to see out the old year welcome the new. Each year has one of twelve animals assigned to it.

Diwali

Diwali is a Hindu festival and like Hanukah and Christmas it is a festival of lights. It is important because it marks the beginning of the religious new year. Families place lights in their windows and doorways to invite Laxmi, the goddess of wealth, into their homes. Laxmi are often specially decorated and surrounded with gifts of food, fruit, flowers

and sweets. In India families sometimes make a pathway of lights leading from the pavement into their house, hoping that the Goddess Laxmi will visit their homes bringing blessings of luck.

Hanukah

The festival of Hanukah is a Jewish celebration of faith & light, and begins in the 25th day of the month of Kislev, in the Jewish calendar. The candles of the Menorah are lit one by one over the eight day celebration, and are a reminder to Jews of how good triumphed over evil.



Id-ul-Fitr

The festival of Id-ul-Fitr marks the breaking of the fast of Ramadan. It starts when the new moon is seen in the night sky which shows that the month of Shawwal has begun. The 30 day fast is broken with a feast and prayers at offered in the Mosque.



USEFUL WEBSITES:

Chinese Irish Cultural Academy
www.cicaireland.com

Islamic Foundation of Ireland
www.islamireland.com

Jewish Ireland
www.homepage.eircom.net/~jewishireland

Indians in Ireland
www.indiansinireland.com

United Nations
www.un.org

*Gina Halpin is the Information & Resources Officer
 for the Irish YouthWork Centre*

Notice Board

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Date: Thursday, 7 September 2006
Venue: Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

One-day course aimed at anyone who is responsible for managing volunteers. It is useful for any organisation that is interested in improving methods that help to retain volunteers and encourage good performance. By the end of the day participants will:

- Understand what elements constitute effective support
- Develop appropriate and effective support structures
- Develop strategies for dealing with disciplinary issues

VOLUNTEERING AND WORKING WITH THE MIGRANT COMMUNITY

Date: Thursday, 21 September 2006
Venue: Coleraine House, Dublin 7

One day course aimed at exploring the issues of cultural diversity in volunteering. This course will look at practical ways to manage diversity to optimise the effectiveness in your volunteer programme. By the end of the day participants will:

- Have an understanding of diversity, its implications and benefits
- Develop awareness and responses to multi cultural issues within volunteering
- Develop practical strategies for managing diversity

For further information and details of costs please contact:

Volunteering Ireland
Coleraine House, Coleraine Street
Dublin 7
Tel: 01-8722622
Email: info@volunteeringireland.ie

INTRODUCTION TO POLICY WORK SKILLS

Date: Wednesday, 14 June 2006
Venue: Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7

One-day course aimed at introducing participants to the essential elements of developing effective policy work within their organisations. The course will clarify what the organisation wants to achieve by engaging in policy work and will then identify the range of people the group wants to influence. The focus of the course will be on how the organisation can present its case to those people who influence policy change. By the end of the course the participants will be able to:

- Show an understanding of the key elements of the policymaking process
- Identify who you are trying to influence and what approaches you can use
- Prepare a lobbying strategy

For further information please contact:

Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups
Carmichael House
North Brunswick Street
Dublin 7
Tel: 01-8735282
Email: tssinfo@carmichaelcentre.ie

YOUTH EXCHANGES EXPLORING OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES & SPORTS AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSION

Training course for youth workers interested in developing YOUTH exchange projects using sports and other outdoor education activities as a method for working with young people facing social exclusion.

Date: Tuesday 20 - Friday 25 June, 2006
Venue: Limerick

Target Group: Youth workers (18yrs+) working directly with young people (aged 15-25yrs) facing difficulties in terms of social inclusion.

Aim: To motivate & empower participants to start Youth Exchanges in the YOUTH Programme, and to improve the quality of their projects by multiplying this experience.

Objectives

- To inform youth workers of the Youth Programme and to create space and support to develop their projects ideas for Youth Exchange Projects
- To bring together youth workers who have the same target group (young people with less opportunities/social inclusion)
- To support the intercultural and inter-professional exchange between participants
- To explore “outdoor activities” as a tool for a methodological approach for developing youth exchanges with the target group
- To discuss and discover the value of the Youth Programme as an extra tool in the general approach and support of personal development of the target group.

For more information contact
Lorraine Gilligan
Project Officer - Training & Evaluation
Youth Work Service - Leargas
Email lgilligan@leargas.ie
Website www.leargas.ie/youth

TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT DEATH

Date: Friday 16 June, 2006
Venue: Dublin

Workshop aimed at exploring why it is important to talk to children about death and how the contexts in which this talking happens can be created safely. It will describe how children absorb and process information about death, including traumatic deaths, for example suicide and murder. The ways in which children respond at different developmental stages to such a trauma will also be explored. It will consider the ways in which children and their families come to talk about their experience of bereavement and

how that communication can be facilitated.

This workshop is aimed at social workers, child Care and family workers and counsellors.

Facilitators: Psychotherapists from the Barnardos Sólás Bereavement Service for Children & Families.

USING ARTS & CRAFTS WITH CHILDREN

Date: Saturday 9 September, 2006
Venue: Carmelite Centre, Dublin

The freedom to explore open ended activities that allow adults and children to express themselves, have fun, and further their personal development is of great benefit to all, particularly those engaged in working with children. This practical workshop will afford professionals and parents the opportunity to experience a variety of arts and crafts, which they can then use in their work and leisure time with the children in their care.

Facilitator: Marion Pierce.

For more information please contact:
Barnardos
NCRC
Christchurch Square
Dublin 8
Tel: 01-4530355
Fax: 01-4530300
Email: martina.dumpleton@barnardos.ie

THEORIES OF ADDICTION

Date: Wednesday 12 July, 2006
Venue: Dublin

Organised by **Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI)**
Trainer: **Peter Kelly**

Half-day course which will look at the following issues of addiction:

- Models of Addiction
- Treatment Options
- Psychoanalytical Perspectives

Booking a place:
Complete application form and return with cheque/postal order (made payable to Merchants Quay Ireland) to Hilda at Merchants Quay Ireland
4 Merchants Quay, Dublin 8.

Queries/applications: Hilda Glennon
Tel: 01- 645 6520
Email: hilda.glennon@mqi.ie
Merchants Quay Ireland
Email: info@mqi.ie
Web: www.mqi.ie

**“CHALLENGING ENCOUNTERS”
STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING DIFFICULT &
PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOUR WHEN WORKING
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

Date: Thurs 28 & Fri 29 September, 2006
Venue: Cork

Two-day course for those working with young people in out-of-school settings. It is designed to introduce participants to the theory and skills required to engage young people at points of difficulty and to assist them to learn from such events for the future. This programme is a combination of theoretical input, demonstration and practice of practical skills and case study review.

Objectives of the Course:

- To understand the purpose of anger in human behaviour
- To identify their own anger at points of challenge & conflict and how to manage it
- To explore the triage of relationships in the work environment and the role group contracts have to play in behavioural management
- To identify behaviour management techniques
- To begin to develop the skills to appropriately engage young people at times of difficulty
- To begin to develop the skills to assist young people to problem solve and plan for the future after difficult events

**“GOOD HABITS OF MIND” A MENTAL
HEALTH INITIATIVE FOR THOSE WORKING
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUT-OF-SCHOOL
SETTINGS**

Date: Tuesday 3 & Wed 4 October, 2006
Venue: Navan

Two-day training course, which aims to examine the how the issue of mental health impacts on young people. It will also offer participants an opportunity to explore issues of good practice from a worker and an organisational perspective. Procedures around referral will also be explored in detail.

Objectives of the Course:

- To examine how the issue of mental health impacts on young people
- To raise participants awareness of mental health theory
- To explore good practice with regard to mental health promotion
- To examine referral
- To explore the practical implementation of mental health promotion

**A PLACE CALLED HOME -
MIGRATION AND ISSUES FOR REFUGEES**

Date: Saturday 17 June, 2006
Venue: Tullamore, Co. Offaly

June 20th is World Refugee Day. Through the use of case studies and activities, this session will examine the experiences of refugees worldwide and explore some of the reasons why people become refugees. The session will also ask what the role of the youth worker is in relation to the integration of young refugees in Ireland today.

For further information please contact:

NYHP
3 Montague Street
Dublin 2
Tel: 01-4874122
Fax: 01-4783974
Email: nyhp@nyci.ie
www.youth.ie

Round Up

NEW FUNDING AVAILABLE FROM THE DORMANT ACCOUNTS

The Dormant Accounts has announced that up to €3 million is being made available under the Economic and Social Disadvantage Category for projects supporting community based services for older people.

This funding measure is intended to provide interventions and supports for community based services to assist older people to continue living in their own homes and in the community.

Applications are invited from locally based community and voluntary groups who have experience of working with and delivering services for older people. The process is being managed by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Department of Health and Children.

The closing date is Friday 2nd June at 5pm.

Applications have also been invited from Partnership Companies working with 'Vulnerable Immigrants'. Under this measure up to €0.5 million has been earmarked for programmes and projects targeted at vulnerable immigrant families.

In relation to the funding for Educational Disadvantage and Persons with a Disability, the work in both the Departments of Education and Science and Health and Children has now been completed and it expected that specific proposals will be brought to Government for consideration shortly.

Further announcements are expected soon in relation to some of the other measures under the heading of Social & Economic Disadvantage. These will include Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners, Alcohol Related Harm, Jointly Funded Flagship Projects and Disadvantaged Children and Young People.

For further information on applying for funding, forms and guidelines please contact:

Pobal

Dublin Office - 01-2400700

Cork Office - 021-4703700

Sligo Office -071-9138240

Limerick Office - 061-313084

Monaghan Office - 047-71340

Forms and guidelines are also available from the Pobal website at: www.pobal.ie

NEW TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR LAUNCHED

The Wheel has launched two new programmes addressing the training needs of the Community and Voluntary Sector - *Training Links* and *Stronger Leaders*.

Training Links, a new pilot programme offers community and voluntary organisations an opportunity to apply for funding for training. Under this programme, groups of organisations that choose to come together and work collaboratively to address their shared training needs, becomes a Training Network. This Network is then subsidised by The Wheel over the period of the training programme. Applications for training grants of up to €50,000 are available per network. Closing date for receipt of completed applications is 5pm, Friday 16th June 2006.

Stronger Leaders, is a cutting-edge tailored leadership development programme which offers an

invaluable opportunity for individuals to avail of a unique leadership development programme specific to the sector, at a substantially reduced cost. This programme is open to all leaders of community and voluntary organisations (i.e. CEO or equivalent), with support from the voluntary leadership within each organisation (i.e. Board of Directors or equivalent).

The true cost of this programme per participant is €6,500. However, due to substantial funding, the actual cost per participant is only €1,700. Closing date for receipt of completed applications is 5pm, Monday 12th June 2006.

Both of these programmes are part-funded under the National Training Fund, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

Details and application forms are available on The Wheel website or from The Wheel office. For further information, please contact Elizabeth Bolger

The Wheel
Irish Social Financial Centre
10 Grattan Crescent
Inchicore
Dublin 8
Tel: 01-454 8727
Email: elizabeth@wheel.ie.

***SOCIAL CARE IN IRELAND:
THEORY, POLICY & PRACTICE
LAUNCH OF NEW IRISH PUBLICATION***

This book is only the second text ever to be published specifically in the area of social care in Ireland. It is ambitious and wide-ranging and attempts to give the reader a strong overall sense of the job of social care as a profession.

The book links the needs of clients of social care to wider economic and social issues. It charts the resource landscape and examines the performance of the state in areas of health, social care and social protection. The book also examines social care practice and offers some strong suggestions towards the need for an increasing advocacy and campaigning

role for social care workers.

Sections of the book include:

- The Family: Theoretical Perspectives & Policy in Practice
- Social Care & Health: Economic & Political Influences
- Caring for Juveniles: Legal & Policy Challenges
- Training & Enabling Social Care Workers
- Working Challenges to Social Care Professionals

Contributors include - Dr. Aine de Róiste, Dr. Colm O'Doherty, Gay Graham, Eithne Fitzgerald, Tom O'Connor, Bridgit Quirke, Maev-Ann Wren, Dr. Peadar Kirby, Prof. Allyson Pollock, Dr. Elizabeth Cullen, Dr. Ciaran McCullagh, Fr. Peter McVerry, Ann McWilliams, Elaine Dennehy, Tom Dennedy, Patricia Kennefick, Evelyn Grant, Phil Mortell, Mike Murphy and Georgina Burke.

“For those reading this book either as undergraduate students, practitioners, academics or policy makers / shapers, the individual chapters will provoke all to think more deeply and productively about the current configuration of the ‘social’ in our lecture halls, clinics, courts, hospitals, residential centres, community centres and administrative offices.”

Dr. Eoin O’Sullivan, TCD

For further information and to order a copy please contact:

CIT Press
Cork Institute of Technology
Bishopstown
Cork
Tel: 021-4326863 /086 8969231
Email: tom.oconnor@cit.ie

Cost: €36.00

IYWC New Resources

Anti-Racism

Beyond the Local: Bringing a Global Perspective to Anti Racist Youth Work By Niamh McCrea (2006)

Conference report which documents the proceedings of “Beyond the Local” conference organised by the National Youth Development Education Programme to mark International Day Against Racism 2005. It contains an outline of speakers’ representations, workshop outcomes, a summary of plenary discussions and some general outcomes and conclusions from the day. Much of the conference had a practical focus, and as such the report includes a number of the methodologies and approaches for bringing a global perspective to anti-racist youth work which were showcased at the event.

Changing Ireland By NCCRI & Equality Commission for NI (2006)

Report aimed at promoting a greater awareness of what it means to be part of a minority ethnic community in Ireland. It hopes to highlight Ireland as an increasingly intercultural society and contribute to combating racism. At its heart are portraits of the lives of seven people and their experiences as individuals rather than seeking to generalise on the experience of all. It draws its inspiration from a booklet published to mark European Year Against Racism in 1997 called *A Part of Ireland Now* (also available from IYWC), which focused on the stories of ten refugees in Ireland.

Arts & Crafts

Beneath the Surface – A Project Exploring Creativity through Arts, Technology and

Education

By Trading Places/ CREATE Project & Kids Own (2006)

The Trading Places/CREATE project was a three year artists-in-school programme with a strong focus on professional development. This took place in ten schools involving eleven artists north and south of the border. The aim of the project was to develop creative partnerships that utilised the power of new technologies and the visual arts as a vehicle for exploring and communicating cultural diversity.

This project sought to reconnect communities once connected through the linen industry in Ireland. Through the introduction of contemporary arts practices, classrooms were transformed into studios. Artists, children and teachers were continually challenged to interrogate their ideas, negotiate the creation of meaning, and strive for authentic collaboration.

Educational Reports

NCGE in Support of Guidance: Policy & Practice 1995-2005 By National Centre for Guidance in Education (2006)

Report marking the tenth anniversary of the NCGE, which was established in 1995 under the aegis of Léargas. Its function was to act as a support agency to the Department of Education; to guidance practitioners in all education settings, and to educational institutions in the development of guidance services. The report looks at the development of guidance in Ireland and illustrates the role NCGE has played and contribution to this field. The report will be a valuable reference for policy makers, trainers of guidance counsellors and their students, practitioners and all those who contribute to the provision of guidance in Ireland.

**Who Went to College in 2004?
A National Survey of New Entrants to
Higher Education
By Philip J O'Connell, David Clancy and
Selina McCoy (2006)**

Study which examined the pattern of entry to higher education in the Republic of Ireland. It is based on a national survey of all those who enrolled as new entrants to higher education in October 2004. The study reviews the background and destination of students entering higher education for the first time by their age, gender, field of study, educational achievement and socio-economic background. In addition, the study examines admission rates to higher education both nationally and regionally. Some of the key findings include: a significant rise in participation by school leavers in higher education; a significant improvement in participation among the lower socio-economic groups but with room for improvement and participation rates among farmers and higher professional groups almost as high as it can go.

Perspectives of Young People

**Inequality and the
Stereotyping of Young People
By Maurice Devlin (2006)**

Report which explores the inequality and stereotyping of young people in Ireland, the research involved ten focus groups with approximately 90 young people. It identifies what while there are exceptions, the young people involved see their institutional relationships with adults as for the most part as unequal, troubled and rooted in stereotypical ideas about their attributes. Particular mention in this regard was made of the media, the local community, schools, politicians, the Gardaí and security staff in shopping centres.

**Our Views Anybody Listening – Researching
the Views and Needs of Young People in Co.
Kildare (Executive Summary)
By Dr. Kevin Lalor & Dr. Katie Baird (2006)**

Report describing the results of a survey of 988 adolescents in Co. Kildare, carried out between

December 2004 and February 2005. The report was commissioned by Kildare Youth Services (KYS) and the aim was to give young people a voice in the provision of services; specifically to explore and identify what young people have to say about community facilities, leisure activities, worries and concerns and sources of support. Central to the research design was the commitment by KYS that young people have an opportunity to express their own opinions and beliefs, direct feedback from young people inform service provision be needs led, rather than service led.

**Young People's Views About Opportunities,
Barriers and Supports
to Recreation and Leisure
By National Children's Office (2005)**

Study commissioned in the context of policy development in the field of young people's recreation and leisure. It set out to determine – what do young Irish people do in their free time; what are the barriers and supports they experience and what are their aspirations with regard to recreation and leisure. Leisure time activities comprise between 40-50% of an adolescent's life. Leisure activities are also the context through which young people can forge new friendships and meet and learn about peers who are different to them in ethnicity, race and social class.

Volunteering

**International Volunteer Projects 2006
By Voluntary Services International (2006)**

An international volunteer project is a unique form of volunteering. The projects bring people together from different countries, cultures and backgrounds to live and work together on short-term projects with local communities. The projects are designed to assist and encourage local initiatives that will be continued when the volunteer project is completed. The projects help these groups in their long term work for a more justice and peaceful society and also aim to breakdown barriers between people and to develop international understanding. This booklet contains information on over 500 of these projects this summer

in 40 countries.

Youth Policy

Report on the Youth Justice Review By Department. of Justice, Equality & Law Reform (2006)

Report by the Youth Justice Review Team which looked into the possibility of delivering a joined service up across government bodies. The aim of the report was to examine the scope for restructuring the delivery of the State's services in the area of youth justice and to look at the best way of delivering a joined-up approach across government bodies. The YJRT found there was a lack of comprehensive data in the area of youth justice in Ireland making it difficult to provide a definitive analysis. The main source of data for this report is An Garda Síochána crime statistics & figures for referrals under the Diversion Programme in its annual reports. Other sources include the Irish Prison Service, the Courts Service and the Probation & Welfare. From data available the main findings were: the number of recorded offences committed annually by young offenders has remained stable in the last 3 years; the majority of young offenders are males aged 14-17; young offenders account for about 3.5% of the total population of 10-17 year olds; the top five offences committed by young offenders include - drink related crime; theft; criminal damage; public order & traffic related offences and more than two thirds of all young offenders are dealt with by means of formal/informal caution.

Youth Issues

The Report of the Public Consultation for the Development of the National Recreation Policy for Young People By Office of the Minister for Children (2006)

The Office of the Minister for Children is developing a recreation policy that will be aimed at young people of secondary school aged 12-18 years. The policy will deal with recreation programmes and facilities that are funded by Government. Research suggests that what young people do in

their free time affects their development, how they integrate into society and their future lives. Both structure and unstructured recreation can be beneficial to young people's development. Structured recreation can increase self esteem, provide the benefits associated with being a member of a group and help integrate young people into their community. This consultation document sets out the background for developing a recreation policy and identifies the main government departments and agencies that provide recreation opportunities for young people, as well as the very important role played by the voluntary and community sectors.

Child Poverty in Ireland 2005: An Overview By End Child Poverty Coalition (2005)

Despite a buoyant economy and increased wealth, child poverty remains unacceptably high in Ireland today. Many find it hard to believe that poverty exists alongside our new wealth but government statistics show that one in seven children live in consistent poverty and nearly one in four children live in relative poverty in Ireland. Poverty among children manifests itself across a range of areas that go beyond income. The longer a child is poor, the greater the impact on the life chances of the child and the subsequent deprivation in later life. Growing up in poverty affects every area of a child's development – social, educational and personal.

All of these titles are available ON LOAN (not for sale) to IYWC members.
For further information or to request any of these resources please contact:

Gina Halpin
Irish YouthWork Centre
20 Lower Dominick Street
Dublin 1
Tel: 01-8729933
Fax: 01-8724183
Email: ghalpin@nyf.ie
Website: www.iywc.com



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Email: info@youthworkireland.ie

Website: www.iywc.com