

THE LINK

SPECIAL EDITION EQUALITY ISSUE

EQUALITY DIVERSITY EMPOWERMENT
POSITIVE INVOLVEMENT RIGHTS BEING
FAIR RESPECTING EACH OTHER ETHICS
INCLUSION CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE
EMPOWERMENT ETHICS CELEBRATING
ETHICS FAIRNESS DIVERSITY POSITIVE
BEING FAIR EMPOWERMENT EQUALITY
INVOLVING EVERYONE RESPECT EQUITY
DIVERSITY FAIRNESS ETHICS POSITIVE
INCLUSION CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE
EQUALITY DIVERSITY EMPOWERMENT
FAIR RESPECTING EACH OTHER ETHICS

YOUTH WORK CHANGES LIVES



Sarah Paterson
Editor

A very warm and inclusive welcome to our Link Equalities special.

Giving all young people an equal chance in life is right at the core of a truly great society, and youth work's ethos of having the young person at the centre of their life path. Behind the current political commitment of giving equal opportunity to all and a fair and just society is the work that is being done across our nation to try and achieve that ambition. There is a lot of fantastic work being done around this agenda but we are not there yet.

Within the pages of this magazine you will find examples of how the sector is challenging the exclusion of some young people.

John Muir Award's work with young refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow has helped this often isolated group of young people to feel more connected and included in their new society. Josh McPhee from Moray is an uplifting example of thoughtful and targeted youth work with a young man from a travelling community who felt excluded from formal education. Scouts Scotland and Girlguiding Scotland have found creative programmes to include those in remote communities and young people who live with long-term illness and disability, proving the art of the possible to create opportunities. Can youth work tackle sectarianism, new action research project 'Looking Forward Not Back' says yes! And remember our special pull-out guide in the centre pages where you can take our special health check for equalities and human rights in youth work..

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Jim Sweeney
CEO
YouthLink Scotland

At the very heart of what we do as youth workers is the principle of equality of opportunity. That is why, while we understand the need and efficacy of targeted work, we also understand and believe that everyone should be able to access youth work activities.

This commitment to inclusion and equity starts with the youth work that happens every day in communities across Scotland. Where young people are engaged, included, nurtured, supported and empowered as individuals, each with a unique contribution to make and their differences are understood. Where their diversity is celebrated and a world view encouraged.

However, beyond the shores of youth work within society at large, there is a growing desire for fairness, equality and inclusion. Policy makers, politicians and activists, of all political hues, are united in their goal for Scotland to be a fairer and more inclusive society. The First Minister has indeed set out a clear vision for Scotland to lead the fight for social justice and equality.

This edition of The Link highlights how youth work practice can make a substantive contribution to the equality agenda.

There are some great examples of equalities work throughout the sector but we need to also acknowledge where we can do better. YouthLink Scotland as the national agency, is currently on a journey to becoming a best practice Equality and Human Rights organisation and accredited "Investors in Diversity". It is important that we share what works, recognise what doesn't and help each other to embed equalities and rights within all the work we do, and in the work of our partners.

This ambition does not just stop at our border, the impact of youth work through the social justice and equality agenda extends across the globe, in the work being done around global citizenship and those projects that seek to break down cultural barriers and tackle discrimination. We need to be able to say that we are a nation that has not just aspired to ensure equality for all, but a nation in which it is increasingly a tangible reality.

Jonathan Swift who wrote *Gulliver's Travels* once said:
 "Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others."
 RNIB have set out to do just that, creating a society
 which is inclusive for all young people.

An inclusive vision

Sight loss is a low incidence disability in the young population of Scotland and as such it brings its own issues including social exclusion, isolation, lack of self-esteem and low confidence. This can have an impact on education, employment and social life. The particular concerns of young people with a visual impairment often don't register and as a result they can experience inequality compared to their sighted peers.

Haggeye, the award-winning forum for blind and partially sighted young people, grew in response to the young people's experiences of:

- Not being consulted on issues/ events that impact upon them
- Not being able to share their concerns with a peer group who also have sight loss
- Not being organised into a voice that can be heard

Addressing these inequalities, Haggeye enables young people with sight loss to make a difference by meeting together to discuss issues that affect them and influence provision, policy and practice through campaigning and lobbying. Through these opportunities, young people also have the chance to gain skills and knowledge that gives them confidence to speak out for change.

Jill, aged 20, a Haggeye member from Falkirk says: *"If we are going to live up to our potential, we need to be more inclusive with everyone. Working together with other Haggeye members gives me an opportunity to make my voice heard and to create a more equal society for blind and partially sighted young people."*

Haggeye campaign for accessible services, facilities and opportunities, both locally and nationally.

Haggeye members recently hosted the UK launch of a 'Bus Fortnight of Action' as part of RNIB's "Stop for me, Speak to me" campaign, which aims to improve access to buses for blind and partially sighted people. This included meeting decision makers at First Bus Borders, holding a youth summit and taking part in a 'Swap with Me' event at the depot of Lothian Buses in Edinburgh.

Lothian Bus employees were able to experience what it is like to travel by bus with sight loss, by wearing 'sim specs', glasses that simulate different eye conditions. They were able to find out what it is like boarding a bus, getting a ticket and finding a seat. Blind and partially sighted people were able to sit in the cab and learn of the difficulties drivers have when communicating with customers on a noisy and busy bus from



behind the perspex screen. Following on from the meeting and events, both Lothian Buses and First Bus have signed up to RNIB's bus accessibility charter and agreed to a set of commitments that will improve bus travel for blind and partially sighted people.

Youth work plays an important role in empowering young people to make their voice heard. Campaigns like this are very effective in challenging inequality as it is the strength and passion of the young people themselves that makes politicians and organisations see what is sometimes invisible.

W: www.rnib.org.uk
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haggeye 

A sense of freedom

Kim McIntosh explains how the John Muir Award offers a safe haven in the outdoors for young asylum seekers and refugees to learn new skills.

A key aim of the John Muir Award, a UK wide environmental award scheme, is to ensure that social circumstances aren't a barrier to experiencing wild places. Since its pilot phase in the mid-90s, engaging with people from all backgrounds has been at the heart of the John Muir Award. Every year since then, at least 25% of Awards achieved are by people experiencing some form of disadvantage. It is something we are really proud of.

In 2014 over 4,600 Awards in Scotland were achieved by people experiencing disadvantage. Nineteen of which were achieved by a group of young asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow who participated through a partnership between Glasgow Clyde College and Forestry Commission Scotland.

The students were on a specialist English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) course for young people who are in Scotland without any family. The main aims of the course are for the students to learn English, to develop personal and social skills, improve integration and learn how to work as a team. The John





“Young asylum seekers and refugees rarely get beyond the high rise flats or supported accommodation they live in.”

Muir Award provides meaningful and shared experiences in the outdoors to build these skills beyond the classroom setting, expanding the curriculum as much as possible. It is an opportunity for the young people to have an exposure to Scotland in a different way and to get value from these experiences.

“Young asylum seekers and refugees rarely get beyond the high rise flats or supported accommodation they live in.” explains Lyn Ma, the groups’ teacher. “They have no idea how to access the outdoors in Scotland. We want to show them what’s here and give them a chance to experience it.”

“Through the activities we do towards the Award we find out just how many things the young people can do. They are able to showcase the skills they are unable to express in the classroom and that are often masked by language barriers. We have discovered incredible botanists in the group and some with fantastic survival skills. Through sharing their abilities in navigation and shelter building, for example, the young people’s confidence grows.”



The opportunity to share their skills (sharing being a key part of the Award) is just one of the benefits the leaders see for the young people. Lyn goes on to describe some others -

- The psychological benefits of being outside are evident – a sense of freedom, appreciation and joy are experienced. The positive impacts on people’s well-being through exposure to nature are well evidenced, but Lyn recognizes just how significant this is for this group of young people who have experienced a great deal of trauma in their lives.
- Through shared experiences in the outdoors the young people have developed real togetherness. This is powerful for people who came to this country with no one. As one young person said “out here we are like family, all together, singing and laughing.”
- They can compare the environments to their home countries, the landscapes, plants, wildlife. It gives them a context for where they now live, and helps them feel connected to a place. “This is like home, in Afghanistan we have mountains too, I used to run up them with my father.”
- It gives them a chance to play, relax, and have fun, whilst feeling safe. The young people love the outdoor element to the course; it is something to look forward to. They show up every week in all weathers: voting with their feet!

The John Muir Award works for this group as it gives a framework for their activity, yet the Award’s flexibility means it can be tailored to the needs of the young people. The John Muir Award is not language based, which is particularly valued. The students can show what they can do and have learnt without having to write a paragraph. One young student surprised us all with his mastery of basket weaving and shelter building – suddenly everyone wanted him in their team.

Working towards the Award was not the motivation for the young people’s involvement, but it can be described as the pinnacle of their experience.

Tom Gold, from the Forestry Commission Scotland, explained: “The recognition of their commitment to the project and their learning, through the John Muir Award certificate, was valued by the young people. It is a tangible outcome that can be used in CVs and interviews and help them to make it in Great Britain.”

To find out more about the John Muir Award or contact their Scotland Inclusion Manager:

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An ethical approach

It's important to get young people's views on issues that affect them but is there a right and wrong way of going about it. Fergus McMillan, Chief Executive of LGBT Youth Scotland puts the focus on the Code of Ethics when consulting with marginalised young people.



LGBT Youth Scotland works hard to ensure that LGBT young people's voice is properly heard in policy and issues that have an impact on them at a national level and in their local communities. Recent examples include the Scottish Government's consultation on same-sex marriage legislation and the Smith Commission after the Referendum, and at a local level, feeding into local equality outcomes.

Central to the relationship between youth work, equality and human rights is Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which says, "Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account" (UNCRC, 1989).

There are lots of other legislative drivers to encourage consultation with communities, like the Equality Act (2010) and the recent CLD Regulations (2013), but there are of course ethical considerations too. By its nature, Community Learning and Development (CLD) epitomises the values and principles of social research, "particularly by actively engaging those who are excluded from participation in key social processes that shape their lives" (CLD Standards Council, 2011).

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people (and I'm sure other groups of young people) sometimes feel 'over-consulted' and this can often be as a result of consultation and research not being well conducted, or followed up.

The CLD Standards Council for Scotland Code of Ethics for practitioners in adult education, community development and youth work, provides a useful framework to approach research or consultation with young people, including young people from marginalised groups. Finally, it is important that we feedback the results of consultation or research to young people at the end of the process.



The following elements of the Code of Ethics are described in terms of reflecting on research and consultation with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people, but should be useful to keep in mind when consulting with other groups of young people too:

Primary client: the primary client is the young person and any research or consultation should be in their best interests.

Social context: the social context is clearly very important for research with LGBT young people (and other minority groups of young people), as the potential source of both discrimination and a lack of acceptance; and the possible route to change or influence that social context. A recent example was the Scottish Government consultation on same-sex marriage which has had a strong voice from young people within it, helped by organisations seeking to get the voice of young people heard.

Equity: clearly important in terms of equality of opportunity and outcome, however, it is important that we do not treat the LGBT youth population as a homogenous group and recognise the part that gender, ethnicity, disability, social class and religion has to play.

Empowerment: consider the role of power in the research/youth work process; for example where a researcher might drop into a youth group to do a specific piece of research or consultation, rather than building the capacity of young people to do research themselves.

Duty of Care: a key theme in social science research is to avoid exposing participants to potential harm. This is obviously significant in research with young people, both in terms of statutory obligations and health and safety.

Corruption: it is important that any research or consultation is not driven by self-interest or that we manipulate methodology or results to suit our own or organisation's ends.

Transparency: we will be open and honest with young people about the purpose of any research or consultation.

Confidentiality: this clause is particularly important to LGBT young people. Confidentiality is a very important element of consultation and youth work in general. LGBT young people need to know that if they disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity as part of a survey, that won't be shared, or that if they approach a youth worker or teacher about an LGBT related issue that is kept confidential. It is of vital importance that researchers and policy makers understand that sexual orientation and gender identity are not well-being concerns issues per se and that children and young people have a right to privacy as individuals (Article 16, UNCRC).

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“Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account going.”



A young traveller's tale

Exclusion, discrimination and widespread disadvantage are issues common to the traveller community. Children and young people from this community are often seen as the most at risk within the education system in relation to attendance, attainment and instances of bullying. Young travellers are four times more likely than their settled counterparts to leave the formal education system with no qualifications.

Josh McPhee, a pupil at Milnes High School, was referred to the Milne's Youth Work Team for weekly anger management sessions. It became clear that his frequent outbursts in class were his chosen method of being excluded from a learning environment that made him feel inadequate and highly vulnerable. An alternative method of learning that would build his self-esteem and show his lifestyle in a more positive regard was needed.

Youth work is neither social care nor formal teaching. It is an intervention that combines elements of both in the context of creating learning and

supportive opportunities for young people. It creates opportunities for free association and fun, empowerment, enfranchisement and critical thinking.

It was identified that Josh's anger and frustration were associated with his family's lifestyle and culture. As a young male traveller, he was constantly being subjected to racist attitudes and taunting. His culture required him to deal with confrontation by "manning up" and using his fists.

His family's travelling regularly took him out of school for long periods of time, which clearly had an impact on his ability to keep up with his peers in the

classroom. This resulted in Josh feeling inadequate and stupid, both deemed as weakness in his culture. Josh displayed behaviour that would portray him as being "tough" resulting in his removal from this environment.

Josh's youth worker thought he would benefit from carrying out a project based around his culture. As well as building his confidence and self-esteem, this was his opportunity to raise awareness and portray a better understanding of the travelling culture within the school and local community. He compiled pieces of writing and illustrations in school and at home.





The White Lady

In the old days, not all travelling folk had transport to get them around.

One wet and wintery night Maggie Townsley, a young traveller girl and her man John McPhee were walking along a road from Cullen to Elgin to stay with Maggie's family. Maggie was heavily pregnant and grew tired so they decided to stop at the road side, sheltered by trees for a couple of days in the hope that the weather would get better before they continued on.

They had no time to rest before the young couple were told to move on by the police. They gathered their belongings together and continued along the long, dark country road. The wind had got up and the rain battered them raw and soaked them to the bone.

Ahead of them was a small bridge and as they got closer, they could make out an eerie figure. The figure was of a woman, dressed all in white. She waved her arms frantically at them, telling them to turn back. The couple were startled and they turned and walked back the way they came. They found shelter in a wooded area where they slept for the rest of the night.

The following day the couple once again made their way up the road and went to cross the bridge, only to find it had been washed away!

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The project coincided with a local exhibition, "The Tin Road", at Moray Art Centre. The artwork was produced by John Hodkinson and each piece depicted a traditional tale that had been shared through centuries by the travelling community. There was a storyteller at the exhibition who inspired Josh, resulting in him documenting stories that his granddad had shared with him. He also attended a workshop at Moray Art Centre and was introduced to drawing with pastels. Those working with him believed that he could achieve an 'Arts Award' for all his hard work. Josh met the challenges of the Award and compiled an excellent portfolio of evidence that was later successfully submitted for assessment.

The final section of the Award (Apprenticeship) required him to share his learning with others. Debi, Josh's youth worker, was contacted by Moray Council's teacher for Gypsy and Traveller children. She asked if he could do a presentation to a class of Primary 6 children. Josh, expecting to speak to a small group, delivered a successful talk to over thirty children and four staff. The class requested and received a copy of his Young Traveller's Tales.

Josh wrote in the introduction of his portfolio:

"...like a lot of traveller kids I find it hard to keep up with my subjects when I'm away from school a lot. I fall behind in class and feel stupid so I get angry... I am taught to stick up for myself, which sometimes gets me into trouble.

"I started to meet a youth worker ... and I learnt that it's okay to be angry, but it takes a bigger and better person to walk away from trouble."

And that is exactly what Josh did. His attendance at school increased, his behaviour improved and he no longer received suspensions. Members of staff at Milne's High were impressed when they saw his portfolio and this helped their understanding of him and his culture. The process of achieving an Arts Award has improved his meta-cognitive skills as he has had to be self-reflective and display leadership. Josh is the first pupil from Milne's High school to receive an Arts Award, a great achievement and the start of a more positive journey for this young man who has fought a personal battle against discrimination.

A is for Adventure for All

Since Scouting's founding more than 100 years ago, we have sought to be an inclusive organisation open to all young people who want to take part. Our vision is to be as diverse as the communities in which we live and we are constantly striving to remove barriers to participation.

Scouting has been growing in Scotland for the past eight years and now each week 37,000 young people take part in our adventure.

Chances are wherever you live you will not be far from a Scout Group, and across Scotland we also have a network of special groups catering for young people with additional support needs and disabilities. These groups work in conjunction with our local groups to provide specialist and one-to-one support as required.

One such group, based in Glasgow, works with young people aged 8 up to 25 with complex physical disabilities and life limiting conditions. The majority of the members use a wheelchair and many have communication difficulties in addition to significant medical and personal care needs. Those needs are met by a team of young volunteers – all aged between 14 and 18 and a team of adult leaders.





If you visited this group you would see a programme not very different from any other group – they play games, earn badges and try new adventurous activities like sailing and archery. In addition to learning new skills, making new friends and striving to reach their potential, Scouting also offers respite to the parents and carers of the young people.

Scouting is also available in two hospitals, Crosshouse in Kilmarnock and Yorkhill in Glasgow, for children and young people who are patients and for their siblings. Lots of noise can be found at both these meetings, providing a welcome bit of fun for them, whether on the ward or at a central meeting place in the hospital.

The Hospital Scouting programme is quite inventive – building the biggest bridge possible between hospital beds out of paper cups for example! It also requires flexibility, designing a programme to suit young people with a range of abilities without knowing who is going to turn up each week.

Programmes like these fit alongside hundreds of other groups which are open and inclusive and welcoming of young people with a range of additional support needs.

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Case Study: Owen's Story

Owen has Hydrocephalus and Cerebral Palsy and is totally dependent for all aspects of his daily living and uses a wheelchair for mobility.

Owen first joined Scouts at Capability Scotland's Corseford School where a Scout Group meets each week. He joined the 77th a few years later and is now a member of our Scout Network for young adults aged 18 to 25.

Owen's disabilities restrict him from doing many things other people of his age would be doing, but despite communication difficulties and his mobility issues he knows his disabilities and perseveres with whatever he wants to do.

Owen's mum, Susan, talks about his experience:

"Due to ill health there have been many challenges in Owen's life. It took him a long time to appreciate he will never be a fireman!

"Owen gets a lot out of being at Scouts. He enjoys being with his peers and making new friends, and trying new

challenges and being able to attempt things we would never attempt with him. Going to camp gives him a lot of freedom and independence."

Our Scout Network is one of our biggest sections, a reflection in part on how few activities are available for young adults in the years after leaving school. Many clubs and organisations stop at 16 or 18 but Scouts deliberately goes on until 25 to ensure continuity in social activities.

"As a family we have treated Owen no differently than his peers, and as a child there are lots of opportunities to be involved in activities. This sadly changes when branching into adult services.

"Scouting has been very important for Owen in the transition from being a young person to being a young adult.

"The 77th just feels like a close family."



Leading by example

It's an issue that has been a blight on community harmony for decades but can youth work tackle sectarianism?



Most youth workers would say yes but would struggle to provide an evidence base for their answer. To date there has not been a concerted effort to measure the effectiveness of youth work specifically in tackling intra-Christian sectarianism across Scotland and even less that involves young people.

YouthLink Scotland sought to remedy this through our action research project; Looking Forward Not Back. This project involves six of our member organisations, more than a dozen youth work practitioners and over 70 young people who took up the challenge to explore this question in their communities. They have engaged

with 1400 members of the public in their participatory research activities and learning experiences. This engagement has included a variety of approaches including workshops in schools and the community, a poster campaign, a theatre production, a radio broadcast and the creation of a human board game.

The research was participatory in nature and was co-produced with the youth workers and young people involved. Each project produced an evidence base on the challenges and successes of youth work in tackling intra-Christian sectarianism with the support of a researcher based

at YouthLink Scotland. Dundee University are externally verifying our work, to ensure the robustness of the methods used and effective presentation of the findings.

Each of the local projects were of different lengths but all took place between May and December 2014. Most involved a core group of young people participating in learning activities to build their knowledge of sectarianism and prepare them to engage with their community. Each designed their own action research project. All had a young person focus but had to reach out beyond their own age range into the wider community.

The Projects

Youth Learning Services (South Lanarkshire)

They have used creative workshops and film to help break down religious barriers. The film the young people developed and starred in is hard hitting, starting with football rivalry and ending with violence and scenes of sectarian abuse.



YMCA Bellshill and Mossend

The young people created a poster campaign which they took into their local supermarket to highlight what sectarianism means to young people and interviewed community members to examine the impact of sectarianism in their local area.



East Renfrewshire Council

Pupils from Barrhead High School and St Luke's High School designed and delivered workshops in local schools. This involved young people from a faith school and non-denominational school coming together to produce the workshops. During the workshops podcasts were made with the pupils to assess the impact of their work. Pulse Radio featured a lunch time special on the project and played the podcasts throughout the day.



Stirling Council

Young people delivered workshops in local schools and distributed anti-sectarian charms which they designed, to demonstrate the wearer's understanding and appreciation of the issue. This is part of the Caring Charms Peer Education Project. As part of the workshops they created an interactive human board game to inform the community about sectarianism in their local area.



Dumfries and Galloway Council

The young people researched, designed and performed an interactive drama based workshop as part of the World of Wonka, YouthBeatz summer event. World of Wonka uses powerful drama to challenge young people (aged 12-25) on different issues.



YACK Youth Action, Cumbernauld and Kilsyth

The youth forum designed and developed workshops and created a short film based on young people's views on sectarianism, which have taken place in local schools in North Lanarkshire. The film is being used as a discussion point for the school based workshops.



National Conference

The national conference took place in Stirling during February and gave over 80 policy makers, practitioners and young people the opportunity to hear from the projects, what evidence they generated and what they have discovered along the way. Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Paul Wheelhouse addressed the conference and met with young people and practitioners involved.



The Results

YouthLink Scotland is committed to ensuring that new innovative practice to tackle intra-Christian sectarianism are developed and tested. We are now in the final stages of writing our toolkit which will include case studies of each of the six projects, a policy context for our work, information that will assist grass roots youth projects tackle sectarianism and create an evidence base to demonstrate change. This will be available from YouthLink Scotland

by the end of March. Photographs, films and other materials associated to Looking Forward Not Back can also be found on the Action on Sectarianism website.

For further information contact Amy Goulding or Heather McVey.

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“I wanted to get involved with the Sport Panel and directly influence the perception of sport in Scotland.”



Making sport inclusive for all

Fatemeh Nokhbeh, aged 17, is part of the Young People’s Sport Panel run in partnership between sportscotland and Young Scot. She explains why she got involved in the project and how she hopes that her role will help amplify the voices of all young people and ensure sport is inclusive for everyone in Scotland.



I think there is a barrier that divides young people in sport. I wanted to get involved with the Sport Panel to share my story, and be able to directly influence the perception of sport in Scotland and make it truly inclusive and available to all.

Personally, I have had the platform to challenge the stereotypes surrounding female involvement in all aspects of sport and in particular as a Muslim woman. Being part of a religious community that is always so wrongly associated with oppression, it has been important for me to discard that misrepresentation and reflect the positive work I do in order to encourage young people’s involvement and break down barriers.

I am not your typical Scot and that is important because Scottish sport needs to represent everyone in

society – different nationalities, cultural backgrounds, gender, socio-economic status and age. A lot of young people might look to the Sport Panel and see the variety of young people involved, and be inspired to get involved themselves!

To date the Sport Panel has been involved with the Active Girls initiative, and we have been working on community involvement through the local Sports Hubs and bringing young people to the forefront of decision making with the Young Hub Leaders initiative. It is fair to say that it’s not always the social norm for young people to be the face of power, and the Sport Panel are already changing that.

I would hope that we could all truly see sport as universal and realise that there does not need to be so many barriers. Everyone can be involved in sport - it is a matter of listening to each other and creating opportunities

so that people can access sport more easily. More people need to have their voices heard, their stories shared and just like that we have a domino effect that does not just stop at Scotland, but goes worldwide!

More about the Young People’s Sport Panel

The Young People’s Sport Panel works with young people from the age of 14 to 23 from across Scotland. It aims to raise the profile of sport, give young people a greater say in the future of Scottish sport and create youth-led content which inspires and encourages other young people to reap the social, mental-health and physical benefits of being involved in sport.

For more information on the Sport Panel:

W: www.youngscot.net
Tw: [#SportPanel](https://twitter.com/SportPanel)

Equality and Human Rights in Youth Work

A Guide for Youth Work Organisations



Equality and human rights are at the heart of the nature and purpose of youth work.

Youth work is both an inclusive approach to working with young people and a platform for positive change.

Youth work seeks to:

- Actively include and support young people at risk of exclusion,
- To promote and support the rights all of young people
- Highlight and challenge discrimination and inequality in all its forms.

The National Occupational Standards describe “equity, diversity and inclusion” as core values of a youth approach and state the following principles of youth work:

- Youth work treats young people with respect, valuing each individual and their differences, and promoting the acceptance and understanding of others, whilst challenging oppressive behaviour and ideas
- Youth work respects and values individual

differences by supporting and strengthening young people’s belief in themselves, and their capacity to grow and to change through a supportive group environment

- Youth work is underpinned by the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence

How does the youth work sector realise these values and commitments?

- 1.** Inclusive service design – taking a rights-based approach to ensuring that youth work provision is accessible to and inclusive of all young people.
- 2.** Inclusive practice – valuing and respecting all young people, supporting and empowering all young people, safeguarding the welfare of all young people, promoting equality and challenging discrimination within the youth work environment
- 3.** Issue based work – applying a youth work approach to identify and address issues of inequality

The Youth Work Occupational Standards describe “promoting inclusion, equity and young people’s interests and wellbeing” as a core function of youth work and set out the following competences:

- C1 Engage in critical dialogue and work with young people in promoting their rights
- C2 Safeguard the health and welfare of young people
- C3 Promote inclusion, equity and the valuing of diversity
- C4 Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements



Equality and Human Rights in Youth Work

A Checklist for Youth Work Organisations

Use the checklist below to make a general assessment of how well equality and inclusion are embedded in the work of your organisation.

1. Organisational Commitment

Our organisation has a policy commitment to deliver an equal and inclusive service?

1. We have written policies that set out our commitment to inclusion, equality, human rights and valuing diversity
2. These policies are supported by clear procedure for implementation
3. These policies are informed by current equality legislation and the purpose, standards and values of youth work
4. These policies are reviewed annually

2. Professional Development

Our staff and volunteers are trained and supported to deliver an inclusive youth service?

1. All staff members and volunteers have received training on equality and inclusion issues and working with specific groups of young people
2. The training needs of staff members and volunteers are reviewed regularly
3. The role of individual staff

members and volunteers in relation to equality and inclusion is discussed as part of support and supervision and appraisal

4. All staff members and volunteers are familiar with these policies and procedures and are clear about what these commitments mean for their role.
5. New staff members and volunteers are made aware of our commitment to equality and inclusion and relevant policies as part of our induction process
6. Job descriptions/ volunteer roles require staff and volunteers to have awareness of equality and inclusion issues

3. Programme Planning

Our programmes are designed and delivered to consciously include the diverse needs and identities of all young people in the community

1. Our programme planning is informed by demographic information about the young people in the communities we serve
2. Our programme planning is informed by an understanding of the needs and issues faced by young people from equalities groups

3. A commitment to the right of all young people to access youth work opportunities underpins our approach to programme planning

4. We consult with young people, parents and other organisations to ensure we have a good understanding of the issues faced by young people from equalities groups
5. We use equality monitoring information to inform programme design
6. We run programmes or activities on diversity and equality that challenge prejudice and promote inclusion

4. Public Image

We present our services in a way that makes people from diverse backgrounds feel included

1. A range of young people are visible, or are specifically mentioned, in advertising, promotional materials, publications and photos of our organisation
2. Our website meets accessibility standards
3. We use visual images and plain English to describe what we do and where we meet
4. We provide or actively offer to provide information about our services in different



languages and formats according to the needs of the community we serve

5. Our buildings and venues are accessible to all young people

6. There are lots of ways to get in touch with our organisation

7. We actively contact and encourage young people in our community to get involved

8. We actively contact parents, community groups and other organisations working with young people to tell them about our services

9. We display material that promotes equality and diversity

5. Inclusive Practice

We put our policy commitment to equality and inclusion into practice

1. Our staff and volunteers are committed to promoting a culture of inclusion and valuing diversity

2. Our staff and volunteers model inclusive language and behaviour

3. Our staff and volunteers address discriminatory language and behaviour

4. Our staff and volunteers are able to signpost and refer young people to additional advice and support services

6. Participation

We consult with and involve young people at all levels of our organisation

1. Our board (or equivalent) includes people from a diverse range of backgrounds

2. We provide a range of informal ways for young people to have a say about our services.

3. We involve young people from a range of organisations in making decisions about our services

7. Promoting Equality and Diversity

Our organisation actively promotes and supports the rights of young people

1. We work with young people in a planned way to promote an understanding and awareness of their rights.

2. We work with young people to promote an understanding and awareness of the importance of equality and valuing diversity and the impact of inequality and discrimination

3. We work with young people to address issues of inequality that might affect them, their communities and wider society.

This checklist is adapted from "Access All Areas – A Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector" published by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and Youthnet. (www.inclusivelyouthworkni.co.uk)



A Guide to getting started

- **Work through the checklist with your board, staff members and volunteers**
- **Adapt the checklist to use with the young people that you work with to identify areas where development might be required**
- **Create and agree an action plan that sets out specific action you will take, a timeline for implementation and who is responsible for making it happen**
- **Include feedback on your progress as part of your regular organisational, reporting, review and planning processes**

Support

- YouthLink Scotland can provide support and advice on inclusive practice and our website offers lots of resources to support work with young people to promote equality and challenge discrimination.

www.youthlinkscotland.org

- The Equality and Human Rights Commission website offers lots of useful resources to help you understand and meet the legislative requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010

www.equalityhumanrights.com

- The Equality and Human Rights Performance Framework (developed by a group of voluntary and community organisations, led by the Equality and Diversity Forum) is a useful tool for helping community and voluntary sector organisations use equality and human rights more effectively in their work. It can help you to assess your performance now, plan your next steps and track your progress.

www.ehrf.org.uk

- “Access All Areas – A diversity toolkit for the youth work sector” published by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and Youthnet provides a comprehensive guide to inclusive youth work practice.

www.inclusiveyouthworkni.co.uk



Closing the gap

Young campaigners are making their voice heard over the political din, lobbying politicians to close the attainment gap that exists for deaf children and young people.



The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people. This includes our work with our Young Campaigners, a group of deaf young people aged 15-20 years old. They lobby for better services and campaign on issues affecting deaf children in Scotland - while having a chance to meet and socialise with peers. We also work with mainstream youth organisations to make them genuinely inclusive for deaf children and young people.

One of the areas that our Young Campaigners are working on is education and post-school transitions. In April 2014 our young people were the true stars of the launch of our research report, *Close the Gap*, at the Scottish Parliament. In the report we asked the Scottish Government to formally recognise and close the unacceptable attainment gap that exists between deaf young people and their hearing peers. One young person presented his experiences of support at school and transitioning into an apprenticeship; another led a quiz and introduced our video to accompany

the research report, while the others hosted individual meetings with the Minister, MSPs and professionals in attendance.

Attendance at Party Conferences by the Young Campaigners has also been key to our successful engagement with MSPs on these issues. This participation has ultimately shaped Scottish Government thinking on deaf young people. The Minister for Learning has now formally acknowledged the attainment gap for deaf learners. This breakthrough has also led to the creation of a National Deaf Learners' Conference with Education Scotland, the first was held in February 2015. Our Young Campaigners co-hosted the conference and facilitated group discussions with their peers from across Scotland.

NDCS work to make universal services more accessible through our Me2 deaf-friendly activities work. We are calling on youth organisations, groups and clubs (arts, leisure and sports) to take small and simple steps to make them accessible. Any organisation that supports young people in and out of school



environment can access our support and resources. As part of this we can offer Making Activities Deaf Friendly (MADF) training to leaders and coaches working with children and young people. This training includes information on deafness, communication, technology, and tips on how to adapt activities. Recent participants of the MADF training include the workers of the Camelion Community Project, and we are currently working with the Hibernian FC Community Foundation to promote a family open day.

For more information please contact Anne-Marie Sandison, Youth Outreach Officer.

W: www.ndcs.org.uk

E: anne-marie@ndcs.org.uk



An equal learning curve

The ZAP Group in Prestonpans is tackling discrimination and inequality for young people on the autistic spectrum by nurturing their potential.

The ZAP group was set up in Prestonpans three years ago. It offers young people who are on the autistic spectrum a safe space to socialise and to develop life skills. Autism is a much misunderstood condition because it manifests itself in diverse forms and it is not always visible. The aim of the ZAP group was to tackle the inequitable opportunities and discrimination faced by this group by offering a weekly youth club and summer programmes in Prestonpan's Community Centre.

Lottery Funding enabled specialist training for youth workers in understanding the condition and in appropriate responses to it. Referrals to the group are channelled through a Children's Support Worker and then a meeting set up with the young person and their family, prior to them coming

to the club. Each child on the spectrum differs and it is important that the child and family are able to discuss specific needs and concerns. It is felt to be good practice for the parent to come along on the child's first club night and then to disengage when the time is right for them.

The group has been a wonderful learning curve for the young people who have become more confident and more independent of their primary carers. Some have moved on to other clubs, one has become a volunteer mentor and all have gained new skills, particularly in their social interaction. At any one time around fourteen young people between nine and sixteen years old attend the club. This is a challenging transition age for autistic youth who struggle with change.

The group have a wide variety of resources chosen by themselves. They enjoy arts and crafts, video, sports, cooking and games. They have visited Dynamic Earth, the Owl Centre, Safari Park, 5 Sisters Zoo and many other venues. They are now looking forward to a pantomime visit and the idea of short residential experiences is being explored.

The ZAP group works in a holistic way, recognising the needs of the families who have young people on the spectrum. Family evenings are organised with mutual support and information sharing for parents. Families can initially be as isolated and confused as their children and they greatly appreciate the chance to meet, share experiences and advice. Parents are consulted regularly and are actively

Case Study: Fraser's Story

It is difficult to choose one child who has benefited from the ZAP group but the experience of Fraser draws out the positive impact of the group.



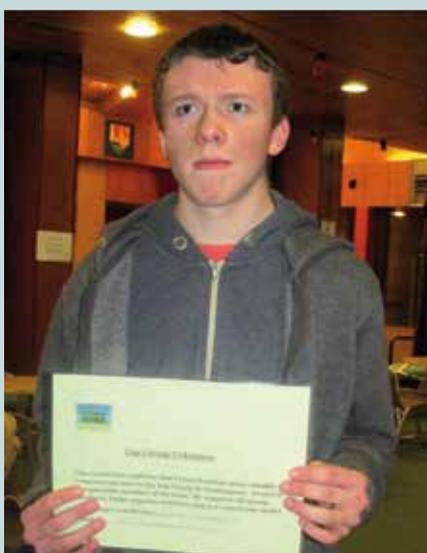
encouraged to make contact between sessions.

The ZAP group has also attracted volunteers preparing for college or university. This means that a raised awareness of autism will be disseminated and will hopefully become an inherent part of the training for youth work. Young people with autism have huge potential and the ZAP group are now examining accredited youth achievement with the group. Young people on the spectrum do however need support to reach their potential and that is our main objective.

For more info contact Margaret Macdonald, Community Development Officer, East Lothian Council

W: 0131 653 4063

T: mmacdonald1@eastlothian.gov.uk



When Fraser joined the group three years ago he was withdrawn and introverted. His behaviour fluctuated and his ability to join in activities was limited. Fraser's spatial awareness issues meant that he avoided games and sport because he felt clumsy. He did not communicate much with the workers or the other young people.

Very slowly the youth workers gained the trust of Fraser. He began to try out new activities because he was in a safe environment and his whole demeanour shifted. He began to exhibit skills that had not been evident before and because he felt valued himself, he took on a caring role with younger group members. Fraser was able to sense when another young person was

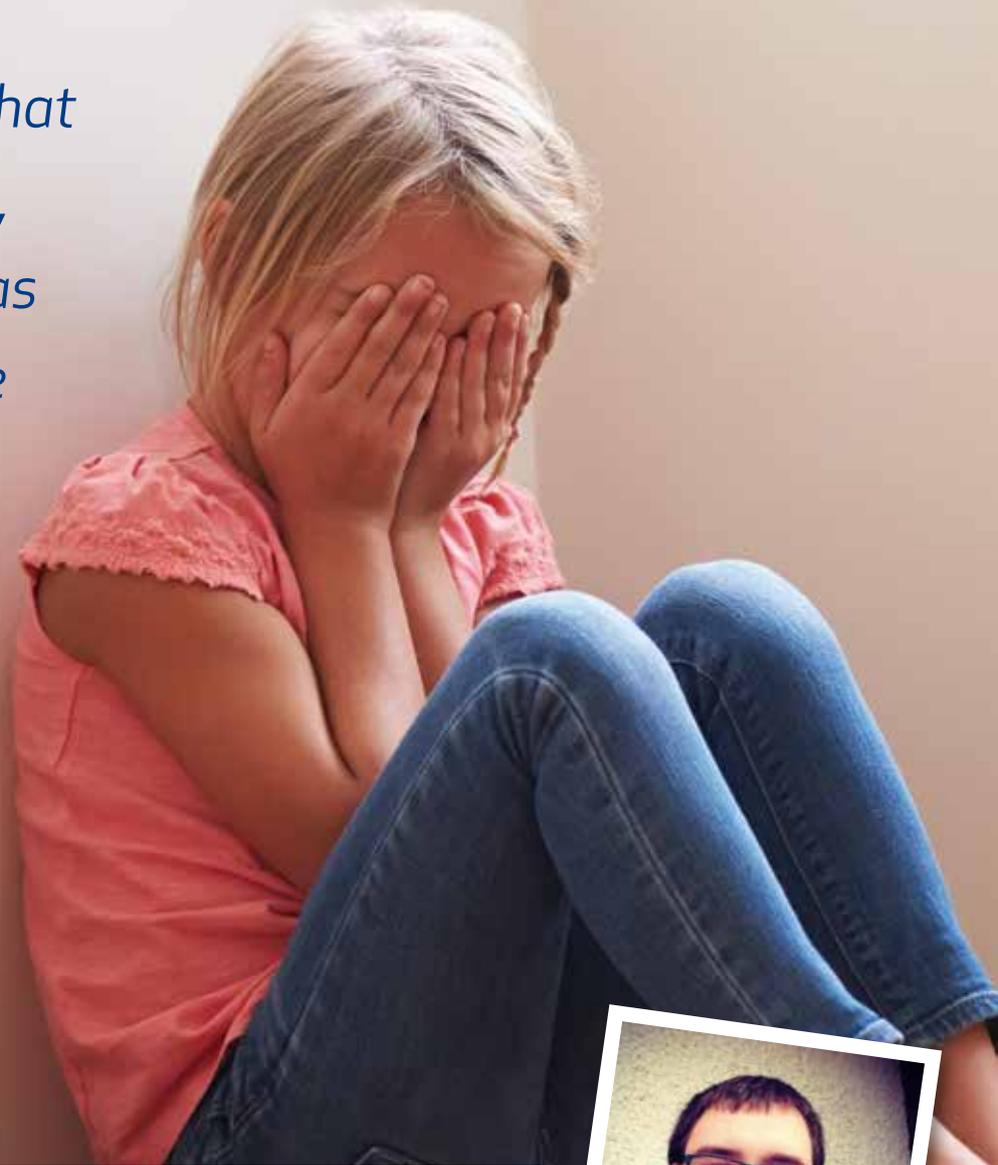
moving towards a "melt down" and he had the ability to defuse friction. He was turning into a natural group worker and the unhappiness that had been so evident when Fraser first started ZAP disappeared. He became enthusiastic and he engaged with all the group's activities.

Fraser has progressed well, he has become a confident young man who attends college and loves to learn. He still comes to every session but he is now a mentor for the group. He has a strong sense of responsibility and takes his role very seriously. Fraser now wants to undertake accreditation in community volunteering.

Fraser's family have also embraced his new found confidence. When Fraser first came to the club, his mum was deeply concerned for his future and worried about his behaviour. She is now as enthusiastic as her son. She has witnessed him develop into a sensitive young man who has a strong sense of his own worth. The pride she feels about Fraser's achievements is evident to all.

The changes in Fraser are probably due to many factors in his life. But his family feel that the safe space that ZAP offered played a huge role in his journey. The understanding of Fraser's needs and the meeting of these needs has helped draw out his potential.

“No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world.”



The poverty divide

Nairn McDonald MSYP for Cunninghame South talks about his personal experience of poverty and how it has shaped his passionate campaigning to eradicate it in our society.

When thinking about the launch of our new campaign this week in Glasgow, which aims to tackle child and youth poverty, I was struck some inspiring words by the late Robin Williams, “No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world.”

I must admit, I was nervous when I was preparing to address the membership of the Scottish Youth Parliament with proposals for a campaign to help combat child and youth poverty.

Poverty is a difficult subject for many people often due to personal experiences, or the negative stigma, which unfortunately is often associated with the word.

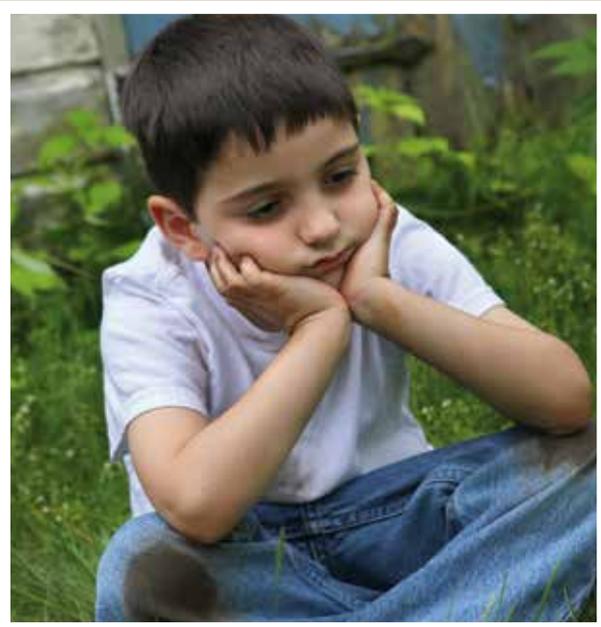
More than one in five of Scotland’s children are considered to be living in poverty. This is much higher than in many other European countries.

For me, I grew up surrounded by poverty, and I have seen the

devastating impact it can have on a young person’s future and their quality of life. Poverty can often undermine the health, well-being, and the educational opportunities of children and young people.

When pitching the proposals for SYP’s new campaign, I wanted to share my personal experiences having grown up surrounded by poverty. I wanted my fellow MSYPs to understand the passion I have for this campaign, and





More than one in five of Scotland's children are considered to be living in poverty.

to understand why there is a drastic need for change, given the devastating impact poverty can have.

Poverty is an enigma. It hides itself behind forced smiles and cracking facades. Poverty can affect anyone, at any time, and that is what we must make people recognise.

There is an image of poverty that is portrayed and largely stereotyped by television and other media. These stereotypes attempt to define poverty as an issue that only exists in certain areas and only affects certain people. The truth is that poverty can affect anyone, at any time. There are many people who society may not recognise as being affected by poverty, but these people are struggling to keep a roof over their head and food on their table. We need to challenge this stigma and misinformation.

In 1999, the UK Government made the commitment to tackle child poverty in the nation by 2020. The UK Child Poverty Act 2010 made this commitment into law. As 2020 is now only five years away, I believe it is time

that we recognise the reality of poverty in Scotland, and make it our priority to work together to change it. I hope we can change the way everybody in Scotland, especially young people, view poverty and those who are living in poverty.

At the Scottish Youth Parliament, we have had a number of campaign successes, and our strength comes from every single Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament going out and engaging with young people in their area and effectively using social media. With every MSYP planning a role, we can reach hundreds if not thousands of young people through this campaign. This is a massive opportunity. We must grasp it.

Through our campaign, we hope to use our reach to speak to thousands of young people across Scotland and further their understanding about what poverty really is compared to how it's often portrayed.

We also hope to celebrate the role many fantastic organisations and projects play in tackling poverty

across Scotland. Youth work and youth services are often the unsung heroes leading the fight against poverty. They continually strive to reduce inequality by providing opportunities for young people to harness all of their passion and talent to create a better and more prosperous life for themselves.

Our Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament voted overwhelmingly to campaign on this issue because that is what their constituents were telling them to do. This is a major priority for the young people of Scotland; they want to see change. As the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people, we must be drivers of that change.

We can't do it alone! We need as many people as possible to get involved and get behind the campaign. I would really urge you to engage with us online, work with our MSYPs locally, urge your elected representatives to do more.

Let the campaign begin!

T: 0131 557 0452
W: www.syp.org.uk
Tw: @OfficialSYP



Never isolated, never alone

A project from Girlguiding is helping to tackle the isolation some young girls and women experience.

For almost 50,000 girls and young women across Scotland, being a part of Girlguiding offers the chance to meet new friends, try new things, and make adventure and fun part of their everyday lives.

But not everyone can make a weekly meeting – they may have a disability or a caring responsibility which prevents them taking part, or live in a rural area far from their nearest meeting place.

That's why we set up the Lones project – to reach out to young people whatever their background and circumstances.

By keeping in touch through phone, email, special meetings and events, girls and young women from five to 25 have the opportunity to experience the adventure and friendship Girlguiding Scotland offers, even if they can't attend on a weekly basis.

Lones members are offered the same opportunities as anyone else – Rainbows are involved in the Rainbow Jigsaw programme, Brownies can achieve their interest badges,

Guides can attain their Baden-Powell Challenge Awards or complete their Go For It badges, and Senior Section members can work on their Queen's Guide Award or travel abroad with guiding.

Katie Emmett, 16, from the Isle of Lewis, has been a Lones member since she left the Guides at 14. As there was no Senior Section Unit on Isle of Lewis she was able to continue her guiding journey through Lones in a way she hadn't expected. Katie said:

"In December 2012, I had no idea that nationwide units of Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Senior Section members existed for girls who weren't able to join a normal unit.

"I didn't think there was a way for me to continue with guiding, because there was no Senior Section unit on the island that I could join when I left Guides.

"It's really exciting opening the Lones newsletters – very carefully, because you never know if a fountain of sparkles and sequins might be enclosed inside!

"Guiding, and Lones, have given me many fantastic opportunities. My mountain-top moment is definitely the two weeks I spent at an international camp in Austria in 2013. I was thrilled to find out that I was one of just ten girls representing Scotland at the event, and it was an amazing experience.

"Those fourteen days of camping in the sunshine, beneath blue skies (and in tents with far more tiny spiders than I would normally be comfortable with!) were amazing.

"I will always be grateful that I discovered Lones. It's given me the chance to continue with my guiding journey, and has shown me that living on a remote Scottish island needn't stop me from taking part in as many opportunities as I can."

T: 0131 226 4511

W: www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk



Girlguiding Scotland
girls in the lead



A bit of banter? Not if it's sexist!

Girlguiding Scotland believes no girl should have to tolerate gender-based violence or any form of sexual harassment. They were shocked when recent research from Girlguiding revealed that girls are growing up with sexual harassment as a “normal” part of everyday life.

The Girls' Attitudes Survey, a UK-wide research project, revealed that girls as young as seven are victims of routine sexual taunts from boys. This behaviour too often intensifies into sexual harassment during their teenage years.

The research, which shows that 59 per cent of girls and young women aged 13 to 21 have faced some form of sexual harassment at school or college, also reveals that too often girls are told by teachers, and society at large, to shrug off sexual harassment as a bit of banter.

In order to tackle sexism and create a fairer society, young women in guiding are calling on politicians to make real commitments to ensuring the well-being of girls by signing up to Girlguiding's Girls Matter campaign. The campaign includes a call for schools to take a zero tolerance approach to sexual bullying and harassment.

Amy Callaghan, 16, a Girlguiding Scotland member from Glasgow who has been campaigning on Girls Matter, said:

“Every day, many girls' lives are made a misery by sexist comments, sexual harassment and abuse at school.

“What's worse is that it's not being treated as a serious issue. We need politicians to take action and sign up to our Girls Matter pledges.

“We need them to send a message that this kind of behaviour towards girls and young women will not be tolerated.”

The campaign is the first time that Girlguiding members have made direct calls to politicians ahead of a general election. The eight calls for change are a response to the overwhelming evidence from the Girls' Attitudes Survey that shows that girls and young women still believe they are too often treated like second-class citizens.

Girlguiding Scotland will be supporting girls across the UK to speak out and calling on more politicians to join First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and other MSPs to publically support their calls for change and prove that girls' voices matter.

GIRLS MATTER: OUR EIGHT CALLS FOR CHANGE

1. Listen to girls and young women, take them seriously and make sure their voices count.
2. Demand schools take a zero tolerance approach to sexual bullying and harassment.
3. Call on all schools to teach body confidence and gender equality.
4. Make girls' rights a priority in the UK's approach to international development.
5. Stop children's exposure to harmful sexualised content in mainstream media.
6. Empower girls and young women to speak out and be heard on the impact of media sexism and stereotyping.
7. Modernise sex and relationships education so all young people can make informed decisions and stay safe.
8. Guarantee that women will be equally represented in parliament.



It is ENABLE Scotland's experience that young people who have learning disabilities have much smaller social circles in comparison to their peers.

Speak for yourself

A recent consultation of young people engaged in ENABLE Scotland Youth Services has found:

40% of young people said they had three friends or less.

5% of those consulted said they had no friends.

When asked why this was, young people said they felt there were a number of barriers stopping them from making friends. Some worried that they wouldn't make friends at clubs or groups, that people wouldn't understand them or their needs, while others felt they lacked the skills needed to sustain friendships. However, most young people commented that the biggest barrier they faced was access to mainstream activities, leading to a lack of meaningful opportunities for them to get involved in.

35% of young people consulted had experienced bullying type behaviours at groups or clubs they had previously attended.

5% of those consulted said they had no friends.

39% also felt the groups were not suitable or supportive to their needs and that some people wouldn't understand.

They also commented that the bullying type behaviours they experienced were not sufficiently addressed.

ENABLE Scotland provides support to children, young people and adults who have learning disabilities and their families. Providing a safe and supportive environment in which to make friends is at the core of the work we do with young people. Over the years we have developed a unique and successful peer support model which brings together young people who do and do not have a learning disability. This model supports the creation of natural friendships and breaking down barriers in a fun environment.

Speak4Yourself groups come together on a weekly basis to take part in activities which the young people choose and plan. The groups are empowered and have ownership of the direction their group takes. They are supported to have a community presence and as a result have raised awareness of their responsibilities within their local community. Many of the young people have previously been involved in activities which support or bring about positive, sustainable change within their communities.

As a result of this model many of the young people who have learning disabilities involved in



Speak4Yourself groups are now having their first experience of real friendship and all the highs and lows that can bring.

For many being involved brings many firsts. First friend, first time going out without parents, first time out in the dark, first time eating in a restaurant, first time having a birthday party with friends not just family... the list could go on! This could not be possible without having a safe and supportive environment for young people to flourish in. For us it's at the heart of everything we do.

For further information contact Ashley Ryan, Youth Services Manager

T: 01698 737049
W: www.enable.org.uk
Tw: @ENABLEScotland





The fight against religious hatred has gone digital with the Action on Sectarianism website launched last year. Now practitioners across Scotland are successfully sharing their resources, stories, workshops and events on tackling sectarianism in Scotland via an online platform.



Sharing knowledge that inspires action

There are currently 44 projects across Scotland funded by Scottish Government to do work in their communities to tackle sectarianism. This issue is not always accepted to be important or even acknowledged as existing.

But how is this being tackled?

In a huge variety of ways – arts workshops leading to performances of specially written plays; work in schools and youth clubs involving a number of different resources; literacy programmes; services for young offenders and more.

Information for the public

The information, resources and activities shared by practitioners, organisations, individuals and others are available not just to other practitioners but also to the general public, whether they are adults, parents, children or young people, they all have access to a wealth of knowledge, expertise and materials.

What does this mean? Does having access to these shared materials, mean it's actually being used? The resources being talked about range from reports, activity packs and case studies to online materials such as videos, podcasts and interactive games, and all have been utilised in some way. We know this because the videos for instance have been viewed over 2,200 times whilst downloadable resources such as reports and activity packs have had a total of over 8,300 downloads.

Action on Sectarianism is working to continue and build on this central space for information on sectarianism and to promote the work that is currently only touching the surface of this important issue.



W: www.actiononsectarianism.info Tw: [@AoSScotland](https://twitter.com/AoSScotland)



Juliet Harris, Director of Together, looks at how children and young people are being discriminated against because of their age.

Standing up for children and young people's rights together



Together is an alliance of Scottish children's charities that works to improve the awareness, understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Non-discrimination is a general principle of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Article 2 is clear that the rights enshrined in the UNCRC apply to all children and young people, whatever their race, religion or ability; whatever they think or say, whatever family they come from. It doesn't matter where they live, what language they speak, what their parents do, whether they are male or

female, what their culture is, whether they have a disability or they are rich or poor. No child or young person should be treated unfairly on any basis – they all have a right to be actively protected against all forms of discrimination.

The Equality Act has been in force since 2010 with the aim of providing a single, clear legal framework to tackle

disadvantage and discrimination. Since its inception it's been seen by many as a great development, giving similar levels of protection to people in relation to their race, sex, sexual orientation, religion and belief and age – similar to the protections outlined in UNCRC Article 2.

However, despite the Equality Act's many strengths, there is one glaring omission: it doesn't give children and young people the same protection from age discrimination as it does adults. This means that children and young people can still be discriminated against as a result of



their age - for example, employers can still pay young people under the age of 18 less than adults doing the same job, and many benefit payments for young people are at a lower level than adults.

Age discrimination against children and young people is not just neglected in law – it goes unrecognised more generally and is often not taken seriously. An example highlighted by the Scottish Youth Parliament is the continued use of the ‘mosquito’ – a device that makes an unpleasant high-pitched noise that only those under the age of 25 can hear. It is specifically designed to stop groups of young people gathering in public places. The use of such a device against any other distinct group in society - such as those of a particular race, religion or sex – would never be tolerated. Yet its use against children and young people is still seen as acceptable.

So many of our members are making great strides to ensure that youth work provision is delivered in line with Article 2 of the UNCRC. Together’s State of Children’s Rights report 2014 (available at www.togetherscotland.org.uk) shows an impressive array of youth work projects that are tackling the discrimination and disadvantage faced by many young people, including Gypsy/Travellers, young asylum seekers, those with a disability and minority ethnic groups. However, there needs to be a wider recognition of Article 2 – in both law and in culture – to ensure that it is always unacceptable to discriminate against children and young people as a result of their age.

E: info@togetherscotland.org.uk

W: www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Tw: [@together_sacr](https://twitter.com/together_sacr)

Where Does Youth Work Fit Into Equalities And Rights

Our Ambitions for Improving the Life chances of Young People in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19, in this strategy the sector commits to the ambition of ensuring that Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in. We work towards a common goal where youth work opportunities will be accessible, equitable and inclusive for all young people.

Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework: contained within this framework are the Minister’s aspirations to make Scotland a fairer and more inclusive place. These outcomes are supported by a range of actions which can create and influence change and improvement – for example ensuring that we all challenge discrimination, stigma and prejudice; and by ‘mainstreaming equalities’. Mainstreaming equalities is concerned with the integration and embedding of equality matters in to how services are designed and delivered.

The Equality Act (2010): this places ‘due regard’ upon Scottish public bodies and those who exercise public functions to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. The arrival of this Act provided an identity for Equalities Groups. To this end, Youth Workers and other educators can rally around activity which will:

“identify groups at risk of not benefitting fully from education and take action to meet their need; and help all learners develop the understandings of equality and diversity issues essential for responsible citizens in the 21st Century.” (Education Scotland)

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS THE EQUALITY ACT

1. AGE
2. DISABILITY
3. GENDER REASSIGNMENT
4. PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY
5. RACE
6. RELIGION OR BELIEF
7. SEX
8. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: states that children have the right to protection against discrimination; it also makes provision of rights for children affected by disability, refugee status, and protects the right of those from minority groups to enjoy their own culture, religion and language. It is the role of youth workers to recognise and realise these rights for all young people.



Many cultures but all one DofE

“I love how the staff understand my needs!”

This is high praise indeed from a young woman who often feels misunderstood. Kismet is a Duke of Edinburgh's Award participant with Sikh Sanjog, a charity advocating the rights and responsibilities of Scotland's ethnically and culturally diverse women. Their youth service's Inclusion Project tailors the DofE programme to suit the needs of participants, like Kismet, who face cultural barriers to participation.

The flexibility of the DofE means that Sikh Sanjog youth workers deliver a programme that is fulfilling for the young people, while at the same time ensuring that it is accommodating of cultural practices.

The young women in the Inclusion Project are generally not allowed to partake in activities outside of formal education, so Sikh Sanjog delivers the DofE inside schools, making it easier for the young women to take part. This approach has been a great success, with over 50 young women participating across 5 schools in Edinburgh. In the coming year it will be included in the curriculum at The Royal High School, in the hope of encouraging young women to become young leaders in their communities.

The structure of the DofE programme has also been adapted for the Inclusion Project. The Expedition section, where participants spend nights away from home, is a barrier to participation since many participants are not permitted to be away from home overnight. Instead of being offered a full DofE programme, which includes the expedition, the young women are offered the opportunity to complete sectional certificates. This enables them to complete their Volunteering, Physical and Skill activities and gain qualifications even though they are unable to complete an expedition.

The activities themselves are also given careful consideration by the youth work team. For the Physical section dance classes are female-only and for the Skills section participants undertake a cultural project. Doing these activities helped to build trust between youth workers and the young women, this enables them to open up about challenges they face in their daily lives. During sessions, topics such as inclusion, citizenship and equality are explored, giving the workers better insight into the young women's needs and making them aware of their options.



The DofE is meant to be a personalised programme that is achievable by all. With a bit of creativity and a few modifications, Sikh Sanjog has extended access to culturally and ethnically diverse young women whilst keeping true to the spirit of the Award.



No barriers to youth work

It just takes a bit of creativity to bring the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to some of the most marginalised young people in Scotland. The DofE is achievable by all and it has only taken a few changes in the programme for it to be open to young offenders.

What is the DofE?

Anyone aged 14-24 can do a DofE programme at one of three progressive levels which, when successfully completed, leads to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. There are four sections to complete at Bronze and Silver level: Volunteering, Physical, Skills and an Expedition. At Gold level, participants also complete a Residential. Participants are free to work at a pace that they're comfortable with to achieve their Award and they can achieve one section at a time.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

The DofE is divided into Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. You can start at any levels, but most people prefer to try for Bronze before trying Silver or Gold. You can choose the one that fits how much time you have to give.

LEVEL	LENGTH OF TIME	
	MINIMUM	PREVIOUS LEVEL ACHIEVED
BRONZE	6 MONTHS	N/A
SILVER	12 MONTH	6 MONTHS
GOLD	18 MONTHS	12 MONTHS

During your programme you'll do each activity for at least an average of an hour a week over this time. You have until your 25th birthday to complete any programme and achieve an Award!

See www.DofE.org/section for loads of inspiring ideas!



For several years now Polmont Young Offenders Institution has offered the DofE to its young people, and HMP Edinburgh has also come on board with their first Bronze Award achieved just last year.

DofE Leaders working with the young offenders at both institutions have been able to offer a wide variety of activity options to their young people. The Physical section might be easiest to envisage – quite a lot of young people will take up gym work to complete it. The Volunteering section takes a bit more imagination, but there are still a lot of opportunities. Last year, participants at HMP Edinburgh ran breakfast roll fundraisers and chose MacMillian Cancer Support to receive over £300 that the participants raised for their efforts in the kitchen.

A creative approach is also brought to the Expedition section. Participants are able to plan out a route in Scotland and then simulate it in the prison with stationary bikes, running and rowing machines, topping it off by a camp in the prison grounds. There is also much more of a focus on teambuilding activities as the Expedition aim.

The Skills section can be the most useful for the future career prospects of the young people involved. They are offered a variety of choices for their activity, from plumbing to bike maintenance to cooking, and all are useful skills for them to use in their lives after their sentence ends.

Whatever the activity, the goal of the DofE is to provide a challenging, diverse and enjoyable programme of activities for young people. This is as possible for young offenders as it is for other young people, and often the reward for them is even greater because they finish their DofE with skills that will help them make their future in prison and beyond so much brighter.

The prisons programme will be expanding in the next year with the hope that HMP Grampian and Cornton Vale will also be offering the DofE to their young offenders.

If you'd like to learn more about the DofE in residential settings, please watch our short video:

<http://youtu.be/dzwcs84H5F8>

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