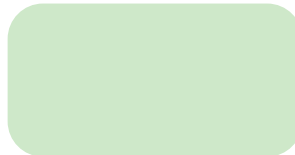
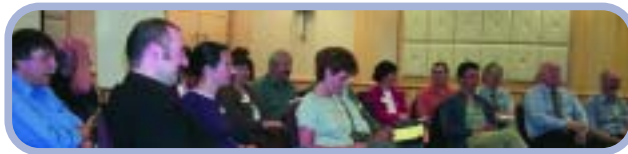


A Framework for

# Reflection in Practice

*Guidelines for embedding EDI principles in youth work practice*





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## Foreword

JEDI - Joined in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence - is an important youth service wide initiative. Its activities are well documented elsewhere including on the JEDI website at [www.jedini.com](http://www.jedini.com). This document is the product of the discussions, investigations and collective experience of the JEDI Practice Group and those with whom they have engaged over the period from April 2000 to May 2002. It is one of a number of complementary and inter-linking tasks the group has taken on as part of the overall JEDI Initiative.

The overall aim of the group's activities is:

**to create the structure and processes for ongoing refinement and development of effective practice.**

This aim was set within the context of the overall aims of JEDI, which are:

- **To develop a coherent strategy for community relations youth work and education for citizenship within the Northern Ireland youth services**
- **To embed the inter-related principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into the ethos policies and programmes of the organisations which make up the youth services**



*Dr. Johnston McMaster with former Education Minister Martin McGuinness*

The approach the group has taken is a wise one. They have not attempted to create the definitive 'manual', but rather have taken an approach common to many of JEDI's activities and outputs - based around a discussion with and about practice. As with the 'Invitation to Dialogue' document, produced by the JEDI Research and Evaluation group at the end of 2001, the group have framed the guidance around the notion of critical reflection, posing questions that practitioners might want to ask themselves, their colleagues and the young people they are working with, as a way of gaining a deeper understanding of practice and creating and sustaining a learning community.

The implications of many of the assumptions the document makes about practice, have serious implications for those who have responsibility for policy and resources, and these will be taken

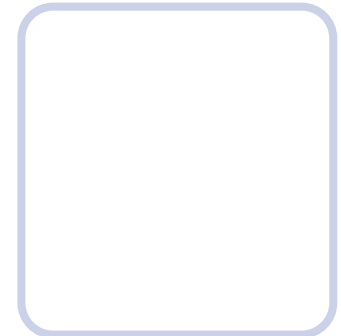
## Reflection in Practice

forward by the JEDI Steering Group which involves key players from across the youth services, as well as the Department of Education, and the International Fund for Ireland.

For the document to have optimal effect, it must be used by trainers within the field, and must itself become a focus of critical reflection, debate and dialogue. JEDI will be seeking and encouraging feedback on this and other resources, and we would very much welcome your thoughts and ideas. Contact details are on the back of this publication.

As always, we are grateful to our funders for their ongoing support. The Community Bridges programme of the International Fund for Ireland; the European Physical, Social and Environmental Programme through the Department of Education; the five Education and Library Boards; and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

**Dr Johnston McMaster,**  
*Chairperson JEDI Steering Group*





## How to use this guide

We sincerely hope that this guide is a useful

resource for the diverse range of volunteer, part-time and full-time workers who make up the youth service. The reflections of active practitioners in the field have been invaluable to us in putting this document together, and we are particularly grateful to a focus group of practitioners, feedback from other parts of the JEDI family and to the 5 agencies who allowed us to visit them and discuss their work as part of our early deliberations. Those agencies were the Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster, the Fermanagh Shadow Youth Council, 'Bout Ye.org (an ICT based participation project in East Belfast), Derry Peace and Reconciliation Group and the South Eastern Education and Library Board ('The Underground' project). Reflections on their work are used throughout the document to illustrate some of the points we have made.

Our intention is that the document should contribute to ongoing training and dialogue around practice.

Our recommendation is that you read the document through and discuss it with colleagues in the first instance. Then as you work, you may wish to refer back to particular sections, or some of the many questions we

suggest you might use as a tool for reflection. There has been much debate about the order of the different sections in the document and though we have settled on a sequence for the purposes of going to print, we acknowledge that there are other ways of organising this resource that would have made equal sense. The important thing is that you make yourself familiar with it and that you use the document in whichever way makes most sense to you and the context in which you are working. We have designed the document to be durable as it is our intention that it should become an important tool to reflective practitioners in their work with young people.

As with the initial guidance produced by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland in 1992, this document is a product of a moment in time, and is designed as a tool for dialogue and not as a definitive or prescriptive model. We very much hope that its publication will lead to increased discussion and reflection, and to the creation of additional resources that support, encourage and challenge the reflective practitioner.

**Nichola Lynagh,**  
*Chairperson JEDI Practice Group*





## JEDI Environment

### INTRODUCTION

The current initiative to embed the JEDI principles into the culture and practice of youth work in Northern Ireland is happening during one of the most turbulent and rapidly changing eras within the region's recent history. Across a range of fronts - political, social, local and international - new accommodations and events impact on both our present and our collective future. At the time of writing, the need for a radical and comprehensive approach to issues of social justice, division and societal change is undiminished.

This section attempts to focus on the environment which led to the creation of JEDI and in which it now operates, by charting some of the more important milestones of change.

### THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In spite of more than a generation of armed conflict in Northern Ireland, there have been some very important - if gradual - changes in the area of work generally known as 'community relations'. Whilst for many in the youth work field (and elsewhere), this has been an important focus of their activities throughout (and in some cases before) 'the troubles', some important developments at the policy level are worth mentioning here. 'Cross community work' emerged as a theme within the 'blue book' produced by the Department of Education in

1987<sup>1</sup>. At this stage the work involved engaging young people from the two biggest communities in Northern Ireland in joint activities<sup>2</sup>. Over time cross community work developed into 'community relations work', with an acknowledgement that a key component of the work should be the exploration of contentious issues<sup>3</sup>.

With the inception of JEDI came the emphasis on the core principles of 'Equity, Diversity and Interdependence'<sup>4</sup> (EDI). Although still addressing issues around sectarianism, an emphasis on these principles takes us much further, challenging us to have a much broader understanding of how we relate to each other in society. In addition to a focus on community relations, there is the emergence of the concept of citizenship in education and political discourse, here, in Britain, Europe and elsewhere.

In recent years governments have been attempting to legislate for much of what would be implied from an EDI framework. For instance, from the perspective of children's rights, the UK Government's adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in September 1990 (an abridged version of this Convention is attached as Appendix 1) is a significant development. More recently, legislation such as the Human Rights act in the UK, and Human Rights and Equality legislation, and the emerging Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland make for an environment where initiatives such as JEDI are not just important, but imperative if the service is to meet its legal obligations. The EDI framework



helps youth workers not only to comply with this legislation, but to develop commitment to change and to the spirit of the various legal frameworks.

The concept of community relations has come a long way, from providing simply opportunities for contact in a divided society, to challenging sectarianism, to dealing with issues of inequity in terms of ethnicity, gender, marital status, disability and sexual orientation. The categories for 'equality proofing' have been finalised in the Human Rights Legislation introduced in Northern Ireland in October 2000.

The impact of legislation has, therefore, guided two major changes in emphasis: -

- The defeat of discrimination has been elevated from covert to overt Government Policy.
- The focus on the Protestant/Catholic divide has broadened to include a more overarching view of relationship between all citizens in all their diversity.

### **CITIZENSHIP**

*The work involved a rural organization which predominantly recruits from the unionist community. The project sought to build relationships, both with the nationalist community and with other ethnic and minority groups. Initially, the work had to overcome previous negative experiences of CR work which had arisen from criticisms made of the organization from a facilitator group in the past. The work has*

*impressively addressed difficult issues at an organizational level, has sought to ground developments within the community and has embraced a vision of citizenship broader than that associated only with a community relations dimension. Progress on such a scale is constrained by time-limited funding, a period less than three years. ...The project has been totally additional to previous work. It has engendered a much more open approach and a keenness to embrace the concept of active citizenship.*

The concept of citizenship should not be seen as a replacement for community relations but rather as a progression of the work being carried out in this field. The parameters for how we live together in an equitable, diverse and interdependent society have been extended beyond the relationships between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. The new legislation maintains that all who live within this society have an equal and indeed, equitable stake within this society. A focus on active citizenship means that we move beyond relationship building to playing a fulsome role in the crafting of a new, more equitable and diverse society, acknowledging the interdependence of all communities and groups.

The development of community relations practice, education for citizenship and the EDI principles have not happened in a vacuum. The political maps of Northern Ireland have changed greatly over the past decade. While the relative importance of events can be



dependent on individual interpretations, some have had an unmistakable influence on change irrespective of their interpretation.

The various paramilitary ceasefires have changed the landscape. While there may be disquiet about motives, good faith and longevity, the guns are largely silent and this has clearly impacted on the space to negotiate.

This factor is well illustrated in pivotal political events. The signing of the Good Friday/ Belfast Agreement, followed by the Referenda North and South opened up the potential for a new political dispensation to replace a generation of direct rule. It also demanded that the population and its leaders create previously unpalatable coalitions as a 'price for peace'.

The Assembly, which has emerged from the agreement, is based on a consensus model, which is both unusual, radical and problematic avoiding as it does the roles of Government and Opposition that are at the core of most western political theory. Its birth and early years have been faltering but as a political innovation it reshapes the background against which social policy will be written.

These changes clearly impact upon young people and on those who work with them, or on their behalf.

### **THE YOUTH SERVICE RESPONSE**

It is important to acknowledge the contribution that youth workers in particular and the education sector in general have made to the improvement of community relations in the contested society<sup>5</sup> of Northern Ireland. There are many initiatives in which youth workers and young people have sought to encourage dialogue between the Catholic and Protestant communities and dispel many of the myths that have been generated by each community of the other. Similar work in the formal education sector, represents another important contribution.

A key challenge for the Youth Service is to develop an understanding of its civic role and responsibilities, as we attempt to create a more inclusive society.



## REFERENCES

- 1 DENI 1987. *The document highlighted the need to '...promote greater understanding of a society with diverse traditions by engaging where at all possible in programmes where there is a strong cross-community involvement.'* (original emphases)
- 2 This emphasis is also present in the Youth Service (Northern Ireland) order - 1987, which established the Youth Council for Northern Ireland, and gave it responsibility to 'encourage cross-community activity by the youth service'.
- 3 See the *Community Relations Guidelines* produced by the Youth Council in 1992
- 4 These principles come from the research by the Future Ways team at the University of Ulster - 'A Worthwhile Venture? - practically investing in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence' 1997
- 5 Guelke et al (1988) define a contested society as 'one where there is no shared common sense of identity and where support for the institutions of the state are variable depending on the traditions and loyalties people belong to and how they sense their position vis-à-vis the state at any time.'





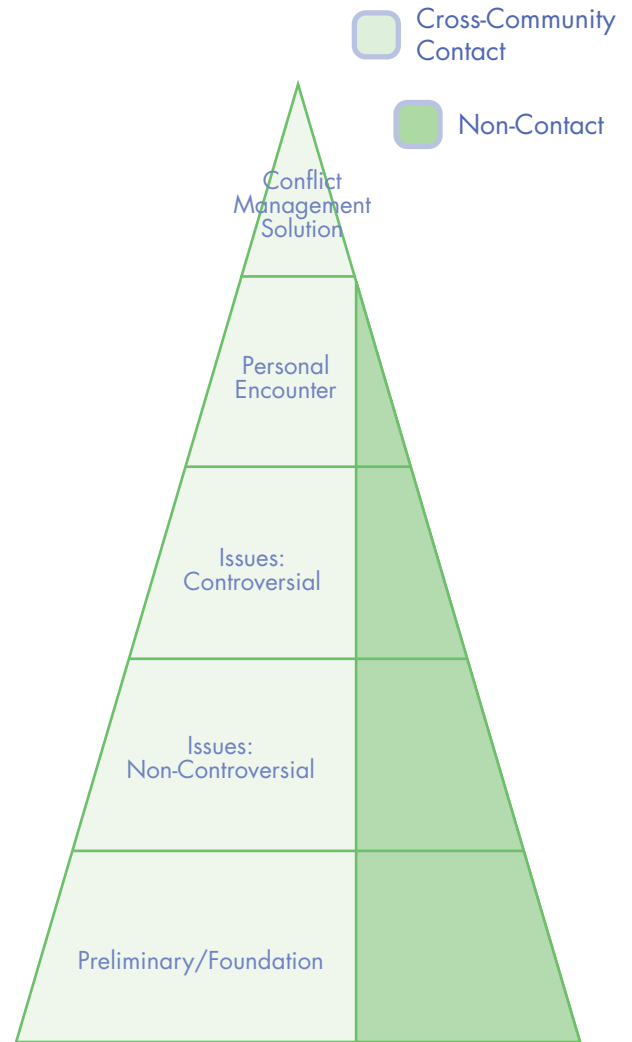
## A New Framework

### 1992 GUIDELINES

In the Community Relations Guidelines (1992), produced by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland, a model of community relations practice was proposed (see figure 1)<sup>6</sup>. Its five levels allowed for single community work (what has subsequently become known as 'single identity work') at the first four of the five levels, with an assumption that the level of contact across communities would increase at each level of the model.

In working toward the creation of these guidelines, the most common view seemed to be that the earlier model was deemed useful for its time, but has limitations in the context of current practice. In particular, it was interpreted as a sequential developmental model, where people should start at the bottom and work their way up. In reality, different groups and contexts demand different approaches. Over time people have begun to take into account that Northern Ireland has many more forms of diversity than Protestant/Catholic, and that effective work may involve both 'single community' work and contact between different communities at different stages in the process. Community relations work (and youth work generally) is very much contextual - that is the local circumstances will dictate where you can start, how long a process you need to engage in, and how quickly your work will be able to progress.

Figure 1





For these reasons, this guide proposes a new framework for people to use in preparing and reflecting on their work. It is not designed to be prescriptive, but rather a framework for workers planning and reflecting on their practice. However it is based on the understanding of two key premises:

- The central importance of dealing with controversial issues in a contested society as a prerequisite for understanding and change
- That dialogue is an integral part of the democratic process

### THE FRAMEWORK

Central to the proposed framework (figure 2) is the concept of reflection and learning<sup>7</sup> - for practice to improve and develop, the practitioner (and the participants in the practice) must reflect on what they have done, learn from that reflection and modify and refine their practice as a consequence.

Around the central theme of reflection and learning, it is suggested that there are four elements. Rather than being seen as one-off stages within a process, you should see the cycle as something that may happen several times over (for example) the course of a project or life-span of a group. They are:

**1. Relationship Building<sup>8</sup>** - is fundamental to effective practice. 'Relationships' include worker to individual, individual to individual, group to worker and group to individual.

Barriers to effective relationship building may include scapegoating within the group, rivalry, a lack of trust or a working environment which feels unsafe. Relationship building is something that most workers will put energy into at the beginning of a group's life. However it is likely to need attention throughout the life-span of a group/project, particularly when handling controversial issues or personal biographies. Sometimes external demands (especially funding time-frames) mean that the time and energy needed to build good relationships is not invested. This can weaken practice.

When you have been dealing with difficult and/or personal issues, it is worth checking with your group to be sure that relationships remain strong, and if necessary taking some time out to ensure that you maintain a trusting and supportive atmosphere within the group.

**Key Questions:** *Some of the questions you might ask with regard to relationship building are - What are the things that have happened in the group that tell me that relationships are strong/under strain? How am I feeling about the group and the individuals within it? How has the behaviour of the group towards each other/me changed during the course of our session/work together?*



*The support worker identified as crucial the empowerment of the young people (modelling the democratic process), mutual respect and realistic expectation of young people's degree of involvement. "Don't expect a higher level of commitment than is possible for the young person. Too high an expectation kills commitment". She stressed the importance of her role as listener and an encourager to motivate and build confidences in the members so that they "can do". - What do you think of the worker's comments about expectations?*

**2. Engagement Around Issues** - Earlier models often assume that groups need to be led gently into progressively more difficult issues. In practice we know that each group behaves differently and issues may emerge from the very beginning of a process or people may take some time to develop the confidence or desire to open up. This becomes more complex in 'cross-community' work, or any work bringing together diverse groups of people where some may be more open, articulate and politically skilled and aware than others. The important factors here are that workers are able to use their judgement on when and how to engage in work around issues, and discussion and exploration of issues is seen as part of a wider process (that is that it has a purpose and will lead to some action or activity).

*Staff and participants found it difficult to raise more controversial topics. Yet aspects of effective practice had developed:*

*The centre uses a CR resource pack developed by a group of young members. Its strength is seen in its clarity and its step by step nature.*

*The young people felt accepted in the centre. They valued the requirement for respect and had some awareness of the concept of interdependence. They expressed a genuine affection for the workers.*

**Key Questions:** *Are there specific interests and/or experiences that you can use as a stimulus for discussion in your group - particularly if you are bringing young people from different communities together? What issues are the young people interested in? What are the blockages to discussion both internally (within the group - dynamics, ability levels and so on) and externally (the local culture and experience young people have of being listened to and taken seriously)?*

**3. Addressing Controversial Issues** - As a principle it is suggested that no worker should engage with a group on controversial issues until they have explored these issues themselves. If the issues are uncomfortable for



you, you can guarantee that they are more difficult for the young people in your group. Young people will also pick up on any reticence or discomfort on your part, and will take the lead from you. One useful way of preparing is to work through materials with colleagues as part of your preparation for group work. There are a number of roles that you can assume to help develop effective programmes addressing difficult and controversial issues, such as those outlined by the *Speak Your Piece* initiative (see appendix 2).

At some point in the working life of your group you are likely to engage around difficult issues, and if you have done your preparation, it is likely to be at the right time for that particular group. Co-facilitation (particularly with someone from another background/community to yourself) can be a useful approach to adopt at this stage. Being a little nervous is natural and probably a healthy sign.

**Key Questions:** *Are you comfortable in addressing difficult or controversial issues with your group? If the group is reticent, is there anything that you are/are not doing that may be influencing them? What kind of resources and stimuli do you have to interest and challenge your group?*

*What are my limitations? Is there a colleague/co-facilitator who will be willing to work with and support me?*

**4. Transformation** - Sometimes the most difficult part is knowing how to move from discussion to action. [look for case study] What are you going to do about these issues you have been discussing. As part of helping young people to make successful transitions, your role is to help them play a fuller and active role in society through identifying and addressing problems. Again, earlier models seem to suggest that action is the ultimate aim of your group work process rather than an integral part of it. Young people taking responsibility and acting accordingly - being citizen and doing citizenship - should be an integral part of your work, with the young people taking action, reflecting on what they learn and developing new actions in response to their learning.

**Key Questions:** *What experience do your group have in taking action to address issues? What was the response to their activity? Can you discuss any obstacles you might see without putting the group off? Sometimes a good tactic is a 'sinch fight' - that is picking an action where you are likely to succeed in the first instance, in order to build confidence within the group for more difficult struggles ahead.*

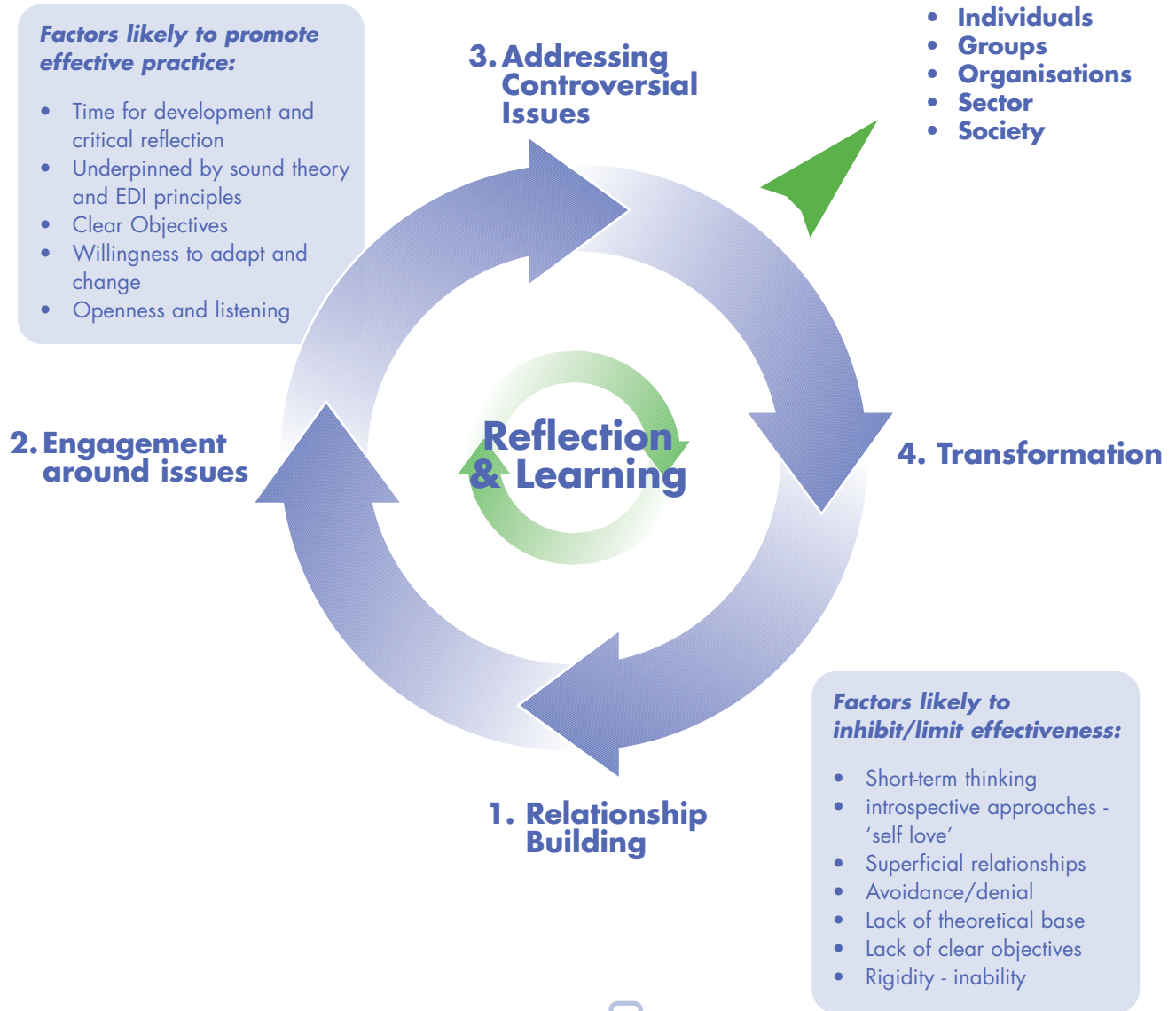
*6 Based on models developed by the Community Relations Council and Clem McCartney*

*7 See the section on critical reflective practice at the end of this document*

*8 See also the section on 'Knowing Your Group' in the 'Towards Effective Practice' section of this document*



**Figure 2 - A Framework for reflective practice**





## Factors likely to impact on your work...

There are many factors that can promote or inhibit effective practice.

### Promoting Factors:

#### **Time for Development and Critical Reflection**

- this is a recurrent theme of this document, and something which cannot be stressed strongly enough. It is also possibly one of the most difficult areas to move on if you work with an environment where time for these activities is not valued or prioritised, or where the practitioner feels isolated. This is very much a matter for policy as well as practice, but the bottom line is that without creating and protecting time for these important issues, practice will be weakened, and its impact reduced.

#### **Sound Theory and EDI Principles**

- in addition to understanding, exploring and critiquing the theoretical base of youth work practice, practitioners also have to consider how the EDI principles are all present in their work. Essentially this means that practitioners should (ideally collectively) be involved in creation of new theoretical approaches to their work.

### Inhibiting Factors:

**Short-term Thinking** - it can be difficult to think in the long term when you have a short contract, or are on short-term funding, or dealing with imminent deadlines. However thinking ahead and having a vision for your work are essential aspects of effective practice

**Lack of Theoretical Base** - youth workers should operate out of some understanding of the theoretical pretext of their work in terms of educational theories, theory around youth work, and theory around conflict transformation. Though much of this should be provided through on-going training, you should also seek out sources of theoretical input, and create a learning community within your organisation, generating your own theoretical base.



**Clear Objectives and a Willingness to Adapt and Change**

- workers need to be clearer about the kind of outcomes (changes) they expect from their work and the indicators that tell us that change is happening. They should ensure that the objectives they set help move them toward those outcomes. As well as objectives being clear, they should also be reviewed on a regular basis, based on critical reflection and learning, rather than slavishly followed. Again there are clear policy implications of this approach, particularly around objectives agreed with funders.

**Modelling Openness and Listening**

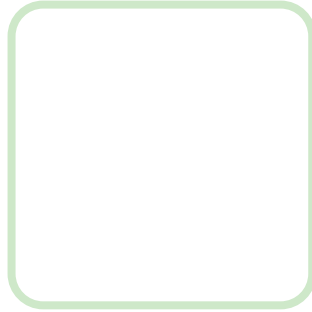
- if you want young people to be open and to listen to each other, then it is very important that you model this behaviour in your relationship with them, including the open sharing of your biography. This should also be encouraged in wider relationships with the local community, other groups you are working with and so on.

**Rigidity - Inability to Adapt and Change**

- workers must be flexible - responding to local circumstances, events and the dynamics of their groups. Again, external forces and the policy context (particularly in terms of funding culture), can work against this flexibility. It is important that workers are able to mediate this environment to ensure the best possible context for the success of their work with young people

**Avoidance/Denial**

- again, we in Northern Ireland are expert at avoidance, at politely skirting around the difficult and contentious issues - often out of the best of motives, for example attempting to avoid hurting the feelings of others. However, if youth workers are to make a meaningful contribution to the development of mutual understanding and respect, and the creation of more vibrant and democratic communities, then these traits must be challenged first in ourselves and them amongst those we work with.



**Introspective approaches** - in Northern Ireland communities and individuals are prone to thinking that they have a monopoly on suffering, and the righteousness of their cause. It is important that as a worker, you are not reinforcing these feelings, but sensitively challenging people (including yourself) to consider other perspectives through vehicles such as cross-community contact, outside speakers, media resources and international contact and exchange.

**Superficial Relationships** - as is stressed in the framework section of this document (page 8) not putting time into building relationships is asking for trouble, and at best will mean that your work is superficial and people are likely to avoid difficult discussions.





## Toward Effective Practice

### WHY DO THE WORK?

It is usually assumed that people should 'do' community relations work, because presumably it is 'a good thing', and besides it is in the curriculum, there is funding for it, it gets you resources to go on trips, and so on. It must be asked - what is the rationale, what are the objectives, and definitions of what terms like community relations and education for citizenship mean? Resistance to this work has come about because some people see it as 'wishy-washy', some as manipulation, others as part of a pan-nationalist agenda, and others still, as an attempt to coerce people into compliance with the values and actions of the British State. A lack of clarity about what the work is, what it is aiming to do, and what changes it is trying to affect, add fodder to the resisters' arguments.

A starting point is to say that this work is about the promotion of democratic values. This immediately begs the question - whose democratic values? The term democracy is used by both of the main blocks here to describe both their methods (particularly post-ceasefire) and their objectives. This leaves the youth worker with a very precarious route to tread.

It is useful to link any discussion of democracy to values that are more universal, such as those laid out in various human rights frameworks,

such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Obviously now that the European Convention on Human Rights is part of the legislative framework here, this is another important document to draw on, and the authors anticipate that the forthcoming (at the time of writing) Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland will be another important reference and guide.

So the basis of effective work in this area, should be around:

- The promotion and safeguarding of democratic values
- The rights of young people
- Helping young people to negotiate conflicts in their lives, and conflicts in rights and values
- The relationship between the young person and their society
- Supporting young people and organisations to develop and contribute to a more plural society.

The human rights and values base then allows for the creation of a framework in which young people can discuss issues such as their identity (identities), allegiances, and the structures and mechanisms of society and how these affect their lives.



### THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRACTITIONER

Lack of confidence and a perceived lack of training have been cited by practitioners as some of the reasons why they feel ill-equipped to engage in community relations work. This is understandable given that such work both challenges their own value systems and potentially raises strong emotions in the young people they work with.

The handling of controversial issues is a daunting prospect for many inexperienced practitioners. As detailed elsewhere in this guide effective practice requires a range of skills, sensitivity, judgement, self-awareness and reflection. But it is also important to remember that skilled practitioners were once inexperienced and that even with experience it is important that they take into account their limitations.

Those with the desire and aptitude to get involved in community relations work and citizenship education should see their training as an evolutionary process. Opportunities for training are important and should be sought but confidence-building is also achieved through experiential learning. The worker should first experience as a participant, effective practice thereby understanding the discomfort, emotional tension and insight of engaging in discourse and having personal values clarified.

Workers should seek opportunities to work with experienced colleagues.

**Co-facilitation** provides the chance to work alongside a skilled colleague, to observe, to engage in interaction with young people on controversial issues, to participate in debriefing and to reflect on practice with a 'critical friend' without shouldering the full responsibility for the programme.

**Mentoring** of this nature can make an important contribution to establishing the confidence and familiarity to allow practitioners to progress toward an increasingly challenging work.

**Peer development** built in the context of a cross-community partnership<sup>9</sup> where workers first develop trust in their own personal and professional discourse can be a powerful catalyst to engaging young people in the effective clarification of their own values.





It is important that all work is carefully considered and prepared. Effective community relations work has a dimension of considered risk but practitioners should be aware of their responsibilities and not feel pressurized into practice for which they feel ill-prepared.

### KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Below, is a list of some of the key principles of effective practice that have emerged from an examination of previous experience and projects. Each principle is explained and a number of questions are posed that should help you reflect on and revise your practice. It is a fundamental to effective practice that you are aware of your group and the context in which you are working. For that reason we have separated that principle from the list that follows.

#### KNOWING YOUR GROUP

If your work with young people is to reflect the inter-related principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence, it is vital that a great deal of energy is directed to getting to know your group (and their getting to know you and each other), the context in which you are working, and the challenges and limitations that you will face. Wittingly or otherwise, a great deal of responsibility and trust is being invested in you - the practitioner - by young people, their parents, the wider community and your employing organisation. As stated earlier, there is no magic blueprint that will guide you

through this process, and energy spent understanding the group and the context in the early stages, is a good investment in the success of the overall process. However, knowing your group is not simply something you do at the beginning of the process. You should grow and learn together, and develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other.

The biggest lesson learnt is to talk to the community first. Get their backing. If you have the confidence of the community the project will work. Local people have been recruited to deliver the project in their area.

**Key Questions:** *What is the background to this group - its history and dynamics? What is its purpose? Why was it established and by whom? To what extent do the young people have ownership of the group and its direction and purpose?*

*What is your understanding of the context of the group? What are the challenges and limitations that the context would place on your work? What are the levels of skills, understanding and preparedness to change within the group? What needs can you identify?*

*Has the group met together previously? Are the members well established within the life of the group? Are there individuals within the group that know other individuals? How do you feel this affects the dynamics of the group? If you*



*are new to the group, what do they feel about you and your role? What are their expectations of you?*

*What is the make up of the group? What kinds of diversity are represented within it?*

*What are limitations that are placed on you that might impact on your ability to do adequate ground-work on getting to know your group (for example tight funding deadlines, a limited time opportunity, you've been 'bought in' to deliver a particular session)? What are the implications of these limitations to the effectiveness of your work?*

## **1. KNOW YOUR MATERIALS**

In creating this resource, we have deliberately steered away from any temptation to create new resource materials. There is a wealth of materials available from a wide range of sources. A resources section is provided at the back of this document to assist you. We concentrate instead on how materials can be used to enhance your work. It is good practice to acquaint yourself with a wide range of resources and materials, both those created to specifically address community relations and citizenship issues, or the EDI principles, and other resources you might gather from the media, reports, and other sources.

Please note that materials do not need to be 'neutral' or politically correct. Indeed materials which express an alternative or even extreme

view, may be more effective in getting to the issues you are seeking to address. More important than what you use are the following factors:

That you are able to provide balance and have the critical skills to analyse source materials,

That you make your group aware that there are a range of perspectives on any given issue.

What is more important than what materials you use are the following factors:

**Key Questions:** *Are you familiar with the materials - have you tested them yourself, with colleagues or other groups? What are their benefits and limitations?*

*Are the materials pitched right for your group? Is the language clear and appropriate? Will the materials be stimulating and interesting for your group (what works with one group can completely flop with another)?*

*Do the materials stimulate and interest you (if you are bored this will show!)?*

*Are you aware of the words, acronyms, terminology and concepts? Can you explain them?*

On a practical note, you should also be aware at the planning stage of the materials and resources you will need including space, materials and equipment. It is also useful to write up a note on the impact and usefulness of resources as part of your reflection on the session.



## 2. AWARENESS OF THE PROCESS

As outlined in the framework section, there is no neat process for you to follow. However, it is important to understand where you are with your group, how far you have come, and what may be the next steps. As well as understanding where the **group** is in relation to its ability to address issues and engage, it is also important to have an understanding of where each **individual** is in relation to the rest of the group.

At the outset of any programme or project you may well have agreed aims. It is important to review your work against these aims periodically, and review and refine the aims as part of the reflective process. It is important to acknowledge progress and obstacles as they arise, and to encourage the group to review, evaluate and reflect on their work together.

**Key Questions:** *What progress have you made as a group, and how do you know this?*

*What have been the challenges and obstacles, and what things have gone better than expected?*

*What would you do differently next time?*

*What are the next steps you need to take?*

## 3. ESTABLISHING THE GROUND RULES

***This is one of the most important aspects of working together as a group, but can often be seen as a chore by both participants and workers - it is important that you set the right tone and encourage the group to invest time and energy in establishing the parameters of your work together.***





As has been previously stated, the nature of this work may be contentious. It is important that group members are able to comment freely without necessarily feeling undermined or under threat. This highlights the importance of establishing agreed and realistic ground rules. A good group agreement also establishes the democratic nature of the group, and the value placed on everyone's participation and contribution. It helps the group to feel that they are in control.

Your role as a worker should be made clear to the group and they should be given the opportunity to discuss and if need be re-negotiate your role.

It is not always possible (nor arguably always desirable) to create a 'neutral' space for your group and your activities, but you should always endeavour to provide a safe space in which people can contribute, challenge and engage without undue anxiety or fear. It is useful to include the time-scale for the group, particular activities or sessions, and to agree the purpose of the group and the expectations of its members. You will probably need to review the agreement from time-to-time as the needs of your group and the relationships within it evolve and change.

It is important that you and group members feel a genuine ownership of the ground rules you agree together. Your group may view the exercise as the facilitator imposing 'ways of being' upon the group without their explicit

consent, and that their opinions are being stifled. It is vital that you work to dispel such feelings, and establish commitment to the agreement, as an integral part of your work together.

**Key Questions:** *What experience (good or bad) does your group have of making an agreement?*

*Is there understanding and consensus about the value and purpose of such an agreement?*

*What are the key factors you need to establish agreement on for your work to proceed?*

*What expectations should the group have of you?*

*How do you ensure that the agreement continues to meet the needs of the group?*

#### **4. DEMOCRATIC MODELLING**

The key here is the relationship between what you are trying to achieve in your work and how you work. In other words congruence between ends and means. This may well have implications for your work setting (does your organisation reflect democratic values? How do you feel you are treated as an employee?<sup>10</sup>). Note that the central relationships are the one between you and members of the group, and between the group members themselves.



*The young people had no control or ownership of the budgets. They appear to have had minimal control over the programme initially, although their influence increased over time, culminating in the conference which they organized and ran themselves with advice and minimal input from the staff involved... the group were given significant autonomy....*

*The conferences seem to have been an important event for the group in taking ownership of the agenda, and addressing issues they had looked at together in a public forum.*

*The agency seems to have been courageous in addressing difficult issues within the group, and pushing people when they thought it necessary.*

**Key Questions:** Who makes the key decisions in your work and why?

To what extent are the young participants involved in decision-making processes about the focus and direction of your work?

What factors influence how decisions are taken (funders criteria, organisational policy, line management structures etc?).

### 5. INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

In Northern Ireland language can be a bridge or a barrier. Whatever your views on particular words, you should be sensitive as to how these words are received by the listener, and be aware of emotive language (for example use of the term Northern Ireland can be taken as a political stance). You must be clear not only about what it is you want to say, but also about how it will be heard by others.

- *Why don't you brainstorm a list of words that you think can be interpreted in a number of ways?*
- *Is there 'civic language', i.e. ways of speaking that are more acceptable in public settings - that are less likely to cause misunderstanding or offence?*



*They learnt about their own tolerance and intolerance and the personal 'triggers' they have around issues.*

## 6. AVOID BEING THE EXPERT

It is important that you are able to demonstrate that you don't have all the answers (even if you sometimes have some of them), and that you work with the group to help them come to their own conclusions about important issues. If you demonstrate or project strong opinions or 'expertise', group members will be loathe to express their own ideas and opinions, particularly if they feel they will be regarded as marginal, unpopular or extreme. You need to be very aware of how you present yourself and what this does to the dynamics of the group. You should also be aware of what you don't know, acknowledge this and be prepared to research and explore important issues with the group. One youth worker describes this state as being 'comfortable in your own ignorance'. It is also of course important that you continue to learn and grow, and that you model this learning within the group.

**Key Questions:** Who presents 'facts' and opinions in your group?

How are they received by others in the group?

Can you agree a set of values with your group against which they can measure their views and actions? (For example the group may accept that they don't like discrimination against themselves, but may exhibit it in their behaviour towards others).

## 7. 'CLOSURE'

This is a very American term, but it is vitally important to know where your group is at, at the end of a particular session or activity, and not to leave things hanging with emotions high and issues unresolved. This issue has to be dealt with through a combination of planning (preparing the work in such a way as to leave adequate time to de-brief and ensure that relationships are fine), and experience (knowing the group well enough to know how far you can take things and when to break and reflect). In any case it is good practice to have reflective time at the end of any session, or during it as appropriate.



**Key Questions:** *Have you time to plan your sessions thoroughly?*

*How much time have you left for the group to review and evaluate the session, and from experience do you feel this is adequate?*

*How well do you feel you know the group, and are they ready to deal with difficult issues?*

*What factors are influencing the progress of your group?*

*Do specific individuals require support?*

### **8. AN ETHICAL BASE**

If your community relations or education for citizenship work is underpinned by the EDI principles, then it is political. Workers engaging with young people must acknowledge the responsibilities that facilitating the work entails. Facilitators are as much products of this divided society as the young people they work with. They can aspire to transparency and greater neutrality. They cannot be neutral. Their role is to present young people with a range of perspectives on specific issues and to help participants clarify their own thinking through activity, discussion and questioning. To do this effectively they must become aware of the possibility of bias in their own contributions and interventions.

Research suggests that one of the most powerful influences in encouraging young people to engage in potentially contentious work is the trust they have in the worker. When situations

become difficult young people look to the worker for re-assurance and leadership.

Workers must ensure that when they encourage young people to express deeply felt opinions or disclose sensitive information about their lives that the environment is appropriate - that there are safe-guards built in to the ground rules with regard to confidentiality, and that young people are aware of the types of information that workers are professionally obliged to act upon.

**Key Questions:** *What are the 'triggers' that make you aware of your own bias on any particular issue?*

*Are there issues around which you should seek the support/collaboration of a colleague, possibly one with a different perspective?*

*Are you and the group aware of any types of information (for example around child protection or criminal activity) that you are obliged to report?*

*What are the difficult ethical issues for you in your work, and how do you get support in addressing them?*





## 9. PERSONAL HISTORY/BIOGRAPHY

Successful work often involves individuals sharing their 'own story'. Such activities frequently result in personal critical reflection. Individuals see previous experience in a new light, particularly in gaining insight into how their attitudes and values have been shaped and their sense of identity formed. Selecting aspects of your past and sharing these within a group can be an important step in establishing trust and confidence. A trusting and democratic environment dictates that the worker, too, should participate in the exercise and be prepared to make appropriate disclosures (consistent with personal safety) which help others in the group see where s/he is coming from. **This is an area where it may be particularly important to consult with experienced colleagues for advice and support.**

**Key Questions:** *What aspects of your own biography do you feel it would be useful to share with the group?*

*If you are not disclosing aspects of your own biography, is this because you feel it is inappropriate, or because you are uncomfortable to do so? Is discomfort a good enough reason?*

*Have you made these disclosures before with colleagues for example?*

*Are you aware of any aspects of the history or biography of any of the group members which you feel is sensitive?*

*Would there be value in their sharing this with the group?*

*Is it appropriate for them to do so?*

*How can you support this disclosure and ensure safety within the group and the wider community?*

*9 Or partnerships reflecting other forms of diversity, depending on the subject matter and the groups you are going to be working with*

*10 These are essentially questions of organisational policy and culture. Workers should be aware of the policy implications of the way they work. JEDI has published guidelines for organisations wishing to engage in a policy development process.*



## Terminology Used in this Document

In spite of all the political and institutional developments of recent years, Northern Ireland remains a complex and divided society. Part of the challenge for youth workers (and arguably the central purpose of youth work) is to help equip young people for life in this still divided and contested society - to help them develop the skills, understanding and aptitude to deal positively and constructively with controversy, conflict and division. Within the JEDI initiative, there is terminology which, unless it is made more explicit, is in danger of becoming mere jargon, terms such as equity, diversity and interdependence, citizenship, and community relations. This section is designed to bring some clarity to these terms - but not to give absolute definitions partly because the meaning of many of the terms may be different in different contexts. For these reasons, we have suggested some questions that workers and groups might ask themselves when considering these concepts to help create consensus and clarity.

**A warning about 'expertise':** People who are engaging with young people around issues that are difficult or controversial, often feel that they need to know a great deal about the subject, so that they have some level of 'expertise', and can answer any questions/queries that might arise. Whilst workers should always be trying to build their

knowledge base, an important part of youth work is the notion of 'co-learning', enquiry and exploration. It is important that workers are comfortable with what they don't know, and that young people are aware that workers also find certain issues difficult or emotive, and are prepared to learn and grow with the group.

**Community Relations:** This is a very broad term used to describe a wide range of practice and approaches. JEDI is engaged in the challenge of bringing clarity to this term, and to help define 'effective' community relations practice (see section on principles). Whilst in the past this work has often been about 'relationship building' with those who have different views or community backgrounds to ourselves, it has increasingly been about understanding difference, appreciating diversity (in its widest sense), and developing the skills for non-violent, democratic and creative alternatives to the patterns of the past.

There is an ongoing debate about the merits or otherwise of 'cross-community contact' (usually meaning projects bringing groups together from the two main traditions here) versus 'single identity' work (which usually means working within a single tradition sometimes as preparation for contact). Both have their place and indeed groups may need to be involved in both forms of work. However it is important to understand the potential shortcomings of each approach. For example cross community contact can sometimes be superficial



particularly when activities are held in 'neutral venues' outside of the communities in which people live. Single identity work may serve to reinforce existing positions rather than encouraging and challenging people to appreciate other perspectives.

**Key Questions:** *What does the term 'community relations' mean to you/your group/organization? What is it you are trying to achieve when you do this work? What are the patterns/ways of doing things in your community, which you think need to be challenged/changed? How would you know this work had been effective (what would change/be different)? How could you measure this change?*

**Equity:** This term is essentially about fairness. It is about ensuring that people are treated fairly regardless of difference. At one level it is about human rights and justice<sup>11</sup> - about ensuring that people have equality of opportunity regardless of things such as their ethnic or community background, sex or sexuality, or disability. However it is important to note that equity is more than equality - treating everyone the same is not the same as treating everyone fairly.

In participation terms, it is about more than saying 'our activities are open to everyone, regardless of...', it is about ensuring that we do not directly or indirectly exclude people, and that we positively seek ways of including those who might choose to get involved in our work.

*Questions: What does the term 'equity' mean to you? Is it the same as equality? Do you feel that you have been treated unfairly in any way, because of a group or community that you belong to, or because of some aspect of your identity? Are you aware of your rights, and the rights of children and young people? What responsibilities do you have for other people?*

**Diversity:** This term is about difference, and how we handle difference. It is about moving from seeing difference as a threat, to seeing it as something which can enrich us, thus appreciating the value of different experiences, cultures and perspectives. It is crucial in youth work that the worker is a positive model in terms of attitudes and responses to difference. Whilst it is important that the worker should have some understanding of different communities and people of various dispositions and backgrounds, it is equally important that they are prepared to (openly and with young people) work to deepen their understanding through enquiry and contact with people who are different to themselves.

**Key Questions:** *What kinds of diversity are there in your group/organisation/community? How do people express their identity? Can you have several identities at the same time? What are the things you like/dislike about your identity? How do you think other people see you? Are there other communities or groups who frighten you or make you nervous? How much do you really know about them? What*



*could your group/organisation do to make your work more accessible to people from other backgrounds?*

**Interdependence:** This term is about relationships. It is about understanding how we are related to each other, and how different communities and groups are inter-connected (for example socially, economically, geographically, culturally and historically). It is about building strong relationships, and a democratic culture. In practical terms this means 'modelling' the kind of society we want to create in our youth work practice, and developing our understanding of how the actions of individuals and groups affect each other. In many respects it is about 'belonging' and feeling inter-connected with others.

**Key Questions:** *How democratic is your group/organisation? Who makes the decisions and how? How can these decisions be challenged? What are the bodies and groups that have power over decisions that affect your life? In what ways can you influence these organisations? How do things that happen in other communities affect you? To what or whom do we feel we belong? Who would say they belong to 'us'? Is that 'us' an individual, a geographical community (community of location) or a community of like minded people (community of interest)?*

**Citizenship:** It is important that the youth service in Northern Ireland, articulates what it means by the term 'citizenship' or 'active citizenship'.

Citizenship can be interpreted in a lot of different ways, and for some it is about compliance - about creating 'good' citizens who vote, behave and don't ask awkward questions. Understandably many in the youth service would resist such a model. In the JEDI context it is about positive civic engagement - the creation of a just (equitable), pluralist (diverse) and democratic (interdependent) society. In practical terms it is about working with young people to address issues of civic/public importance, about learning public life skills, and about understanding how society, communities and organisations work, and how to be effective in addressing issues and playing an active and positive role in society.

**Key Questions:** *What kind of society would you like to see in the future - what would be different? What does the term 'citizenship' mean to you? What are the issues you would like to be able to address in your community/organisation/group? Is there something practical that your group/organisation could do to address one of these issues?*

11 Frameworks for these concepts are contained in a range of human rights and other legislative instruments - see section on JEDI Environment



## The Youth Worker as a Reflective Practitioner

Critical reflection is a term used freely in professional circles. Most of us, in our professional lives, would claim that we think about our practice, decide what we think went well and what did not, and then act to bring about improvement. If we are honest our attempts at improvement are haphazard and, often, based on hunches. There is a possibility that our reflections go no deeper than tinkering with technical aspects of our practice without ever challenging the value system on which that practice is based.

Critical Reflective Practice as advocated by Schon, Elliott and others is much more than evaluative action on specific aspects of practice. It asks us to be more systematic about our reflection on practice. It helps us to generate evidence to address

### **Key Questions:**

*What did I, the worker do?*

*What did the young people do?*

*What were they experiencing / learning?*

*How worthwhile was it?*

*What did I learn?*

*What do I intend to do now?*

A systematic assessment of community relations/citizenship practice is essential for three reasons:

- 1) Practitioners in the past have relied too much on “feel good” hunches that have been impossible to document with sceptical audiences, and worlds other than youth work. Intuitive responses based on craft experience are crucially important, but should be supported by evidence from other sources.
- 2) Mainstream external evaluations of work are often conducted at arbitrary moments in time and fail to fully understand the contextual situation so familiar to the practitioner
- 3) Too frequently community relations practice with young people is facilitated by workers who are vulnerable to organisational, sectoral and community pressures - consequently their professional esteem suffers.

It is a way of working. It can fundamentally alter a practitioner’s sense of professional and personal worth and also challenge the bureaucratic constraints under which he/she works.



### WHAT IS MEANT BY REFLECTIVE PRACTICE?

It is the consideration of your **own** practice in a systematic and critical way. It both contextualises and personalises in an effort 'to understand the social situation in which the participant finds himself.' (Elliott)

In other words you, your group and the circumstances in which you work are unique. Reflective Practice takes stock of the present by generating understanding of your situation with a view to improving the future.

The practice of youth workers needs to be further and more deeply researched. The worker is best placed to do that research. For that research to have meaning it should be focused concerns or problems identified by the worker.

Reflective practice is:

- **Educational** - the practitioner deepens their understanding and professional knowledge. In addition to questioning what young people have learnt it also allows you to question what you have learned and what you might do as a result of that learning
- **Professional** - it empowers by encouraging autonomous and independent judgment, thus giving the worker the evidence by which to support professional action and challenge weak or inappropriate policy.

- **Ethical/Moral** - it encourages practitioners to go beyond the technical strengths and weaknesses of their practice to examine the underlying personal and professional values on which that practice is based.
- **Systematic** - the practitioner engages in the systematic collection of evidence to gain insight into his / her practice. It is systematic in that it involves
  - \* collecting and collating evidence employing a variety of methods in parallel - e.g. a diary, a 'critical friend', questionnaires, video and audio recording, interviews
  - \* analysing evidence
  - devising hypotheses based on evidence
  - testing hypotheses in action
  - reflecting on the results of that action

Once embraced the practitioner becomes in effect committed to a cycle of **ACTION RESEARCH** - constantly refining problems and taking action to improve practice.

- **Collegiate** - critical reflective practice becomes really effective when it becomes a collective enterprise and colleagues open up their practice to sympathetic scrutiny and share insights into their personal and professional values.



### THE STAGES OF ACTION RESEARCH

Critical reflection is a key component of action research. Practitioners must understand, intimately, the situation as it really is before they can take action to improve practice.



## Further Resources

The very nature of this work, as these guidelines have indicated, is constantly changing. For this reason, it is difficult to identify resources that remain relevant and will not date. It is almost impossible to also identify resources that will be pertinent and precisely relevant to your own particular needs and situation.

What is intended therefore, is to provide examples of organisations and materials that will help lead you in the right direction. The JEDI website contains an updated section on current resources and links to appropriate organisations.

It is important to stress that the resources indicated below are simply a sample of what is available and the fact that certain publications and materials are not shown here does not mean that they are not valid and useful.

Overarching this work in particular and youth work in general is the ethics you employ in your work. The **National Youth Agency** has compiled a booklet on ethical practice in youth work. It can be downloaded from the NYA website at [www.nya.org.uk/ethics\\_in\\_yw](http://www.nya.org.uk/ethics_in_yw).

The **UNESCO Centre at the University of Ulster** have collated a wide range of resources on areas such as Citizen Education, Diversity and Interdependence and Equality, Justice and Sustainable Development. The directory has many useful resources on specifically Community Relations and sectarianism in

Northern Ireland as well as listing resources on other issues such as racism, the rights of women and Human Rights. Possibly the strength of this resource is that it gives fairly comprehensive details of websites and web based resources. For further information, contact Barbara Rosborough on 028 7032 3593. The website for the UNESCO Centre is [www.ulst.ac.uk/unesco](http://www.ulst.ac.uk/unesco)

The **Community Relations Council Information Centre** has many publications in stock including those published by the Community Relations Council and over 100 other community relations, community and political groups. The phone number for the centre is 028 9031 1881. The CRC website is [www.community-relations.org.uk](http://www.community-relations.org.uk)

The **Irish School of Ecumenics** have published two resources based on the work of Dr. Cecelia Clegg and Dr. Joseph Liechty. Entitled Moving Beyond Sectarianism, one resource is targeted at young adults in the youth and schools sector, the other at adult education and continuing learning. The aim of the packs is to make available practical, attractive, experiential and multi-media resources in the field of community relations. The cost of the packs is £20.00 and they are available from ISE, 028 9038 2750.

The **Citizenship Foundation** has a website that contains a list of recent publications and contacts to other organisations. Website address is [www.citfou.org.uk](http://www.citfou.org.uk).

**Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN)**

provides information and source material on the conflict in Northern Ireland. The website address is [www.cain.ulst.ac.uk](http://www.cain.ulst.ac.uk) and provides links to other sites such as the ARK website ([www.ark.ac.uk](http://www.ark.ac.uk)), a joint project of the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast which has a social and political archive of Northern Ireland. Linked to this site is the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey which provides details of social attitudes of people living in Northern Ireland. ([www.ark.ac.uk/nilt](http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt))

Detailed information on political parties in Northern Ireland can be found at [www.politicalresources.net](http://www.politicalresources.net).

**BBC Northern Ireland** has published *A State Apart*, which is an interactive chronicle of 30 years of conflict in Northern Ireland. Copies are available from the Education Company, telephone 028 9084 4023.

*Eyewitness* is an interactive online site which looks at approaches to conflict transformation and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. This learning resource draws upon BBC radio and television archive and explores themes such as 'Dealing with difference' and 'cross-community action'. It has a number of interactive activities which encourage the user to role-play and reflect the dynamics common to all conflicts. This is an essential learning resource for youth and community groups. [www.bbc.co.uk/eyewitness](http://www.bbc.co.uk/eyewitness)

*The Symbols Interactive Experience* is a series of CD-ROMs that explore major symbols of cultural identity in Northern Ireland. The first in the series is entitled *1916 - Lest We Forget* and it explores the symbolism of the Battle of the Somme and the Easter Rising. Currently this resource is free for trainers and is available from the **Nerve Centre** in Derry, telephone 028 7126 0562 or visit their site on [www.nerve-centre.org.uk](http://www.nerve-centre.org.uk)

The **Linenhall Library** in Belfast has collected a huge range of materials relating to the conflict in Northern Ireland including posters, leaflets, photographs as well as a press cuttings service. The library has also developed a CD-ROM entitled *Troubled Images*, which is a collation of political posters, and other images from the past 30 years. Further information can be obtained from the librarian, Yvonne Murphy at the Northern Ireland Political Collection at the library. Telephone 028 9032 1707 or log on to the website at [www.linenhall.com](http://www.linenhall.com).

For a range of materials on International Development, you can contact **80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World**. Their resources include information on development issues as well as *Northern Ireland: A Place Apart?* which explores many of the core issues involved in the Northern Ireland conflict (published in partnership with the Glenree Centre for Reconciliation.) 80:20 can be contacted on 003531 286 0487 and some

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useful information on their work can be obtained on the Development Education Ireland website at [www.developmenteducationireland.org](http://www.developmenteducationireland.org)

Also on the theme of development education, the **One World Centre** has a comprehensive catalogue of resources on a number of issues including world debt, aid and the environment. The telephone number is 028 9024 1879, website address: [www.belfastdec.org](http://www.belfastdec.org).

**Granada Learning** have published *Exploring World Religions* an interactive CD-ROM that examines Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Current price is £59.99 and Granada Learning can be contacted on 01264 342992.

The **Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities** is committed to providing training in the fields of equality, anti-racism and anti-discriminatory practice. NICEM can be contacted at 028 9023 8645 or via their website, [www.nicem.org.uk](http://www.nicem.org.uk).

Resources are also available on the subject of disability. **Disability Action** has developed a student pack, which can be obtained from the charity for a small charge of £3.00. Access is also available to the library maintained by Disability Action. The address is 189 Airport Road West, Belfast, telephone 028 9029 7880.

As previously stated, this is by no means a definitive listing of available resources. You are encouraged to explore and develop your own resources to ensure they meet your own specific needs.



## Appendix 1 UN CHILDREN'S CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

### Article

1. Who is a child? Every human being below 18 years unless the laws of a country say differently.
2. Non discrimination. All children are entitled to all of the rights in the Convention and therefore the State must protect the child without any exception whatsoever.
3. Best interests of the child. The best interests of the child should be the driving force behind any actions concerning them.
4. Implementation of rights. It is up to the State to make sure that the rights in the Convention are implemented.
5. Parents, family, community rights and responsibilities. The State must respect the role of parents and family in bringing up a child.
6. Life, survival and development. All children have the right to life and the State is obliged to ensure the survival and development of the child.
7. Name and nationality. Children have the right to a name, a nationality, to know and be cared for by their parents.
8. Preservation of identity. If a child illegally loses their identity the State must help the child to find out what they are.
9. Non-separation from parents. If a family is separated for some reason the State has to give the child information about the whereabouts of missing family members.
10. Family reunification. A child has the right to keep regular contact with both parents if they live in different countries and should be able to travel in order to ensure this.
11. Illicit transfer and non-return of children. The State shall combat child kidnapping.

## Reflection in Practice

12. Expression of opinion. As a child you have a voice and the right to have others listen to your opinion.
13. Freedom of expression and information. If you need information you have the right to get it, you also have the right to express yourself in writing, art, etc.
14. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion. States are to respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, subject to parental guidance.
15. Freedom of association. You have the right to meet with who you want as long as you are peaceful you can gather in groups.
16. Privacy, honour, reputation. Nobody can interfere with your rights to privacy, family, home or correspondence.
17. Access to information and media. You should have access to information from a number of different sources and of protection from harmful materials.
18. Parental responsibility. Both your parents or guardians have the responsibility for your upbringing and the State should provide them with assistance where necessary.
19. Abuse and neglect (while in family care). You are entitled to protection from all forms of maltreatment by parents or guardians. If this ever happens the State has the responsibility to ensure you are protected in some way.
20. Alternative care for children in the absence of parents. This means that you have the right to special protection if you are temporarily or permanently deprived of your family. If this ever happens your cultural background must be taken into account as an important part of your well-being.
21. If you live in a country where adoption is allowed, any adoption that takes place should always be based on your best interests.
22. If you ever become a refugee you are entitled to special protection.

23. You have the right to benefit from extra help and education, if this is what you need to enjoy a full life in society.
24. Health Care. You have the right to the highest standard of health and medical care available.
25. Periodic Review. Any child who is placed for care, protection or treatment has the right to have the placement reviewed at a regular basis.
26. Standard of Living. Parents have the responsibility to provide adequate living conditions for the child's development even when one of the parents is living in a country other than the child's place of residence.
27. Education. You have the right to free primary education.
28. Aims of Education. The aim of education is to help you develop your personality and talents, to prepare you for a responsible adult life, respect for human rights as well as the cultural and national values of your country and that of others.
29. Children of minorities and indigenous children. If you belong to a minority or indigenous group you have the right to enjoy your culture and to practise your own language.
30. Play and recreation. You have the right to rest and leisure, to play and take part in recreational, cultural and artistic activities.
31. Economic exploitation. You have the right to be protected from harmful forms of work and against exploitation.
32. Narcotic and psychotic substances. You should be protected from narcotic drugs and from being involved in their production or distribution.
33. Sexual exploitation. You have the right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse.

34. Abduction, sale and traffic. The State has the job of protecting children from being abducted, sold or trafficked.
35. Other forms of exploitation. You have the right to be protected from all forms of exploitation.
36. Torture, capital punishment, deprivation of liberty. You have the right not to be subjected to torture or degrading treatment. If detained, not to be kept with adults, sentenced to death nor imprisoned for life without the possibility of release. The right to legal assistance and contact with family.
37. Armed conflicts. If you are under 15 years you are not supposed to be recruited into the armed services or to take part in armed conflicts.
38. Recovery and re-integration. If you are ever the victim of armed conflict, torture, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation you have the right to receive whatever treatment you need in order to become a full part of society again.
39. Juvenile justice. If you are ever accused of breaking the law or are found guilty of breaking the law you should be treated in such a way that helps you maintain your self dignity and not to suffer negative effects on rejoining society.
40. Dissemination of the Convention. You have the right to be informed of your rights and the state should be involved in this.

Note: The Convention has 54 Articles in all and articles 41 - 54 are mostly concerned with its implementation and entry into force.

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## Appendix 2 10 ROLES FOR FACILITATORS - EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

### Approach/Stance

Description

#### 1. Neutral Facilitator (also 'neutral' or 'academic')

Explaining/exploring the range of viewpoints without stating your own opinion. Setting down rules and procedures for discussion (in which you may act as chair). Non-judgemental.

#### 2. Committed (also 'campaigner' or 'expert')

Expressing your own views on the issues without raising alternative views. Using your knowledge and experience to bring the group along.

#### 3. Provocateur

Bringing up arguments, viewpoints and information which you know will provoke the group, and which you do not necessarily believe, but because they are the authentic beliefs of other individuals or groups, you can present them convincingly

#### 4. Advocate

You present all the available arguments in as objective a manner as possible, concluding with your own position and the reasons for your conclusions.

#### 5. Declared Interests

You begin by declaring your own position, so that the group can allow for any bias on your part when listening to the views you express.

#### 6. Devil's Advocate

You deliberately adopt opposite stances to confront people irrespective of your own views. Slightly 'tongue-in-cheek'

#### 7. Ally

You support the views of a particular sub-group or individual (usually a minority), in order to boost their confidence, or to ensure that their views are heard.

#### 8. Official View

You are letting the group know the official position of your employer/organisation/statutory authority/the law etc. This may or may not be your own position.

#### 9. Challenger

Through considered questioning, you challenge views being expressed, encouraging people to justify their positions.

#### 10. In Role

You may 'become' a particular person or caricature (for example a politician or church leader), putting across their position and arguments to the group

There are many others...

(From the Speak Your Piece Project, University of Ulster, 1997, adapted from BAA/Nottingham project - Teaching Through Controversial Issues)





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**JEDI**

Forestview, Purdy's Lane, Belfast, BT8 7AR  
Tel: 028 9064 3882 Fax: 028 9064 3874

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