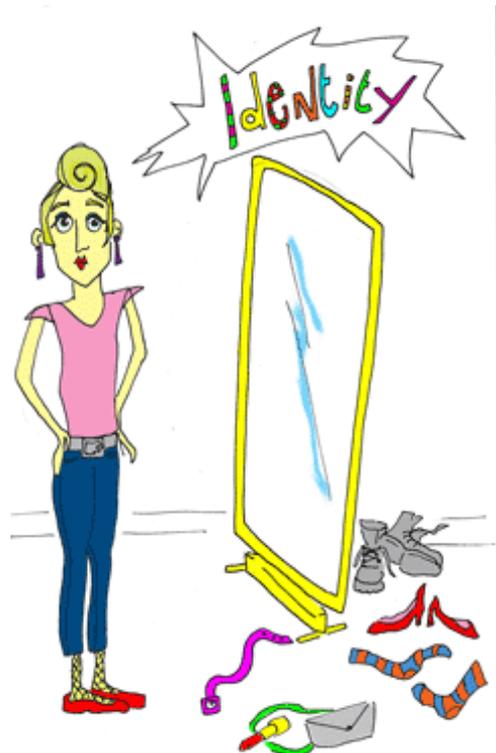


CHAPTER ONE

Promoting inclusive youth work practice - organisational support

Introduction

'Access All Areas' has been designed to be used by trained youth workers, by volunteers in local youth groups, by directors and managers of youth services and anyone else working with young people in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Toolkit invites us to look at the support that is needed - at a personal and organisational level - to make sure that **all** young people feel they belong and are actively participating in their community.



Terminology

This resource has been developed for youth workers on the island of Ireland. At times it is necessary to make distinctions between our two jurisdictions and we have had to choose a terminology to reflect this. We have chosen for the most part to use Northern Ireland (NI) and Republic of Ireland (ROI). At times we also use North and South. Where there are large tracts of text that refer specifically to the different jurisdictions we have used coloured boxes: Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

This chapter was developed by Anne Walsh (NYCI), Marie Fitzpatrick (Pavee Point), Michael Barron (BeLonGTo), Matthew Seebach (YWI) and Ben Ewan (Youthnet) for 'Access All Areas – a Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector' published by NYCI and Youthnet 2012

Overview of chapter

This chapter looks at specific support that an organisation might need to embed inclusive youth work practice. The chapter includes the following:

- 1. A definition and deeper understanding of equality and inclusion**
- 2. An overview of youth work policy in relation to equality and inclusion**
- 3. An overview of legislation that aims to ensure equality and inclusion in youth work**
- 4. Developing an equality and inclusion policy**
- 5. A master checklist to be used by youth leaders and managers**
- 6. A master checklist that young people can use to assess the youth activities they attend**
- 7. A discussion on collecting and using data (ethnic identifiers). A sample registration form is included**
- 8. Using Access All Areas to carry out a regional survey**

1 A definition and deeper understanding of equality and inclusion

Equality is the notion that **everybody** is of equal value and deserves equal respect, dignity and opportunity. It is based on four key objectives:

1. Access to services
2. Inclusion in decision making and shaping one's own community
3. Relationships based on love, care, respect and solidarity, and
4. Acknowledgement of diversity and the right to social statusⁱ

Inclusion Inclusion is identifying, understanding and removing barriers that exist to ensure participation and belonging. It focuses on allocating resources to achieve equality of outcome for all.

Inclusive youth work is responsive to the needs of all young people. It involves:

- Openness and dialogue
- A willingness to change
- A commitment to equality

Equity Equity, similar to inclusion, ensures that young people have equality of outcome regardless of background. It is about making sure children and young people are not directly or indirectly excluded and that positive steps are taken to include those who might otherwise feel excluded.

Diversity Diversity encourages respect for and expression of the range of identities represented by children and young people involved in youth work and those who work with themⁱⁱ

What does an inclusive group look like?

Creating a service based on equality and inclusion means asking if our projects, programmes and activities are based on the norms and values of the majority group or do they include the needs of young people from diverse living circumstances and identities? An inclusive service is one that reflects the range of diversity within a community. In a mainstream, volunteer or universal service this will mean engaging with the young people in the community in a way that is responsive to the numbers of young people from diverse backgrounds that live within that community. For example, 10% of the young people in the country come from a minority ethnic background, 10% have a disability, 20% will, at some stage, have a mental health issue, 1.5% will be a Traveller, and 7.5% will be LGBT. Small numbers will be involved in juvenile justice, will have left school early or will be a young parent. A mainstream, volunteer or universal youth group should reflect this diversity in their membership relative to their overall numbers. For example, the number of young people in a youth group from a minority ethnic background would ideally be similar in percentage to that in your own community. Furthermore, all diversities should be included, either by actual targeting and inclusion or within regular programme activities and conversations – for example developing an LGBT friendly environment, doing disability and mental health awareness programmes etc.



Sometimes services work exclusively with marginalised and diverse young people and may not see how, or why, they might become even more inclusive. However, diversity is never a single identity issue. All young people have multiple identities and all aspects of exclusion should be addressed even in specialised services. For example, a person with a disability will have a sexual orientation, a gender and an ethnicity etc. Some of these aspects of identity will sometimes put them into other minority groups. An inclusive service challenges prejudice and looks at what diversity is **not** represented or included in the group. This may involve looking at more invisible diversities such as sexual orientation, early school leaving or mental health or it may involve looking at more obvious diversities such as ethnicity, disability, young parenthood etc. and finding ways to address these.

The principle of equality and inclusion needs to be firmly embedded in our society and promoted from an early age. Youth work is an ideal setting for working towards this goal by exploring issues and developing awareness with young people.

How do we ensure equality?

Equality means that everybody should have equal prospects of well-being, having their needs met, and to develop themselves. Resources should be distributed in such a way to provide for this.ⁱⁱⁱ

Therefore, equality means asking if your service offers the same level of outcome to all young people in your community? For example:



- **Do some young people feel intimidated by the dominance of the majority group?**
- **Is it harder for some young people to physically access and participate in your project or group?**
- **Is there racism or homophobia in the project or group which makes it difficult for young people from diverse backgrounds to participate?**
- **Does your service accommodate the various learning needs of young people?**

How do we ensure inclusion?

Inclusion is a process that is relevant to all young people but particularly focuses on those groups who have historically been marginalised or at risk. It involves a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. It recognises the need to involve parents/carers in its practices and decision-making processes. It also asserts that inclusion is not possible without those being 'included' playing a full part in the process.^{iv}

Inclusion is about the quality of young people's experience; how they are supported to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the youth service. In essence it involves adapting policies and practices within youth services to remove barriers to learning so that nobody is marginalised. Inclusion moves away from labelling young people, towards creating an appropriate learning environment for all children.^v

The specialised chapters in this Toolkit will assist you to include a range of diverse young people and leaders in your organisation and youth groups.

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2 An overview of youth work policy that relates to equality and inclusion

There are a number of key policy documents that underpin the delivery of youth services across the island of Ireland and provide a mandate for delivering a service based on the principles of Equality and Inclusion.

Northern Ireland (NI)

10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People (2006 – 2016)

The Strategy for Children and Young People highlights the need to provide equality across services and to ensure provision is inclusive of **all**.

Youth Work Strategy (2005-2008)

A new youth work policy for Northern Ireland '**Priorities for Youth**' will be available for consultation in due course. It is hoped that delivering an 'inclusive' service will be a key priority.

One of the key themes of the current strategy is 'Delivering Effective and Inclusive Youth Work'. It aims to:

"Ensure that high quality youth work is inclusively and effectively delivered to facilitate the personal and social development of young people within a supportive public policy framework"

Department of Education Priorities

One of the key priorities for the Department of Education NI in the delivery of education across the formal and non-formal sectors is '**Reducing the Gap – Removing Barriers to Access**'. The intended youth service outcomes under this

priority are:

- Commitment to promoting equality of opportunity
- Targeted provision for disadvantages or marginalised young people
- Responsive and coordinated service
- Outreach provision

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy (CRED)

The Department of Education (NI) has a policy for delivering Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) across education.

The CRED policy aims to:

“...develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination...”

It also seeks to provide opportunities for young people to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions.

The intended outcome of the policy is that children and young people will have a greater understanding of equality and diversity for all section 75 groups, respect the rights of all, and have developed the skills, attitudes and behaviours that enable them to value and respect difference and to engage positively with it.

It is anticipated that the main themes of this policy will underpin the development of ‘Priorities for Youth’.

A number of other policies will have a direct impact on the delivery of youth work including, for example, the Department of Social Development ‘Volunteer Strategy’ and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister ‘Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy’.

Republic of Ireland (ROI)

Youth Work Act (2001)

The Youth Work Act governs all Youth Work in Ireland and commits youth services to meet the needs of all young people equally and fairly.

National Youth Work Development Plan

This plan commits to uphold the Equal Status Act which places obligations on youth services to deliver services in an equal and non-discriminatory way. In its key points in relation to equality and inclusiveness it states:

“Proposals for a National Youth Work Development Plan are based on a commitment to a vision of youth work which values diversity, aims to eradicate injustice and inequality, and strives for openness and inclusiveness in all its dealings with young people and adults.”

Quality Standards in Youth Work (NQSF and SLVYG)

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) and the Standards for Local Voluntary Youth Groups (SLVYG) are mechanisms by which all youth groups and organisations will assess their youth work practice with the aim of developing and achieving better practice in all youth work settings. A core principle under which youth groups will measure themselves is that equality and inclusiveness are ensured and all young people are welcomed, valued and involved.

3 An overview of legislation that aims to ensure equality and inclusion in youth work

Republic of Ireland legislation

Equal Status Act (2000) and the Equality Act (2004) – (in relation to Youth Work)

The Equal Status Act 2000 and Equality Act 2004 prohibit services from discriminating and harassment on nine grounds. 'Services' includes all youth services, whether they are run by volunteers or paid staff or whether fees are paid by participants or not.

The nine grounds are:

- Age
- Gender
- Religion
- Disability
- Family Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Civil / Marital Status
- Membership of the Traveller community
- Race (Ethnicity, Skin Colour or National Origin)



Northern Ireland legislation

Section 75 (a) – (in relation to Youth Work)

Similarly Section 75(a) of the NI Act (1998) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need for promoting equality of opportunity across nine equality grounds;

- **age,**
- **racial group,**
- **marital status**
- **sexual orientation;**
- **between men and women generally;**
- **between persons of different religious belief,**
- **between persons of different political opinion,**
- **between persons with a disability and persons without; and**
- **between persons with dependants and persons without.**



Other relevant equality legislation in the North, which protects young people through the provision of education and services, includes:

- Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (as amended)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
- Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (as amended)
- Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended)
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006 (as amended)
- Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (as amended)

Discrimination

Discrimination is treating a person less favourably than another person. It includes making distinctions between people and denying them opportunities on the grounds of issues other than ability or qualifications; for example their gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, disability, family circumstances etc.

Under Equality Legislation there are 3 kinds of discrimination:

1. **Direct** (e.g. refusing someone a service, being hostile to young people because of an aspect of their identity). Direct discrimination occurs when a person receives less favourable treatment, or a less favourable outcome, than another person in the same situation would have received on the grounds of their identity under the nine grounds.
2. **Indirect** (e.g. creating barriers to a young person's participation in a youth service). Indirect discrimination occurs when a seemingly neutral policy or requirement actually has an adverse impact on a person from a minority background. Indirect discrimination can be unintentional. It can happen when services fail to take into consideration that different groups of people have different needs. Treating people with different needs the same can have the effect of being an indirect form of discrimination. For example, failing to provide for the mobility needs, such as providing wheelchair ramps, for people who are wheelchair users is a form of indirect discrimination that is fundamentally inequitable as it clearly denies access to those people.
3. **By Association** – a young person is discriminated against not because of their identity or status but because of their association with someone else (e.g. treating someone unfavourably because they are a family member or friend of a gay person, member of the Traveller community, person with a disability etc).

N.B. In Northern Ireland, this would be known in equality legislation as 'Victimisation'

Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Harassment, including sexual harassment, on any of the nine grounds is prohibited. This prohibition applies to all aspects of a youth service: in programmes, in drop-ins, on trips, on the sports field, and so on.

A person who is responsible for the operation of a youth service must not permit a young person to be harassed or to be sexually harassed because of their identity or status linked to the nine grounds. This responsible person will be liable for the harassment or sexual harassment unless they took reasonably practical steps to prevent it.

In this way a person could take a case against a youth service if they are being harassed or sexually harassed by another person in the group. The onus is on the youth service to prove that they took all reasonable measures to ensure that it was stopped.

Youth services are liable for discrimination or harassment committed by an employee in the course of their work, whether or not it was done with the youth service's knowledge or approval. A service has a defence against being liable for the discriminatory actions or harassment of an employee if it can prove that it took such steps as were reasonably practical to prevent the employee from committing the actions.



NB: Harassment applies to both the actions of workers and of young people.

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Positive Action (Affirmative Action)

Positive action occurs when measures are taken to correct an unequal state of affairs, for example where equality of outcome has been verifiably absent because of discrimination in the past. Examples would be where previously under-represented groups (such as women) are deliberately targeted.

Under the Equal Status Act in the Republic of Ireland, youth services are allowed to:

- Provide preferential treatment and
- Take positive actions that are genuinely intended to promote equality of opportunity for young people covered by the nine grounds

Under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 Public Authorities are 'bound' to have regard to the need for affirmative action (positive action) when considering their duty under the clause.

<p>Further info: the Equality Authority Phone: 1890 245 545 Email: info@equality.ie Website: www.equality.ie</p>	<p>Further info: the Equality Commission Phone: 028 90 500 600 Email: information@equalityni.org Website: www.equalityni.org</p>
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4 Developing an inclusion policy

You may have identified the need to develop an equality and inclusion policy or to review your existing policies. The following section will help you to develop your equality and inclusion policy.

An equality and inclusion policy should be developed in consultation with all team members. It should be reflective of practice and offer workable guidelines toward maintaining an inclusive and equal youth work setting.

Contents of an equality policy

It should include the following sections:

1. Your organisations mission statement
2. Your organisation's general principles/core values/guiding principles
3. Statement of your organisation's commitments to equality and inclusion
4. A statement of who is targeted in an equality and inclusion policy. At minimum these must include all of the following 9 grounds:
 - Gender
 - Civil / Marital status
 - Disability
 - Race (Colour; Ethnic or National origin)
 - Membership of the Traveller community
 - Family status
 - Sexual orientation

- Political or religious belief
- Age

Ideally you would also include the following:

- Socio-economic status
- Antibody status
- Responsibility for dependants
- Address
- Trade Union membership
- Criminal conviction
- Recovering from addiction

5. Statements outlining the responsibility of your organisation and its staff with regard to equality and inclusion

6. Policy implementation statements about your:

- Programmes and practices
- Publications
- Training
- The work/service environment
- Policy review and evaluations

7. Complaints procedures – state what these are

8. A clear outline of equality legislation and definitions in relation to equality legislation and inclusion (e.g. discrimination—direct and indirect, harassment including sexual harassment; and interculturalism)

Note

- Advice on writing an equality and inclusion policy can be obtained from the Equality Authority
- NYCI training is available on writing inclusion policies. NYCI's Intercultural and Equality Officer can provide a detailed template to help you develop an Equality and Intercultural Policy



5 A master checklist to be used by youth leaders and managers

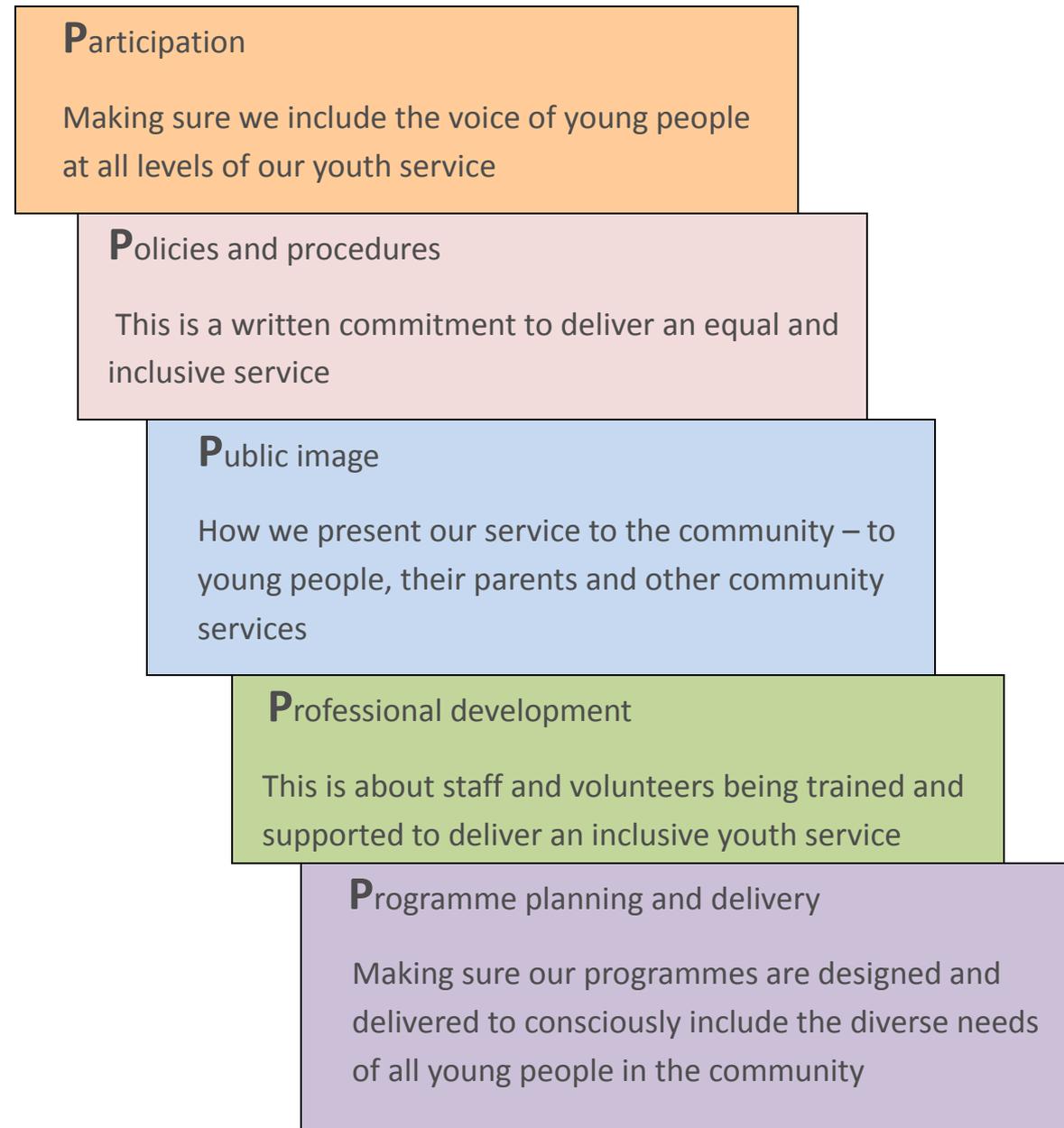
A note on other checklists in Access All Areas

Each specialised chapter has a checklist designed to look in more detail at your inclusion practice in relation to specific groups. These allow you to assess how well your service is doing in offering equality of outcome to young people who have diverse lives in your community. They are self-assessment exercises and can be used repeatedly and by all members of an organisation in an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation. Ideally all of the checklists should be completed by each youth service over a period of time. International best practice says that obvious improvements should be planned for and monitored by repeating the self-assessments on a regular basis. This allows groups to assess their current position and to measure their achievements from this position over a defined period. At all times it is important to compare your current levels of inclusion with local demographics to get an accurate reading of how inclusive your service is relative to the community in which you work. An inclusive service is one that fully reflects all the diversity within a community.

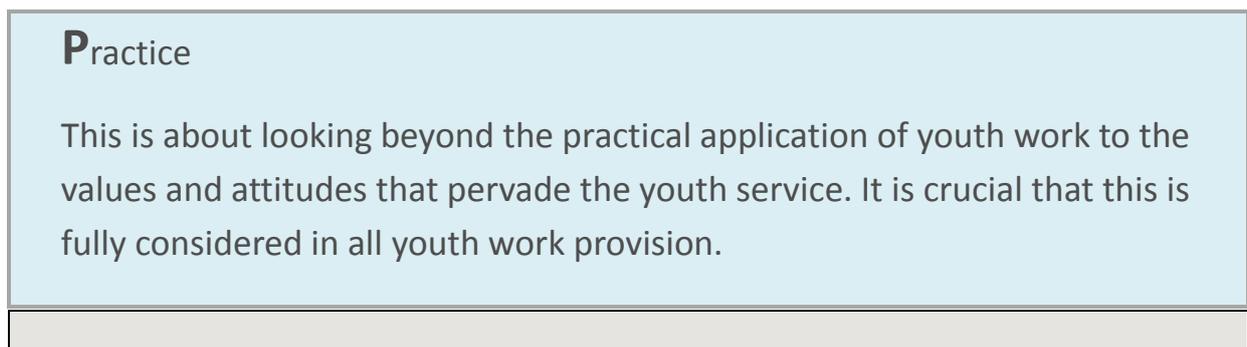


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The checklists are all framed under a proofing model referred to as the 5 P's which are outlined here:



Encompassing these five criteria at all times is the question of practice:



Using the checklists

1. You may find it easiest to do this as a team. Try to have people from different roles in your organisation – ideally from management to young people. Some groups choose to do one checklist at each team meeting and to give time for discussion
2. Go through the 'Checklist' as a group
3. Discuss which points should be answered 'YES', which should be answered 'NO' and which should be answered 'PARTLY' and agree them as a group
4. Identify between 3 and 5 of the points you answered 'NO' or 'PARTLY' that your group/ organisation can work on over the next 6 months
5. Put together a set of ACTIONS that will address these points (you can use the template provided). You can use the appropriate chapters in Access All Areas to help you decide on a course of action - each chapter has practical advice and a list of resources and contacts
6. Develop a work plan, indicating when the action will be completed and the milestones on the road to its completion
7. Identify who in your youth group/ organisation is going to be responsible for making sure the ACTIONS happen
8. Plan to meet regularly to review how the ACTION PLAN is working
9. When the work plan is completed, evaluate your progress and choose your next set of goals

Using the master checklist

The master checklist will help you determine, in a general sense, how well equality and inclusion is embedded in your organisation. It will point you to actions that need attention and it may help you identify groups that you may not be targeting successfully. The specialised chapters will then help you to work more effectively with those young people that are not currently included in your youth groups.



You may be filling out this checklist as a leader of a youth group/youth club or youth service. Alternatively you may be working within a youth organisation as an administrator or at organisation headquarters. Therefore the degree to which you engage directly with young people may differ from others. You should answer the questions as they apply to your situation. Be careful about questions that you initially think are ‘not applicable’ to you as this can be another way in which we inadvertently exclude people – ask yourself instead how they be made applicable to your own situation.

When completing the master checklist you should think about a range of diversities. Where it is not stated specifically the checklist always refers to young people from minority ethnic backgrounds, young LGBT people, young Travellers, young people with a disability, young people with mental health issues, young people involved in the juvenile justice system, young parents, and early school leavers. Follow steps 1-9 above in completing the master checklist.

Master Checklist

Public image

To be successful in making people from diverse backgrounds feel included they need to be visible in our organisation, [even if we do not work directly with young people]:

How do we present our services - to young people, their parents and other community services?

- | | | | | |
|----|---|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1. | A range of diverse young people are visible, or are specifically mentioned, in advertising, promotional materials, publications and photos of our organisation | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 2. | Promotional material about our group/ organisation (flyers, posters, news articles, newsletters etc) is inclusive: | | | |
| | • We use simple English to describe our programmes and activities | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| | • We use visual images to show what we do and where we meet | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| | • We have a disability accessible website (a blind person can use a voice activated screen reader to access the content) | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| | • Our material is available in the different languages most commonly used in our community | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| | • We state that we are accessible and inclusive of all people | YES | PARTLY | NO |

3.	There are lots of ways to get in contact with our organisation/ group. You can:			
	• Phone the youth organisation/leader	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• SMS (text) the youth organisation/ leader	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Email the youth organisation/ leader	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Drop in to the youth group/ organisation	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Follow us on Facebook	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Use Twitter to communicate with us	YES	PARTLY	NO
4.	The building(s) where we meet are accessible for wheelchair users, those who have sight loss or are Deaf (see Access all Areas chapter 5 for a more detailed checklist on being accessible to people with a disability)	YES	PARTLY	NO
5.	We (staff, volunteers and young people) are open to and welcoming of all members of the community:			
	• Young people form a minority ethnic background	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young Travellers	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people with a disability	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people with mental health issues	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people who have been involved with the juvenile justice system	YES	PARTLY	NO

	• Young parents	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people who have left school early	YES	PARTLY	NO
6.	We have information and a list of services we can refer young people to	YES	PARTLY	NO
7.	We take part in meetings and network with other community groups (e.g. health professionals, Community Gardaí / PSNI, schools, social workers, community workers, specialist organisations)	YES	PARTLY	NO
8.	We tell all young people in our community about our youth group and encourage them to join			
	• We ask the members to invite their friends	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• We tell all the schools in the area about our group/organisation	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• We put up notices in local libraries and community space/centres	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• We advertise in local newspapers	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• We put notices in local shops	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• We tell all the local places of worship about our group/organisation	YES	PARTLY	NO
9.	We seek to meet all parents in our community, tell them about our youth group/organisation and reassure them about concerns they have about their children joining our youth group/s	YES	PARTLY	NO
10.	We display information and awareness raising material (LGBT information, Traveller pride week, anti-racist posters, disability awareness etc)	YES	PARTLY	NO

Professional development

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

- | | | | | |
|-----|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 11. | Our youth group/ organisation applies equality principles and legislation (e.g. staff and volunteers come from diverse backgrounds, are committed to equality etc | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 12. | Job descriptions/ volunteer roles require staff and volunteers to have awareness of equality and inclusion issues | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 13. | Staff and volunteers receive training on equality and inclusion issues and working with specific groups of people (LGBT, minority ethnic, Travellers, disability etc) | YES | PARTLY | NO |

Participation

To be effective in developing relevant, useful services, it is necessary to consult with diverse communities and young people [even if we do not provide direct work]:
How do we make sure we include the voices of young people at all levels of our youth organisation?

- | | | | | |
|-----|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 14. | The management committee of our group/ organisation includes members from a diverse range of backgrounds | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 15. | Our group/ organisation provides a range of informal ways for young people to have a say about the group (advisory groups, forums, group contracts, surveys, consultations, reviews, evaluations etc) | YES | PARTLY | NO |

16. Our group/ organisation has young people from a range of backgrounds involved in making decisions **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**

Policies and procedures

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

17. Our group/ organisation has a written commitment to equality and inclusion (charter, code of practice, mission statement, policy etc) **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
18. Volunteers/ staff understand what equality and inclusion means **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
19. We put what is written about equality and inclusion into practice (e.g. we model inclusive language; we address bullying, name calling, racism, sexism etc;) **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**

Programme planning and delivery

To be successful in addressing current issues faced by young people and youth workers our youth groups need to be aware of who young people are and how they live, [even if we do not provide direct work]:

How do we make sure our programmes are designed and delivered to consciously include the diverse needs and identities of all young people in the community?

20. Our group/ organisation has up to date information about the ethnicity of young people in our local areas, and the numbers of Traveller families in the area **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**

21.	We collect information on the cultural or ethnic background of young people who are part of our group/ organisation	YES	PARTLY	NO
22.	We collect information on requirements in relation to disabilities	YES	PARTLY	NO
23.	We have information on the gender breakdown of our group/ organisation (how many males/ females)	YES	PARTLY	NO
24.	We compare the makeup of our local area with the people who attend our group and identify groups of young people who are under-represented	YES	PARTLY	NO
25.	We consider the needs of all young people in our community when planning programmes (cultural, religious, mobility, literacy, family responsibilities, diverse abilities, educational, etc)	YES	PARTLY	NO
26.	We ask a broad range of young people including those who do not attend what they would like to get involved in	YES	PARTLY	NO
27.	We run programmes or activities on diversity and equality that challenge prejudice and promote inclusion of:			
	• Young people from a minority ethnic background	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young LGBT people	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young Travellers	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people with a disability	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people with mental health issues	YES	PARTLY	NO

• Young people involved in juvenile justice	YES	PARTLY	NO
• Young parents	YES	PARTLY	NO
• Young people who have left school early	YES	PARTLY	NO
• Gender roles and stereotypes are explored and challenged	YES	PARTLY	NO

Develop your Action Plans

Use the checklist above and the information in the Toolkit to develop an action plan.

Refer back to the checklists you have reviewed. Consider the explanations you gave to the 'no' and 'in progress' responses. Choose the areas where you feel you can make some concrete improvement in the:

- Short term, (1-2 weeks)
- Medium term (1-3 months)
- Long term (6 months – 1 year)

Write up an action plan with:

1. Timeframes for completing your chosen tasks,
2. Allocate a person responsible for ensuring these tasks are completed
3. Determine what supports need to be put in place to complete these tasks

Action Plan Template

Section (e.g. working with young LGBT people)	Description of action to be taken	Date for completion	Person responsible	Supports needed
Short term (1-2 weeks)				
Mid term (1-3 months)				
Long term (6 – 12 months)				

6 A master checklist that young people can use to assess the youth activities they attend

A young person/youth member can use this checklist to assess the youth group/ organisation they are a part of (or other voluntary groups in your community)

Use this checklist to identify how your youth group/ organisation can be more inclusive of young people who have diverse lives and identities. When reading the checklist consider the following groups of young people: young people from minority ethnic backgrounds, young LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people, young Travellers, young people with a disability, young people with mental health issues, young people involved in the juvenile justice system, young parents, and young people who have left school early.

How do I get started?

1. Put together a team of young people (try and have people from different backgrounds in the group)
2. Go through the 'Checklist' as a group
3. Discuss which points should be answered 'YES', which should be answered 'NO' and which should be answered 'PARTLY' and agree them as a group
4. Identify between 3 and 5 of the questions where you answered 'NO' or 'PARTLY' that your group/ organisation can work on over the next 6 months. At this stage you will need to involve the youth leaders too.
5. Put together a set of ACTIONS that will address these issues (use the template at the end of this document if it helps). You can also use the appropriate sections in Access All Areas to help you decide on a course of action (there are more detailed checklists in each section which may help

you along with practical tips and a list of resources and contacts)

6. Identify who in your youth group/ organisation is going to be responsible for making sure the ACTIONS happen
7. Plan to meet regularly to review how the ACTION PLAN is working
8. After 6 months you can go back to the checklist and re-do this process over again identifying 3 to 5 new points to work on

Master Checklist for youth members to use

Public image

To be successful in making people from diverse backgrounds feel included they need to be visible in our organisation

How do we present our services - to young people, their parents and other community services?

1. A range of diverse young people are visible, or are specifically mentioned, in advertising, promotional materials, publications and photos of our group/ organisation YES PARTLY NO

2. Promotional material (flyers, posters, news articles, newsletters etc) about our group/ organisation is inclusive:
 - We use simple English to describe our programmes and activities YES PARTLY NO

 - We use visual images to show what we do and where we meet YES PARTLY NO

- We have a disability accessible website (it is written in a way that a blind person can use a screen reader to access its content) **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Information about our group is available in the different languages most commonly used in our community **YES PARTLY NO**
 - We state that we are accessible and inclusive of all young people **YES PARTLY NO**
- 3. There are lots of ways to get in contact with our organisation/ group. You can:**
- phone the youth organisation/leader **YES PARTLY NO**
 - SMS (text) the youth organisation/ leader **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Email the youth organisation/ leader **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Drop in to the youth group/ organisation **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Follow us on Facebook **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Use Twitter to communicate with us **YES PARTLY NO**
- 4. The buildings where we meet are accessible - for wheelchair users, those who have sight loss, are Deaf, parents of babies and young children, for people of different religions or none, etc (see Chapter 5 for a more detailed accessibility checklist) **YES PARTLY NO****
- 5. The youth group (youth members, youth leaders, staff and volunteers) are open to and welcoming of all members of the community, for example:**

- Young people from a minority ethnic background **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young Travellers **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young people with a disability **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young people with mental health issues **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young people who have been involved with the juvenile justice system **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young parents **YES PARTLY NO**
 - Young people who have left school early **YES PARTLY NO**
6. **Youth leaders have information and a list of specialist services they can refer young people to** **YES PARTLY NO**
7. **Youth leaders take part in meetings, partner and network with other community groups** (e.g. health professionals, Community Gardaí/ PSNI, schools, social workers, community workers, specialist organisations) **YES PARTLY NO**
8. **We tell all young people in our community about our youth group and encourage them to join**
- We tell our friends **YES PARTLY NO**
 - The youth leaders tell all the schools in the area about the group **YES PARTLY NO**
 - We put up notices in our local library and community space/centres **YES PARTLY NO**

- We advertise in local newspapers **YES PARTLY NO**
 - We put notices in local shops **YES PARTLY NO**
 - We tell all the local places of worship about our group **YES PARTLY NO**
9. **Youth leaders seek to meet all parents in our community, tell them about our youth group and reassure them about concerns they have about their children joining our youth group** **YES PARTLY NO**
10. **We display information and awareness raising material in our meeting place(LGBT information, Traveller pride week, anti-racist posters, disability awareness etc)** **YES PARTLY NO**

Professional development

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

11. **Our youth group/ organisation operates under equality principles and legislation in relation to employment and involvement of volunteers (e.g. members of the staff and volunteers come from diverse backgrounds, youth leaders are committed to equality etc)** **YES PARTLY NO**
12. **Job descriptions/ volunteer roles require staff and volunteers to have awareness of equality and inclusion issues** **YES PARTLY NO**
13. **Staff and volunteers receive training on equality and inclusion issues and working with specific groups of young people (minority ethnic, Travellers,** **YES PARTLY NO**

LGBT, disability etc)

Participation

To be effective in developing relevant, useful services, it is necessary to consult with diverse communities and young people [even if the organisation does not work directly with young people]:

How do we make sure we include the voices of young people at all levels of our youth organisation?

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 14. | The management/advisory committee of our group/ organisation includes members from a diverse range of backgrounds | YES PARTLY NO |
| 15. | Our group/ organisation provides a range of ways for young people to have a say about the group (advisory groups, forums, group contracts, surveys, consultations, reviews, evaluations etc) | YES PARTLY NO |
| 16. | Our group/ organisation has young people from a range of backgrounds involved in making decisions | YES PARTLY NO |

Policies and procedures

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

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------|
| 17. | Our group/ organisation has a written commitment to equality and inclusion (charter, code of practice, mission statement, policy etc) | YES PARTLY NO |
| 18. | Our youth leaders understand what equality, interculturalism and inclusion means | YES PARTLY NO |

19. **Our group/ organisation puts what is written about equality and inclusion into practice** (e.g. we act on our rules on bullying, name calling, etc) **YES PARTLY NO**

Programme planning and delivery

To be successful in addressing current issues faced by young people and youth workers our youth groups need to be aware of who young people are and how they live:

How do we make sure our programmes are designed and delivered to consciously include the diverse needs and identities of all young people in the community?

20. **Our group/ organisation has up to date information about the ethnicity of young people in our local areas, and the numbers of Traveller families in the area** **YES PARTLY NO**
21. **We collect information on the cultural or ethnic background of young people who are part of our group/ organisation** **YES PARTLY NO**
22. **We collect information on member's requirements in relation to disabilities** **YES PARTLY NO**
23. **We have information on the gender breakdown of our group/ organisation (how many males/ females)** **YES PARTLY NO**
24. **The youth leaders compare the makeup of our local area with the people who attend our group and identify groups of young people who are underrepresented** **YES PARTLY NO**
25. **We consider the needs of all young people in our community when planning programmes** (cultural, religious, mobility, literacy, family responsibilities, **YES PARTLY NO**

diverse abilities, educational, etc)

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------|
| 26. | The youth leaders ask a broad range of young people, including those who do not attend, what they would like to get involved in | YES PARTLY NO |
| 27. | We run programmes or activities on diversity and equality that challenge prejudice and promote inclusion of: | |
| | • Young people from a minority ethnic background | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young LGBT people | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young Travellers | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young people with a disability | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young people with mental health issues | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young people involved in the juvenile justice system | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young parents | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Young people who are not in school, employment or training/ Early School leavers | YES PARTLY NO |
| | • Gender roles and stereotypes are explored and challenged | YES PARTLY NO |
-

Sample Action Plan Template

	Description of action to be taken	Date for completion	Person/s responsible
Short term (1-2 weeks)			
Mid term (1-3 months)			
Long term (6 – 12 months)			

7 A discussion on collecting and using data - ethnic identifiers and best practice

Ensuring equality and inclusion practice: identifying diversity in your youth organisation

It is impossible to determine how inclusive your service is if you do not know if the young people who currently use your service have diverse lives or identities. After filling out the checklists you may have identified that you do not have data on the identity of the young people who use your service and you are unsure how to address this. The following section will give you some guidelines on collecting data.

The team who wrote this Toolkit considered this question in great detail and looked at best practice in other countries. Collecting data is not straightforward. The sensitivity and expertise needed to support those young people who have not as yet come out openly as LGBT for instance, or to support those who are concerned about their mental health or a disability they have but who don't want to reveal this information is considerable. We concluded that the skills needed to collect these aspects of diversity in your group cannot be imparted through this Toolkit. Readers are advised to directly contact the relevant organisations for training and advice on this.

However, it is totally appropriate and indeed best practice that some aspects of a young person's identity are asked



about. These include asking whether a young person has a disability, have any special requirements, what religion they practice, what their ethnic identity is and whether they come from a Traveller background. It is up to those answering to decide whether to impart the information but it is appropriate to ask.

Therefore, registration forms in all youth services should invite young people to identify their special requirements, any disability and their ethnic or cultural identity. An example of how to do this and how to use the information you collect, in accordance with best practice, is laid out below.

If your organisation does not use registration forms there are other ways of collecting this information – through one to one conversations or through activities. For more information on this, see page 45.

Rationale for asking about ethnicity, disability etc

In order to be able to meet the needs of the young people who attend your organisation (and also your staff or volunteers) it is important to know what is important to them. One of the things that can be of huge importance or concern to us is our ethnic or cultural identity and any special requirements or disabilities we might have. In order to plan effectively it is important for youth services to know this information. You might, for example, decide to acknowledge the diversity within your organisation by celebrating important festival days. You would need to know which ones are important to the group you are working with. You might also need to understand what cultural practices your members live by – for example certain foods might cause offence or members may have to abide by specific dress codes. When planning an event you would also need to know in advance what special supports you would have to put in place with regard to young people with a disability. For example, you may need to ensure wheelchair access, provide visual aids or adapt the way you impart information.

What is the best approach to collecting information on ethnic identity, disability, religion etc.

One of the more obvious ways to gather information about your members is through the use of registration forms but best practice should be applied. Information about a person's ethnicity should always be self-described, by the person themselves if aged 11 or older – and by parents/ guardians for participants under 11. Young people may prefer to have someone present to explain aspects of a registration form and sometimes to help them fill it out. Always respect a person's right not to disclose information about themselves. Non-disclosure is common, especially in relation to disabilities. Some organisations have stopped asking about ethnicity on forms due to the lack of responses to this question when it has been asked. But given time, trust-building and a realisation by young people that it is used to improve services the rate of responses does increase so perseverance is important.

Asking identity questions raises the question of data protection and confidentiality. Be clear to your members that this information will be kept confidential and safe and that it will be used to plan effective services that meet the needs of all those using the organisation. Also explain that you are committed to inclusiveness and equality and without this data you cannot assess how well you are meeting this goal.

Reviewing and adapting your registration forms

We would recommend using the questions in the sample registration form below which you might like to copy, or use to adapt your own forms. You can also use this form to do a once-off inclusion survey. There may be situations when parents or youth members ask questions about the registration form. In practice we have rarely been asked questions as most people are very happy to respond to it as it is. However, a fuller rationale has been included after Table 1 that you can copy and use.

This chapter was developed by Anne Walsh (NYCI), Marie Fitzpatrick (Pavee Point), Michael Barron (BeLonGTo), Matthew Seebach (YWI) and Ben Ewan (Youthnet) for 'Access All Areas – a Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector' published by NYCI and Youthnet 2012

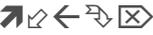
Table 1 – Sample registration form^{vi}

Our youth centre believes in equality, diversity and inclusion.

We would like all people to feel **included** here. In order to **respond/plan for individual needs** and interests we are asking you to complete the form below.

Only reveal what you are happy for us to know.

The information given will be **treated confidentially** and used only to make this a safe and relevant youth group that meets your needs and interests

Name:	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Tel: 
	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Email: 
Address: 	Date of birth: / / 	
	Religious tradition: _____ Practising <input type="checkbox"/> Non-practising <input type="checkbox"/>	
Your National / Cultural / Ethnic Identity: _____ (Give your answer as you do to your friends. Examples others have given to this question include Irish, Irish-Traveller, Polish, Irish-Polish, Nigerian, Nigerian-Irish, British, Northern Irish etc.)		
Your Parents/Guardians'/carers' national/cultural/ethnic identities: _____ (this is to recognise the cultural influences that may have played a part in your life)		
Individual Requirements: (Please mention anything that we need to know about e.g. disability, allergies, medical conditions, dietary requirements etc. and the supports you need to allow you to participate) _____		
Languages you speak: 1 st language (mother tongue) _____ 2 nd language _____ Other languages: _____	Interests Friendships  Art  Music  Sport  Self-Confidence  Computers 	
How did you hear about us? _____	Direction in your life  Other  _____	

Supplementary information to offer those filling out the registration form

Why is it important to ask about ethnicity, religion and disability?

In order to be able to be able to meet the needs of the young people who use our service (and also our staff or colleagues) it is important to know what is important to them. Our ethnic identity, our religion and any special requirements or disabilities we have all identify us in very deep ways. It is important to ask these questions alongside asking what our members want to do and why they want to be involved in our youth activities. In order to plan effectively it is important to know all this information in advance.

Ethnicity & Language: We might, for example, want to acknowledge the cultural diversity of our members by celebrating important festival days. We would need to know which ones are important to your group members and also which languages are relevant if we wanted to put up welcome signs in different languages in our meeting spaces. We might also need to source information in other languages so we can explain our activities more clearly to parents or our members (For example, NYCI has translated flyers that explain what youth work is in 8 different languages. Scouts have resources available in several different languages which may be used to explain difficult concepts to young people and parents with limited English language skills). We would also need to understand what cultural practices your group members live by – for example certain foods that might cause offence or specific dress codes or gender rules our group members may have to abide by.

Disability: When planning an event we would also need to know in advance what special supports to put in place to meet the specific needs of young people with a disability who would like to attend our service. For example, we may need to ensure wheelchair access or have visual aids or accommodate an assistant for a member. We may also need to adapt our activities, our way of work or our ways of communicating.

Religion: We would also need to know if we can plan an event on specific days and whether our members' religious services might clash with an event and prevent them from being able to attend.

Why do we ask about a parent's or guardian's religion and ethnic identity?

Many young people from migrant or mixed ethnic backgrounds who have been brought up in Ireland may describe themselves as Irish. However, their parents/guardians ethnicity will still have a significant influence on their sense of identity. Equally their experience of being part of a migrant family may mean that they have different needs and experiences from others who have been established in an area for a long time especially in regard to having a sense of belonging.

What is meant by ethnic identity?

Ethnicity can, and is, defined in several different ways. Language by its very nature changes over time and meaning is often not fixed. We use the term ethnicity* to be able to describe how we are different to other people. That difference, however, is what we interpret it as and not how others (often wrongfully) would believe. Ethnicity, at its simplest, means the group of people to which we feel we belong. Where we belong to two (or more) groups of people then we have dual ethnicity or we are multi-ethnic. This will be the case for children of mixed parents, or for people who have lived for a considerable time in two or more different countries, or in the case of Northern Ireland where a person might feel they belong to Ireland, Britain and Northern Ireland. We believe it is better to use the term quite loosely and for people to respond to the question as they see fit. It is important to know that the group that we belong to – i.e. our ethnic identity - might, or might not necessarily, be linked to our genetic ancestry.

National identity & ethnic identity: We have used the term ‘national or ethnic identity’ in this registration form. We have included the term national because people understand it more easily and it is easier to define. However, there are differences since the term national is a legal definition of the country you belong to whereas ethnicity is more about where you truly feel you belong to. These are not necessarily the same but they often are. Where possible the person’s ethnicity is the preferred description to include.

*In common terminology the term ‘race’ is often used to denote differences in peoples. It is no longer appropriate to use the term ‘race’ as the term is linked to assumptions of superiority of some groups of people over others. It also assumes vastly genetic differences which have since been proven as untrue. There is only one ‘race’ in genetic terms, the human race.

Reviewing your staff and volunteer forms

In adult situations, especially amongst staff and volunteers it is appropriate to ask about the languages a person speaks especially as this gives you the opportunity to discover what language skills are present in your organisation. It would not be as appropriate to ask their parent’s ethnicity.

This chapter was developed by Anne Walsh (NYCI), Marie Fitzpatrick (Pavee Point), Michael Barron (BeLonGTo), Matthew Seebach (YWI) and Ben Ewan (Youthnet) for ‘Access All Areas – a Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector’ published by NYCI and Youthnet 2012

Alternate ways of doing an inclusion survey - using interactive methods to collect data on diversity

Doing a survey using registration type forms outside of your normal registration process will seldom give you a 100% return as some members will be absent on the night you do it or parents may not get around to returning the forms. There are alternative ways to collect data on the ethnic and cultural makeup of your youth group. You can do it through conversations with parents or young people at appropriate times. You can also do it through the activities that you run.

Activities for collecting information on cultural diversity in your groups

You can develop a **picture of cultural diversity** (or influence) for your membership by putting up a world map, an Irish map and a county map and asking the young people and volunteers to say what parts of the world/country/county they have lived in or their parents have lived in. It helps if they pin strings lines from their own name (placed around the outside of the maps) to the place they want to talk about. In this activity don't forget to ask about different cultural influences from within the country such as those of the Traveller community. Also fully include all those from the majority culture who may have been influenced by connections to other counties or villages or who may have family living abroad.

You can discover how many languages are used in the group by asking the young people to draw flags or stamp their painted hands on a wall and write 'welcome' beside it in their home language/s.

If you are doing these activities as part of a data collection survey it helps to have someone observing and writing down the information. If some information is unclear it can be clarified later. Make sure the young people know you are also doing a data collection exercise.

Using the data collected to assess how inclusive your organisation is

The identifier form has been designed to help you with your planning. One aspect of planning for inclusion is to establish whether the membership of your youth group reflects the diversity within your wider community. By comparing the statistics from your youth group with demographic data from your area you will be able to see if you are engaging with the young people from diverse backgrounds in your community.

It is also important to determine what support would have to be put in place to meet the needs of your potential members. Collecting demographic data on your community can help you to plan for this in advance.

The following steps will help you with your group assessment and planning:

Step 1

Does the % of people attending your organisation from a minority ethnic background reflect the % of people from a minority ethnic background in your area?

Using registration forms or other methods that suit your youth group determine the % of all people attending your organisation from a minority ethnic background. Don't forget that the UK is included as a minority ethnic background in the Republic of Ireland. You then need to compare this figure with the % of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in your area. To find out this information you can try a number of sources:

- Ask your local schools for their statistics. All schools collect these statistics and your local schools may be able to give you correct

information.

- If the schools can't help you ask the Department of Education and Skills for their statistics for the schools in your area. It helps to know the Department codes for the schools. The schools can give you these.
- The Department of Education Northern Ireland Statistics and Research branch can provide you with a breakdown of ethnicity in primary and post primary schools by district council area
- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency can provide you with more general information on migration and population www.nisra.gov.uk. The statistics on the population comes from two main sources: 'The Registrars General Annual Report' which give an annual overview of the NI population and 'The Census' which gives a once in a decade detailed breakdown of the population (next one due 2011). Detailed population and migration small area statistics can also be obtained from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme/DataCatalogue.asp?button=Population
- You could look up the central statistics website – www.cso.ie. You can find statistics for each town in Ireland with over 5000 residents classified by ethnic or cultural background
- You should also use the methods outlined above to determine the largest representations of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in your area to see if they represented in your youth group?
- For a full report for your area that includes breakdowns by age and ethnicity you can contact the Central Statistics office (CSO) directly www.cso.ie but there may be a small charge for it.
- As a last resort use a 10% figure for ethnic identity as the figure you compare your data to as this is the national average. This would mean that ideally 10% of your group come from a minority ethnic background.

Step 2

Does the % of people attending your organisation from the Traveller community reflect the % of people from a Traveller community in your area?

Using registration forms or other methods that suit your youth group determine the % of people attending your organisation who identify as being from a Traveller background. Many Travellers do not like to self-identify, especially in youth groups where settled young people are in the majority. Therefore, you should only ask people to identify how they personally want to describe themselves.

To see if your group reflects the wider community you need to determine the % of people from the Traveller community in your area. To find out this information you can try a number of sources:

- Pavee Point did an all Ireland health survey of the Traveller community in 2010. Their statistics are the most accurate and up to date and can be accessed for each county on www.paveepoint.ie or <http://pavee.ie/ourgeels/>
- Ask a local Traveller support service for advice about Travellers in your community. They may know the families in person and will be able to advise you. They may know if the Travellers in your area are keen to engage. They might also know whether they would be comfortable disclosing that they are Travellers and other sensitivities that you should be aware of.
- You could look up the central statistics website – www.cso.ie but it is important to remember that the statistics gathered by the census in 2006 does not show an accurate record of the actual number of Travellers in the country. Recent research from Pavee Point shows that the CSO figure may only represent 60% of the actual number of Travellers in the Republic of Ireland.^{vii}
- For a full report for your area that includes breakdowns by age

membership of the Traveller community you can contact the Central Statistics office (CSO) directly www.cso.ie but there may be a small charge for it and as described above the figure will be indicative rather than accurate.

- As a last resort use a 1.5% figure for Traveller identity as the figure you compare your data to as this is the national average. This would mean that ideally 1.5% of your group come from the Traveller community. But this may not be relevant in some areas and it could be much too low in others.

Step 3

If your membership is not inclusive of minority ethnic or Traveller young people you can still do inclusive youth work.

There may be a number of reasons why your group is not culturally diverse. It may be because cultural diversity in your area is low. Or it may be that other youth groups in your area are engaging more fully with the people in the community from minority ethnic and Traveller backgrounds. Or it may be that you target a specific group of young people based on other identified needs and this doesn't include Travellers or minority ethnic young people unless their ethnic identity coincides with the specialism of your target group. To embed inclusion in youth work it is important to approach it with a community focus.

- Make contact with other youth groups in your community. Determine if other groups are more active in engaging with young people from minority ethnic backgrounds and Travellers than yours. The main concern should be that those from minority ethnic and Traveller backgrounds in your community, who would like to engage in youth work, are actually accessing a youth group. Try to discover why the young people from minority ethnic and Traveller backgrounds have chosen one youth group over another.
- Run inclusion programmes in your youth group. This could include doing ongoing activities on identity and inclusion. It could also include doing visits and exchanges – especially with groups that are already engaging

with young people from diverse cultural backgrounds

- Tell young people and parents from minority ethnic and Traveller backgrounds about your own youth group and make a dedicated effort to include them

Step 4

Determine what supports you need to put in place to meet the needs of anyone taking part in your organisation that has a disability or special requirements.

- Ask the young person or their parent/guardian who has told you about a disability what you can do to meet their needs.
- List the needs and put plans in place to make the necessary provisions
- Do the relevant disability awareness training based on your members identified needs with every member of staff and volunteers including staff that have minimal contact such as admin, security or maintenance staff. For example, in the case of an emergency shouting a warning is not appropriate if one of your members is Deaf, or flashing signs will not be appropriate for someone who is blind)

Collating the information within your own organisation for reporting purposes

For your ongoing planning needs you will need to store the information you have collected. Ideally you should work toward increasing your inclusiveness over a period of time, setting realistic goals and implementation plans. You may need to refer back to the information when planning new activities to see if it is appropriate. There are several ways of recording the information collected.

Simplest form of recording and using the data collected

When using these forms for your own reporting purposes it is not absolutely necessary to note every ethnic identity (for example in a database). A database

entry could have just 4 options:

1. Irish
2. Irish Traveller
3. Minority ethnicity,
4. 1st/2nd generation or mixed ethnicity. This is where a young person's ethnicity differs from their parents/guardians (1st/2nd generation young people or young people with mixed ethnicity may have very different needs from more newly settled migrants)

These 4 divisions will give you a broad breakdown of statistics that you can use to assess cultural diversity in your organisation. It is also advisable to count the number of different ethnic backgrounds the young people come from.

More complex form of recording and using the data collected

Planning at a project or service level entails having a full, detailed, ethnic breakdown recorded just as a detailed special requirements assessment is important. This would entail having a hard copy file for each service user or member and a separate file listing the range of a) ethnic diversity in your organisation and b) special requirements of members in your groups.

A full listing of ethnic origins will grow in detail as your organisation becomes more diverse. However, a full list is very manageable on a database and its wealth of information is invaluable – especially for comparison with data sourced from schools or the Department of Education and Skills (DES). You can do a direct comparison between the ethnic groups represented in your groups and those that attend local schools. In this way you can identify the young people from specific ethnic groups in your area that are not attending your youth groups and you can look at new ways of engaging with these groups.

It is important to note that the DES uses place of birth as their data set on identity. DES is principally interested in English language skills so that they can plan for provision of services. Their statistics do not relate directly to ethnicity or identity. For example, the Irish-born children of migrants will not be included.



8 Using Access All Areas to carry out a regional or county-wide survey

Why run a regional or county-wide diversity survey?

Because youth activities are by definition ‘voluntary’, those who decide to attend a given youth group, will by their actions make up the demographic of a group. This can result in a group that reflects the inherent inequalities that exist within wider society i.e. it will consist of those young people who are the most ‘privileged’ or have the strongest, and most mainstream, social networks. Many youth workers will equally have the interest, expertise and commitment to target young people who are less privileged, and those who come from diverse backgrounds. However, in reality, we seldom know what the true picture of engagement is across a number of youth groups – either at county level or regional level. Evidence suggests that inclusion of young people from diverse backgrounds in youth work activities is patchy and in some areas there are specific groups who are not being engaged with.

Without this knowledge youth organisations are not in a strategic position to know which groups are not engaging in an area and who they should be targeting. For strategic planning purposes it is important to know:

- Are all categories of young people with diverse lives and identities being reached?
- If so, to what degree? If not, why not?
- In what ways can we best support youth leaders to be more inclusive?

Access All Areas can be used to carry out a regional or county-wide survey.

While this Toolkit is available for any individual youth group to use in its own youth work development process it can also be used in a coordinated way on a county-wide or regional level.

Who would be involved in carrying out a survey?

A survey could be coordinated by a VEC/ ELB Youth Officer with support from various participating youth organisations or it could be run by a national or regional organisation with the support of other locally based youth organisations. It only has a value if the vast majority of youth organisations in the region or county are involved as a survey would need to look at youth engagement in an entire geographical area to have validity in terms of who is engaging. Sports bodies should also be included.

The actual tasks involved could be carried out or coordinated by the youth development officers (or regional managers) during a visit to each youth group or youth leader under their remit in the chosen area. A survey of each group takes 1-2 hours to complete. As such it could involve one full night's activity for each group being surveyed. A typical survey would involve up to 30 youth groups.

Collection of the results from each youth group should go to the co-ordination body that would collate the data, compare it with demographics from the area and then map out and disseminate the results to the participating organisations.

What tasks are involved in doing a diversity survey?

There are 4 tasks involved in doing a survey:

1. First we need to know the strengths and gaps that exist amongst youth leaders in the area (as youth leaders themselves perceive them) by using the checklists in Access All Areas.
2. Secondly, we need to capture a picture of the inclusion and exclusion that exists. What areas of inclusion need a greater focus? How can youth work providers target the more marginalised if we do not know who the most marginalised are in any given area. What groups

could be making bigger efforts to be more inclusive? We do this by capturing a snapshot picture of inclusion and exclusion as it exists across youth groups in the region by using the registration form or a diversity activity as described earlier in this chapter of Access All Areas. You can add questions to this to answer other specific information.

3. Capture a snapshot of inclusion practice by observing the visual signs within the youth group setting – posters, signs etc
4. Capture a picture of inclusion by asking the group what activities they held in the previous month

Task 1 By asking youth leaders to fill in the checklists and collating all of these together the coordinating body will see patterns emerging that identify strengths and weaknesses within the region. This can help you to identify areas that need attention such as training needs, initiatives such as publications, supporting partnerships, exchanges, etc.

Task 2 By asking young people and leaders – on any given night - to fill out a registration form or take part in a diversity activity that captures data on the cultural/ethnic, religion, gender and disability diversity within the youth group you can get a picture of some of the diversity in the group. This should then be compared with demographics on minority ethnic groups, minority religions, Traveller groups and those with a disability that live in the area. By comparing this data a very clear picture emerges of the levels of engagement of young people from diverse backgrounds and who isn't engaging.

Task 3 Look around the youth group setting and their publications and notices in the area and ascertain what level of diversity is demonstrated.

- Is there anything to show that it is an LGBT friendly environment?

- Is there anything to show that it is ethnically or culturally diverse or welcoming?
- Are there indications that it is an accessible building?
- Do they use a number of ways to explain and run activities to accommodate the diversity of learning needs in the groups?
- Is there information or an invitation to talk to someone for young people who need specific support on issues such as mental health, sexual health or pregnancy advice, back to education or training possibilities etc?

Task 4 Ask a question on the activities that have been run in the previous few months with both young people and leaders and determine whether any of these have focussed on diversity and inclusion.

What should the collected facts be measured against?

All youth groups – volunteer led or staffed – should be proactively welcoming and open. Access All Areas checklists set out a thorough list of what should ideally be in place. The results of the strengths and gaps exercise are measured directly against this good practice guide.

Youth work groups should engage with young people from diverse backgrounds relative to the demographics within their communities (i.e. if 10% of the community is from a minority ethnic background than 10% of the youth group should be from a minority ethnic background). This data can be sourced easily from DES/NISRA, from the most recent census and from Access All Areas demographic sections.

Ideally the data should also be backed up by interviews with other key organisations in the area such as religious bodies, unaffiliated groups that do

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youth activities, disability groups, refugee and migrant support groups, Traveller support groups and sporting bodies as these may be engaging with some groups of young people.

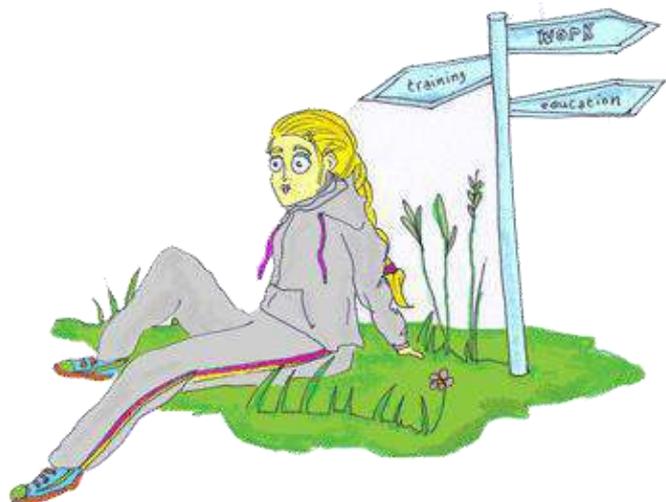
Difficulties that may be encountered

This method relies on the cooperation and commitment of key personnel across a number of organisations. It also depends heavily on the relationship these key people have with individual youth leaders. Inevitably some will have better relationships and contact than others. If an individual or manager feels they cannot take it on then it falls back on the lead coordinator to carry out the survey amongst those groups assuming the manager of those groups agree.

Analysing the registration or diversity activity results is an exacting task which some people find easy to do and others find more difficult. Capacities for this work need to be assessed and identified early on in the process.

Many youth groups have set programmes of events planned well in advance and they may not want to give one night over to this process. One way to overcome it may be to do the checklists with leaders after a meeting (or on another agreed night) and do a short registration and questionnaire process with the young people at the beginning of a meeting.

Support on the process is available from NYCI.



Useful Contacts

<p>Department of Children and Youth Affairs</p> <p>www.dcy.gov.ie</p>	<p>Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform</p> <p>www.justice.ie</p>
<p>Department of Education and Skills</p> <p>www.education.ie</p>	<p>Central Statistics Office</p> <p>www.cso.ie</p>
<p>Department of Education NI</p> <p>www.deni.gov.uk</p>	<p>Northern Ireland Statistic and Research Agency</p> <p>www.nisra.gov.uk</p>
<p>The Equality Authority</p> <p>Phone: 1890 245 545</p> <p>Email: info@equality.ie</p> <p>Web: www.equality.ie</p>	<p>The Equality Commission</p> <p>Phone: 028 - 90 500 600</p> <p>Email: information@equalityni.org</p> <p>Web: www.equalityni.org</p>

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Community and Voluntary Sector

<p>Activelink</p> <p>www.activelink.ie</p>	<p>Online network for Irish non profit organisations: information on seminars, events, employment and volunteering opportunities and general news relating to the community and Voluntary sector in Ireland.</p>
<p>Changing Ireland</p> <p>www.changingireland.ie</p>	<p>Changing Ireland is an independent community development magazine published quarterly and located in a disadvantaged community where positive change is taking place, in Moyross, Limerick.</p>
<p>The Wheel</p> <p>www.wheel.ie</p>	<p>Support and representative body connecting Community and Voluntary organisations in Ireland.</p>

<p>NICVA</p> <p>www.nicva.org</p>	<p>NICVA, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, is a membership and representative umbrella body for the entire voluntary and community sector of Northern Ireland. NICVA offers a range of services including advice (governance and charity advice, HR), fundraising, research, policy and lobbying, training and consultancy.</p>
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- ⁱ Inequality and the Stereotyping of young people, Maurice Devlin published by The Equality Authority 2006 p16-17
- ⁱⁱ Model of Effective Practice, Curriculum Development Unit (2003)
- ⁱⁱⁱ Based on Baker J, Lynch K, Cantillion S, and Walsh J (2004), *Equality: From Theory to Action*, Palgrave Macmillan, Bakingstoke
- ^{iv} www.bristol-cyps.org.uk/services/eit/definitions.html
- ^v www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/multiagencyworking/glossary/?asset=glossary&id=22998
- ^{vi} This registration form was developed from one devised by Gurrabraher Youth Service (YWI Cork) after they reviewed their practice using Access All Areas checklists
- ^{vii} See www. <http://pavee.ie/ourgeels/>