



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 396, 7 April 2024

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <https://seapn.org.uk/events/>.

Black Lives Matter/Anti-racism

Anti-racist systems leadership to address systemic racism

https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/media/sooflams/anti-racist-practice-strategic-briefing-joint_web.pdf

(Source: email from Research in Practice, 28 Mar 2024)

Important new guidance:

“This briefing offers an overview of anti-racist systems leadership. It does not shy away from the complexities and challenges of tackling the roots of racism. Enduring disparities and inequitable outcomes persist, systems leadership working together could and should eradicate these inequalities.

The briefing aims to:

- Support leaders in developing critical thinking to understand how systemic racism is constructed and perpetuated in policies, tools and practice within individual organisations and partnerships.
- Provide important concepts and signpost to research and resources that illustrate the multi-layered impact of racism within communities, workforces and across local public service systems.
- Offer tools to enable partners to establish themselves with anti-racist systems leaders and case study examples of local system’s development.” [p2]

NB Fuller assessment to appear in *The Network Newsletter*.

Coronavirus/COVID-19

“As the pandemic turns four, here’s what we need to do for a healthier future”

https://theconversation.com/as-the-pandemic-turns-four-heres-what-we-need-to-do-for-a-healthier-future-224991?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2012%202024%20-%202904129496&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2012%202024%20-%202904129496+CID_d326038a967fe5a06719b439df86d139&utm_source=ca

[mpaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=As%20the%20pandemic%20turns%20four%20heres%20what%20we%20need%20to%20do%20for%20a%20healthier%20future](#)

(Source: *The Conversation*, 12 Mar 2024)

Important article:

“March 11 2024 marks four years since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

Although no longer officially a public health emergency of international concern, the pandemic is still with us, and the virus is still causing serious harm.

Here are three priorities – three Cs – for a healthier future.”

These are:

- Clear guidance: “In future, whether it’s another COVID wave, or another virus or public health emergency, clear communication by trustworthy messengers is going to be key.”
- Combat complacency: “COVID complacency is setting in as we have moved out of the emergency phase of the pandemic. But is still much work to be done.”
- Culture change: “At the most fundamental level, we need to do more to create a culture of equality. Some groups, especially the most economically deprived, fared much worse than others during the pandemic. Health inequalities have widened as a result. With ongoing pandemic impacts, for example, long COVID rates, also disproportionately affecting those from disadvantaged groups, health inequalities are likely to persist without significant action to address them.

Vaccine inequity is still a problem globally. At a national level, in some wealthier countries like the UK, those from more deprived backgrounds are going to be less able to afford private vaccines.”

Cost of living crisis/poverty – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Warm Welcome”

(Source: Warm Welcome Spaces *E-News*, 3 Apr 2024)

It was good to see two libraries included in the latest *E-News*:

“Warm Welcome Heroes we featured this past winter, serving as examples of the dedication and impact Warm Welcome Spaces have had on their communities.”

East Ham Library, <https://www.warmwelcome.uk/blog/we-come-everyday-its-like-a-family>:

“Join us on a journey into the vibrant world of East Ham Library, where diverse communities – including Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black communities – come together, weaving connections and discovering a sense of belonging within the Warm Welcome Space. On a recent visit, we delved into insightful conversations with the dedicated space leaders, unveiling their approach to inclusion.

Their secret? A deliberate effort in ensuring that the library’s staff and volunteers authentically represent the diverse tapestry of the community.”

Port Talbot Library, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XsbLVis3coU>:

“Actor Michael Sheen visits Port Talbot Library as part of the Warm Welcome Campaign [...]”

Cost of living crisis/poverty – Other Agencies

“Child poverty rises six times faster in most deprived areas compared to the richest”

<https://neweconomics.org/2024/03/child-poverty-rises-six-times-faster-in-most-deprived-areas-compared-to-the-richest>

New from the New Economics Foundation:

“NEF analysis of new DWP stats show that child poverty in the poorest areas has increased by 8 percentage points since 2014/15”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“All schools 'should be required to appoint a young carers lead', says charity”

<https://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/article/all-schools-should-be-required-to-appoint-a-young-carers-lead-says-charity>

(Source: Children & Young People Now *Update*, 14 Mar 2024)

Article introducing the Carers’ Trust young carers covenant which gives some important background info about young carers – see,

<https://carers.org/downloads/final-young-carers-covenant.pdf>:

“There are at least one million young carers aged 17 and under in the UK and over 600,000 young adult carers aged 18 to 25. They are caring for family members and friends with challenging long-term disabilities, illnesses or addiction.

We know that more than 139,000 children and young people are caring for someone with a long-term illness or disability for over 20 hours every week. And shockingly, over 50,000 of them are spending 50 hours or more each week on their caring role.” [p2]

Changing stories together

Download the pdf from:

https://nlt.cdn.ngo/media/documents/Strategy_final_25.03.24_-_low_res.pdf

Web version: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/about-us/our-strategy/>

(Source: National Literacy Trust *Monthly Newsletter*, Apr 2024)

“This strategy explains how the National Literacy Trust will change life stories between 2024 and 2027.” [p1]

NLT (Network member) have just launched their new strategy, focusing on what they identify as three “breakthroughs”:

Breakthrough 1: Every child starts school with language and communication skills ready to grow and learn at school

Breakthrough 2: Every young person, wherever they grow up, leaves school with literacy skills for life

Breakthrough 3: Everyone leaving the criminal justice system has improved literacy skills to help them thrive.

NB Fuller assessment to appear in *The Network Newsletter*.

Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Other Agencies

Just Fair Resource Library

https://justfair.org.uk/resource-library/?mc_cid=bea030a9c4&mc_eid=17c19d737e

(Source: email from Just Fair, 28 Mar 2024)

The charity Just Fair (“our mission is to lead and inspire work to protect economic, social, and cultural rights in the UK”) has just launched a new searchable resource library.

Finding a balance: how to ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is for everyone

<https://www.moreincommon.org.uk/media/u42d5qz1/finding-a-balance-ucl-policy-lab-university-of-oxford-and-more-in-common-report.pdf>

(Source: *Equally Ours Newsletter*, 4 Apr 2024)

Important new report:

“Recent years have seen a number of high profile, polarised and occasionally acrimonious debates about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). These debates between activists, politicians, practitioners and columnists give the impression of deep, binary divides on the merits (or harms) of embracing EDI.

This binary does not however reflect public opinion. **The British public are five times more likely to say that EDI is a good, rather than a bad, thing** – and support for EDI extends across Britain. The public are also more likely than not to think that EDI leads to fairer outcomes and that they personally benefit from EDI practice – **most people do not see**

EDI in zero sum terms. That sentiment is not limited to the most progressive segments of the UK but extends across more socially conservative groups too.” [p5 – emphasises theirs]

The report goes on to make 10 recommendations for improving/renewing EDI work.

NB Fuller assessment to appear in *The Network Newsletter*.

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“Breaking the Chains”

<https://miclu.org/breaking-the-chains>

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 18 Mar 2024)

Drawing on work by the Migrant & Refugee Children's Legal Unit, this resource outlines what “Breaking the Chains” is:

“Breaking the Chains is a unique and ground-breaking project designed to meet the specific needs of asylum-seeking children and young people by providing a holistic legal representation and advice service which is child-centred and child-friendly. The project seeks to advise, educate, empower and engage children and young people in the asylum process alongside professionals from both legal and non-legal sectors. It aims to improve the outcomes (both legally and socially) for asylum seeking children and young people, especially those who are most vulnerable or from marginalised communities.

Breaking the Chains was created in 2018 in response to consultation with Albanian children and young people, and the grassroots agencies supporting them. MiCLU have formally partnered with Shpresa Programme, a user-led organisation working with the Albanian community, to work with Albanian asylum-seeking children.”

and also sets out some important background info about the Albanian asylum-seeking community.

“The UK government is using private tech companies to deliver public funds to asylum seekers”

https://theconversation.com/the-uk-government-is-using-private-tech-companies-to-deliver-public-funds-to-asylum-seekers-223698?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2019%202024%20-%202912229569&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2019%202024%20-%202912229569+CID_90b6874f95e7c9f40ea2da34c8d85e1c&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=The%20UK%20government%20is%20using%20private%20tech%20companies%20to%20deliver%20public%20funds%20to%20asylum%20seekers

(Source: *The Conversation*, 19 Mar 2024)

Investigation into the Aspen card:

“When asylum seekers arrive in the UK, they are not eligible for benefits. Those who do not have anywhere else to live are provided with government-funded housing. Those who are not able to meet essential needs can access basic Home Office funds to cover food, clothing and toiletries.

The sums in question are paltry. As of December 2023, asylum seekers housed in self-catering facilities are given £49.18 per week, per person. Those housed in hotels get £8.86.

Private tech companies are increasingly encroaching on the delivery of public funds to vulnerable people. These are distributed via a prepayment system called the Asylum Support Enablement (Aspen) card, provided by Prepaid Financial Services (PFS, a subsidiary of EML Payments Ltd).”