The Network Newsletter:
tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries

Number 39, December 2004

(formerly published as *Public Libraries & Social Exclusion Action Planning Network Newsletter*, issue 1, May 1999 – issue 29, September 2001)

The Network's Website is at www.seapn.org.uk and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the newsletter archive.

For a general overview of work to tackle social exclusion, see the CILIP Community Services Group site at http://www.cilip.org.uk/groups/csg/si/index.html.

Did you see ...?

Adults Learning

The latest issue of the NIACE journal, *Adults Learning*, has some interesting articles, including:

- "Where now for ICT and adult learning?"[1] – based on research carried out last year (and to be published as a book next year), this article suggests that it is not so much the "digital divide" that should concern us, but "digital choice". Part of the issue is a reliance on teaching ICT skills themselves, rather than applying them to the learning of something else …
- "Lost in translation"[2] looks at whether we are really hearing the voice of learners, or people speaking on their behalf, and, drawing on a scale of participation developed by the UN Development Programme, sets out ideas for greater consultation and involvement
- "Developing self-esteem ..."[3] is an interesting look at whether, by using the increasingly popular analysis that suggests that learners (and others) do not achieve because of lack of self-esteem, we are actually labeling people in a way that blocks their development.

Who Cares?

The latest issue of the magazine[4] from The Who Cares? Trust focuses on mental health, with an introduction to what constitute mental health problems and a useful

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[1] Neil Selwyn and Stephen Gorard. "Where now for ICT and adult learning?" *Adults Learning* 16 (3) November 2004, pp8-10.
[2] Jane Thompson "Lost in translation" *Adults Learning* 16 (3) November 2004, pp14-16.
[3] Kathryn Ecclestone "Developing self-esteem and emotional well-being – inclusion or intrusion?" *Adults Learning* 16 (3) November 2004, pp11-13.
[4] *Who Cares?* 69, Autumn 2004. Further information is available at: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk.

list of organisations to contact, an interview with rising singing star Sarah Bennett, and a look at background statistics (eg 45% of 15-17 year-olds in care have some sort of mental disorder), as well as the usual mix of photo-story, news, poetry and interviews.

It also includes a short piece to promote *Cheery tarts and cats galore*, the collection of poetry, writing and art produced by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation-funded project, FAB, which works across Cornwall linking looked-after young people, Education and Libraries.

ExtraTime Special

ContinYou, the charity that supports and develops out-of-school-hours learning [oshl], produces termly bulletins, *ExtraTime Specials.*

One of the latest, *Embedding oshl: how it works*, looks at how oshl can be linked to national strategies (eg the Key Stage 3 Strategy) and to national agenda (eg social inclusion). It also looks at how oshl can work with personalised learning (the new direction in the DfES five-year strategy for schools[5]). It also has a valuable list of resources.

Report to Parliament …

As background to the current Parliamentary Inquiry into public libraries, DCMS have produced a brief summary[6] of key points about and initiatives affecting public libraries, which is a useful introduction to the current 'scene'.

"Every Child Matters"

Just in case you haven't seen this yet, DfES have just launched an "Every Child Matters" Website at:

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.

Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2004

The New Policy Institute has recently updated its annual analysis of indicators of poverty and social exclusion.

Key findings include:

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[5] *Five year strategy for children and learners*. DfES, 2004. Available at: www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/5yearstrategy. The bulletin also lists the links to the other national frameworks: *The learning country* at www.wales.gov.uk/subieducationtraining/content/learningcountry/tic-contents-e.htm; *Educating for excellence: choice and opportunity* at www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/ndser-00.asp; and *Department of Education strategic framework and business plan 04-05* at www.deni.gov.uk.
[6] *Report to Parliament on public library matters*. DCMS, 2004. Available at: www.culture.gov.uk.

- "The number of people living in low-income households continues to fall. All of this fall has been among children (and their parents) and pensioners. In contrast, the number of working-age adults without dependent children who are in low income has risen in recent years

- There has been substantial success over the last decade in reducing unemployment and in reducing worklessness among couple households. There has been much less success in reducing the numbers of people who are economically inactive but want paid work, in long-term worklessness due to sickness and disability, and in worklessness among single-adult households. There is a large overlap between these groups and they are a major challenge for future policy.

- While work strongly reduces the risk of being in poverty, it does not eliminate it: two-fifths of people in low-income working-age households now have someone in paid work. A quarter of all those earning less than £6.50 per hour are directly employed by the public sector.

- Low pay is only one of the disadvantages of jobs at the bottom of the labour market. Two-fifths of people who find work no longer have that work six months later, the same proportion as a decade ago. More than half of employees on below-average incomes are not contributing to a non-state pension.

- Progress in increasing the number of children and young adults with an adequate minimum level of educational qualification has now stalled, with no further advance since 2000 compared with significant progress during the second half of the 1990s. Around a quarter of young people at each of the ages of 11, 16 and 19 are still failing to reach a basic level of attainment".[7]

Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Scotland 2004

The JRF have also just published a report[8] on Scotland – key findings are:

- "While the percentage of both children and pensioners in low-income households is falling, the percentage for working-age adults without dependent children is rising.

- The number of working-age people who want paid work is more than twice the number who are officially (ILO) unemployed. Four-fifths of long-term claimants of out-of-work benefits are sick or disabled.

- Two-fifths of those aged 25 or over and earning less than £6.50 per hour work in the distribution, hotel and restaurant sectors. A further quarter are directly

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[7] Taken from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Website, www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/d14.asp. The full report is available only online at: www.poverty.org.uk.
[8] Guy Palmer, Jane Carr and Peter Kenway. *Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Scotland 2004.* Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2004. £16.95 (ISBN: 1 85935 259 6).

employed by the public sector. Relatively few low-paid jobs are in sectors which face direct competition from low wage producers abroad.

- Half of all employees aged 25 to 50 lacking Higher grade or above are low paid. A quarter of all 19-year-olds lack such qualifications.

- More than half of employees on below-average incomes are not contributing to a non-state pension.

- While the rates of premature death have fallen over the last decade, they are still much higher than in any other part of Great Britain. 29 of the 32 local authorities have higher premature death rates than the average for England and Wales".[9]

The dynamics of deprivation …

DWP have just published a report[10] in their "Families and Children Strategic Analysis Programme" which looks at the relationship between income and deprivation over time.

The key conclusions include:

"The relatively weak longitudinal relationship between income and deprivation means that families who dip into poverty just for a short period need not be a primary area of concern. The converse, though, is that those in long-run poverty suffer even more deprivation than might have been feared; and that a temporary escape from poverty will do little to alleviate their position.

The implication seems to be that permanent improvements in poor people's underlying economic positions are required …"

Understanding prejudice

Stonewall have just published a major piece of research[11], based on their 2003 survey, *Profiles of prejudice*[12].

Key findings include:

- Types of prejudice range from aggressive to "benevolent"
- Feeling less positive towards a particular social group is not regarded as prejudice if it can be justified

[9] Taken from Joseph Rowntree Foundation Website, www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/n104.asp.

[10] Richard Berthoud, Mark Bryan and Elena Bardasi. *The dynamics of deprivation: the relationship between income and material deprivation over time.* DWP/Corporate Document Services (Research Report 219), 2004 (ISBN: 1-84123-728-0). Available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/.

[11] Gill Valentine and Ian McDonald. *Understanding prejudice: attitudes towards minorities.* Stonewall, 2004. Further information available at: www.stonewall.org.uk.

[12] *Profiles of prejudice.* Citizenship 21, 2003.

- Groups that challenge majority views on a cultural level include lesbians, gay men and Asian people
- There is a strong perception that the white majority is being unfairly treated, and that minority groups are receiving preferential treatment – on an economic level, a threat is felt from asylum-seekers, Travellers and Black people
- Marginalised young, white heterosexual men tend to be the least socially integrated
- Respect can be found within the white majority population – and this depends on the nature and quality of contact with members of other social groups
- There is an emphasis on sameness and the importance of minority groups fitting in, which shows a lack of appreciation for difference
- "Contact in public spaces, without engagement, is not enough to foster respect and can even exacerbate prejudice." (p9)

The report identifies five different kinds of prejudice:

- Aggressive
- Banal (mundane examples that may be intentional or unintentional, that pass unnoticed)
- Benevolent (positive views which may still produce negative consequences)
- Cathartic ("a release of views recognised as being less positive about minority groups, and therefore unacceptable, that is justified and therefore rendered acceptable" (p16))
- Unintentional.

The report's recommendations include:

- The need for Government, agencies and minority groups to work together to tackle common issues
- "Campaigns designed to reduce prejudice should teach the value of difference both within minority and majority groups" (p9)
- The importance of the workplace – and the role of employers to develop a workplace culture that fosters contact between groups
- Work with the media to present more positive images of minority groups
- More research to benchmark prejudice and monitor the success of strategies to reduce prejudice.

This research provides invaluable background material on the prejudices faced by several groups, including lesbians and gay men; disabled people; transsexuals and transgendered people; asylum-seekers; minority ethnic groups; Gypsies and Travellers; gender.

This is a very important piece of research, particularly in the way that it sets out the links between different kinds of prejudice. Highly recommended.

"Looking after Literacy" project evaluation

The Who Cares? Trust has recently published an evaluation report[13] of this project which ran in Kent; it shows that the project did have a positive impact on the young people's reading, and also shows what can be achieved even with limited intervention.

Books Connect 2

The evaluation report[14] of "Books Connect 2" has just been published.

"Books Connect" aims "to nurture the formation of innovative, library-led partnerships involving museums, archives and arts organisations to develop new audiences and new venues for creative activities inspired by books, words, stories and reading." [p6]

All 9 library authorities in the East Midlands Region took part, and this report outlines some exciting work, as well as evaluating the projects using the Generic Learning Outcomes.

Bringing communities together ...

DCMS have just published a booklet[15], based on issues coming out of a seminar held in Oldham earlier this year, that shows some of the ways in which sports and culture can help to create community cohesion and some of the issues that still need to be dealt with. It includes a description of Blackburn with Darwen Library Service's "By Our Guest" programme for asylum-seekers; and a piece on "Moving Minds", the project involving museums and galleries from Bradford, Leeds and Manchester with communities and artists to create work that looks at migration, culture and identity.

Copies of the booklet can be obtained from:
Amy Ward, Strategy, Policy and Delivery Unit, DCMS, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH.

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[13] *An evaluation of the "Looking after literacy" project in Kent: enabling children in care to fulfil their educational potential*. The Who Cares? Trust, 2004 (ISBN: 1903239184). The full report is available at: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/professionals.htm and also at: www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects//upload/ACF12F7.doc.
[14] *Books Connect 2*. Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, 2004 (ISBN: 1-898489-37-8). Copies available from RCMG, tel: 0116 252 3995; email: rcmg@le.ac.uk.
[15] *Bringing communities together through sport and culture: Oldham 2004*. DCMS, 2004.