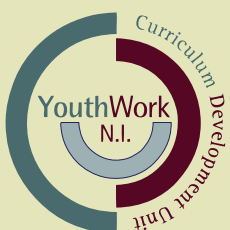




The Use of **Age Specific** Developmental Needs Based Curricula

Report
June 2006



The feasibility of the use of age specific, developmental needs based curricula within the Northern Ireland Youth Service.



1. introduction



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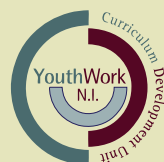
Introduction

This is the report of a feasibility study on the development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula for the Northern Ireland Youth Service.

The study was commissioned by the Curriculum Development Unit and YouthNet on behalf of the Northern Ireland Youth Service Liaison Forum. The research was carried out by an independent consultant, Tony Macaulay (Macaulay Associates) between March and May 2006.

The report includes:

- An executive summary of the findings and recommendations
- Information on the background to the project and the terms of reference of the research
- An explanation of the research methodology
- A presentation of findings under each research objective
- A set of main conclusions
- A presentation of the feasibility options
- A series of recommendations for the future based on the findings
- A bibliography
- A set of associated appendices



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Introduction

This is the report of a feasibility study on the development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula for the Northern Ireland Youth Service. It was commissioned by the Curriculum Development Unit and YouthNet on behalf of the Northern Ireland Youth Service Liaison Forum and carried out by an independent consultant, Tony Macaulay (Macaulay Associates) between March and May 2006.

Conclusions

The main conclusions of the feasibility study are as follows:

1. There is evidence of effective practice within the majority of youth groups, centres and projects, involving a conscious differentiation between “senior” and “junior” work, allocation of specific staff to each age group, often meeting at different times and with different age appropriate programmes.
2. A high percentage of young people participating in the Youth Service in Northern Ireland are doing so within the context of age specific curricula delivered by uniformed youth groups, whose voluntary leaders are trained in the delivery of age specific curricula.
3. There is a lesser focus on written age specific curricula in the wider Youth Service. However, there is also a range of examples from across the Youth Service from transitions work, family youth work, young adults work, play work, schools based youth work, peer education programmes, leadership development programmes and health education programmes.
4. In wider Youth Service provision most age specific youth work is based on identifying needs within the framework of a Model for Effective Practice rather than based on a written age specific curriculum.
5. While a Model for Effective of Practice appears to be providing a clear curriculum basis for work with adolescents, those most concerned with the needs of Under 10s and Young Adults are seeking greater age specific differentiation in addition to this.
6. There is a need for the development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service, particularly for Under 10s and Young Adults.
7. There is a need for any further development of age specific curricula to be flexible and to focus on approaches, models and methodologies rather than a curriculum syllabus.

Recommendations

As a result of the feasibility study the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The Department of Education should task the Youth Service Liaison Forum with establishing two linked cross sectoral consortia to develop and support age specific developmental needs based curriculum frameworks (including approaches, models and methodologies) for Under 10s and 16-25s, that are rooted in the values, philosophy and principles of the Youth Service.
2. The Curriculum Development Unit should continue to promote the sharing of good practice that will maintain and further develop effective work with the 10-16 age group.



- 3.** The Curriculum Development Unit should lead, co-ordinate and facilitate the recruitment of the cross sectoral consortia, as a strategic priority.
- 4.** The Curriculum Development Unit should develop a programme of appropriate support and training for the implementation of the frameworks developed by each consortium.
- 5.** The work of the consortia and the Curriculum Development Unit's co-ordination and support role should be adequately resourced.
- 6.** The consortia should include representatives from across the youth sector including uniformed organisations, play work organisations and agencies specialising in work with young adults.
- 7.** The consortia should consult and engage with other relevant government departments and agencies in the development of the frameworks.
- 8.** The focus of the consortia should be on developing clear flexible curricular frameworks with approaches, models and methodologies that will support the delivery of effective age appropriate youth work across the Youth Service in Northern Ireland from 4-25 years.
- 9.** The frameworks should become embedded in youth work training and in the professional development of workers.
- 10.** The consortia should work to a clear time bound action plan based on these recommendations.

3. background to the research

3.1 Youth Work Strategy 2005-2008

The Northern Ireland Youth Work Strategy (Youth Service Liaison Forum, 2004) sets out a series of priorities for 2005-2008 under four key themes:

- Effective inclusive youth work
- Participation
- Resources and funding
- Implementation

Under the first theme of delivering effective inclusive youth work the Strategy sets out a series of objectives, including the following objective, included under the heading “Sustain and Develop the Quality of Youth Work”:

1.4 Develop and support appropriate curricula that reflect the values, aims and priorities of the Youth Work Strategy and the needs of relevant age groups.

The age range of the NI Youth Service is 4-25 year olds. The Strategy, under the heading of “Young People in Northern Ireland an Overview of Rights and Needs” includes an outline of developmental needs as formulated by the Youth Service Policy Review (Department of Education, 1999). The section explains:

- *“The Youth Service Policy Review formulated an outline of key developmental needs, indicating how these relate to youth work during the journey from childhood, through adolescence, and into young adulthood. It is noted that, whilst this outline attributes specific needs to defined age bands, in reality life transitions vary according to each individual. Hence the age-banding within this outline should not be seen as prescriptive.*

Children: key developmental needs in the 4-10 year age band:

- *Physical development: the opportunity to initiate safe and creative play activities that enrich a child’s physical abilities promoting good health, skill development, and serving as a pre-requisite for later physical confidence;*
- *Social development: experiences to enable children to develop personal relationships through informal activities, providing a forum for the expression and testing of communication and social skills leading to self-confidence, value learning and co-operative interactions and;*
- *Creative stimulation: non-formal activities providing an experience of how things work and contributing to projects which enable an understanding of their environment, relationships, their strengths and imitations.*

Young People: key developmental needs in the 10-16 year age band:

- *Participation: opportunities for engagement in activities and groupings that allow a personal sense of contribution and community ensuring the development of accountability, personal esteem and membership of society;*
- *Acceptance by, and of, others: the provision of programmes that encourage healthy relationships, reducing potential prejudice towards others and allowing feedback of acceptance and respect;*
- *Development and challenge to values and beliefs with other young people, building a foundation for good health, spiritual development and creative contribution to society;*



- *Engagement with the wider community: opportunities for involvement in community decision making, developing skills and knowledge appropriate to ‘active citizenship’.*

Young Adult: needs specific to the individual young adult in the 16-25 age band

- *Information: young people face crucial choices between the ages of 16 and 25 years. Accurate information accessible through a variety of mediums is required to enable young people to make informed decisions which support their development. There is inequality in young people’s access to information sources and advice.*
- *Specialist support: many young people will face crises during this period in their lives. Individual support for young people around areas such as health, including sexual and mental health, employment, offending behaviour and accommodation is a requirement;*
- *Citizenship: support for young adults in the transition to full active participation in community life is particularly relevant in Northern Ireland given the long absence of local democracy and the prevailing sectarianism.”*

Harland et al, in “The Nature of Youth Work in Northern Ireland: Purpose, Contribution and Challenges” (2004) recommended “*Youth work in Northern Ireland should be underpinned with conceptually based knowledge on stages of youth development in relation to particular age groups*”.

3.2 The Curriculum Development Unit

The Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) was established in April 2002. Its aim is to enhance and support Curriculum Development within the Youth Service in Northern Ireland. The Inter-Board Youth Panel supported by the Youth Service Partnership sought and was successful in securing funding through the Department of Education from Executive Programme Funds, to establish the Unit. The Unit is a resource for all full-time, part-time youth workers and volunteers within the Statutory and Voluntary Youth Sectors in Northern Ireland.

The Unit was tasked by the Youth Service Liaison Forum to complete this feasibility study for the Northern Ireland Youth Work Strategy under the Operational Plan 2005/2006.

4. terms of reference

The purpose of the research was “to investigate the feasibility of developing for the Northern Ireland Youth Service a number of age specific, developmental needs based curricula”

The research objectives were as follows:

- 4.1** Map the extent to which age specific, developmental needs based curricula exist or are in operation in the Northern Ireland Youth Service (include reference to the UK, Republic of Ireland or elsewhere, make comparisons if necessary.)
- 4.2** Identify and summarise the key elements of age specific, developmental needs based curricula.
- 4.3** Identify and engage with a representative sample of organisations/agencies that are using age specific, developmental needs based curricula, for the purpose of identifying and exploring areas of commonality and difference, including for example:
 - The ethos underpinning the use of age specific curricula models
 - The central or primary purpose of age specific curricula models
 - The structure and/or components of age specific curricula models
 - General, primary or specific target areas/groups in which age specific curricula models are used
 - General, primary or specific programme areas/social issues in which age specific curricula models are used
- 4.4** Identify the methods and techniques agencies and organisations use to ensure age specific, developmental needs based curricula are delivered, operated, communicated (to workers and young people, internally and/or externally), maintained and embedded.
- 4.5** Identify and illustrate the benefits or added impact of age specific, developmental needs based curricula
- 4.6** Identify and illustrate the constraints or risks of age specific developmental needs based curricula
- 4.7** Draw conclusions on the range and scope of age specific, developmental needs based curricula identified through the study.
- 4.8** Make recommendations, for stimulating debate and discussion on, the value, relevance, difficulties and/or next steps that should be taken regarding the development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service.

5. research methodology

The research methodology was as follows:

5.1 Initiation Meeting

This first meeting between the researcher and the YouthNet and CDU staff:

- discussed the terms of reference in depth
- reviewed the proposed methodology, approach and agreed any necessary refinements
- agreed timescales and relevant dates of meetings
- gathered relevant initial information and key informants/ contacts

5.2 Telephone Consultations

A series of telephone consultations were carried out with a sample of key informants to gather additional views on possible sources of information for the desk research, suggestions for potential interviewees and to identify areas for further investigation¹. The telephone consultation questions and a list of those consulted by telephone are in Appendix I and the letter requesting participation at this stage is in Appendix II.

5.3 Desk Research

The desk research identified, collected, compared and analysed a range of models, frameworks, research projects, initiatives and methods/techniques from Northern Ireland, GB, Republic of Ireland and other countries.

The main sources of information were:

- Literature and resource materials from the Curriculum Development Unit Library
- Relevant regional, national and international websites
- Literature and resource materials from various youth service statutory agencies and voluntary organisations

A full list of sources of literature reviewed and information analysed is in the Bibliography.

5.4 Individual and Small Group Interviews

An invitation to participate in the research was circulated widely throughout the Youth Service through *e pipe* and those groups and agencies that were interested in taking part were asked to complete a profile response form.

The letter of invitation is in Appendix III and the Profile Response Form is in Appendix IV.

Seven forms were returned and YouthNet/CDU assisted in the selection of organisations to participate based on ensuring as broad a representation as possible in the sample.

A series of 15 semi structured individual and group interviews were then carried out with a representative sample of organisations/agencies on frameworks for measuring personal and social development.

The interviews aimed to:

- Gather information on existing models
- Discuss benefits and constraints of measuring personal and social development outcomes in youth work
- Discuss and explore feasibility options for the NI context

A list of the interview questions is in Appendix V and a list of the interviewees is in Appendix VI.

¹ A Scoping Workshop planned for 22nd March 2006 which was cancelled due to low attendance and a sample of invitees were included in the semi structured interviews instead.



5.5 Focus Groups

A series of three focus groups were facilitated to explore and discuss the feasibility and options for the further development of a framework and/or frameworks for measuring personal and social development of young people.

The focus groups were as follows:

- Boys Brigade, Belfast Battalion Training Committee: 8 participants on 10th May 2006
- SEELB Youth Service: 6 participants on 4th May 2006
- WELB Youth Service: 8 participants on 11th May 2006

The focus groups followed the same question framework as the interviews. A list of the focus group participants is in Appendix VII.

5.6 Options Appraisal Workshop

An options appraisal workshop involving a range of key stakeholders was facilitated on 5th May 2006. The purpose of the workshop was to explore, assess and prioritise a range of options that had emerged from the research. The workshop programme and a list of participants is Appendix VIII. A list of options that were appraised is in Appendix IX.

5.7 Draft Report

A series of draft reports were produced and presented to the key stakeholders for comment and discussion. The final report includes the amendments suggested at the draft reports stage.

6. findings

6.1 Age Specific Curricula

For the purposes of this research age specific curricula are defined as specific written curricula that reflect the values, aims and priorities of the Youth Work Strategy that have been designed for delivery with a particular age group within 4-25 years.

6.1.1 Existing Age Specific Curricula

(a) Uniformed² Youth Groups

The development and delivery of age specific curriculum based on the developmental needs of children and young people is most evident within the uniformed youth sector of the Youth Service in Northern Ireland.

This most substantial delivery of the ongoing development and delivery age specific curricula is found in the following groups:

- Boys Brigade
- Catholic Guides
- Girl Guides
- Girls Brigade
- Scouts

To map the extent of this delivery of age specific curricula in Northern Ireland the Youth Council NI Geomapping System provides important information.

With the assistance of the Youth Service departments from the five Education and Library Boards, the Youth Council Geomapping project collects data from all registered youth groups in Northern Ireland. Data includes number, ages and gender of members, location of group, and numbers/type of paid and voluntary staffing.

The data is based only upon youth groups which submitted annual YS1 statistical returns. Each registered group classified itself within one of six main categories: Controlled, Uniformed, Voluntary, Non-uniformed Church Based, Community Based and Other. All registered groups are required by the Boards to be delivering youth work as defined in the Model of Effective Practice.

The consultant analysed the findings of the 2005 data cycle as an indicator of the scale of the delivery of age specific curricula through uniformed youth groups across Northern Ireland. This analysis found that uniformed groups are the most frequently occurring type of registered youth group and a substantial percentage of the total of all participants in registered youth groups in Northern Ireland are participants in uniformed groups.

Another indicator of the high level of participation in uniformed groups in Northern Ireland is found in The Girls Brigade Annual Report 2004/2005. The report recorded 18,462 participants in 296 units, with 3232 voluntary leaders and 526 young leaders. The Boys Brigade figures for 2005 were 16,100 participants in 307 units, with 3,321 voluntary leaders and 270 young leaders (Source: Faith Based Youth Work in Northern Ireland, YouthNet Faith Based Interest Group, Macaulay, T., 2006)

These statistics demonstrate that a high percentage of young people participating in the Youth Service in Northern Ireland are doing so within the context of age specific curricula.

Each group has developed a similar range of four age bands, and have developed age specific curricula over a period of many years.

²“Uniformed” refers to groups that include the wearing of a uniform as part of their youth work.



For example in the Boys Brigade each company is split into a number of sections:

- Anchor Boys - for Boys aged 5 - 8 years
- Junior Section - for Boys aged 8 - 11 years
- Company Section - for Boys aged 11 - 15 years
- Seniors - for young men aged 15 - 18 years

In the Catholic Guides each group is made up of:

- Cygnets: 5-7 years
- Brigin: 6-10 years
- Guides: 10-16 years
- Rangers: 14-18 years

In the Girls Brigade the age groups are as follows:

- Explorers : Under 8
- Juniors : 8 - 10 years
- Seniors : 11 - 13 years
- Brigaders : 14 - 18 years

The Girl Guides summarise their curricula using user friendly language on their website as follows:

Figure 1: Girl Guiding UK Website

What do Rainbows do?

Rainbows have fun! They take part in indoor and outdoor activities as part of their programme called the Rainbow Jigsaw. Their meetings are full of games and activities which provide challenging opportunities for Rainbows to think for themselves and take an active part in unit decision-making. Everything a Rainbow does helps her to develop it's an opportunity to look, learn, laugh and love.

Who can be a Rainbow?

Any girl aged five or over can be a Rainbow. The oldest Rainbows are usually about seven years old. In Northern Ireland only, a girl may become a Rainbow at any time after her fourth birthday.

What do Brownies do?

Brownies have fun! They take part in indoor and outdoor activities that challenge them to do their best. Their meetings are action-packed and full of challenges, games and activities, usually ones that the Brownies have suggested themselves. Everything a Brownie does is an adventure - it's a world of excitement, new interests and friends.

Brownies belong to a Pack and work in small groups called Sixes. This gives each girl a group of ready-made friends to take care of her. It also makes her feel that she belongs to something special.

Brownies meet regularly, usually once a week during school terms. There are often opportunities for Brownies to take part in special activities and events throughout the year. Many Brownie Packs go away on holiday, to camp or on an overnight sleepover.

Who can be a Brownie?

Brownies are usually aged between 7 and 10, although some Brownies stay until they are a little bit older. Any girl over the age of seven can become a Brownie as long as she is able to understand, and wants to make the Brownie Guide Promise.

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What do Guides do?

Being a Guide is all about learning new skills, making new friends and helping others. Each Guide is encouraged to achieve her own personal goals through a progressive programme with the opportunity to work for a wide variety of badges. This allows the girl to mature and develop at her own pace.

Guides work together in Patrols, groups of four to eight girls, providing a ready-made group of friends and helping the girls to feel that they belong to something special. They elect their own Patrol Leader. A Patrol plans its own activities with the support of the Guide Leader so that each Guide learns to share in decisions that affect herself and others in the Patrol.

Who can be a Guide?

Guides are usually aged between ten and 14, although some Guides like to stay until they are older. Any girl over the age of ten can become a Guide as long as she is able to understand, and wants to make, the Guide Promise.

What do Senior Section members do?

During her time in the Senior Section, a young woman participates in a programme known as Look Wider, which is based on the principles and methods of guiding. It is designed to appeal to all young women and offers fun and flexibility to suit the individual.

The programme is also linked to a variety of recognised qualifications or awards, both within and outside guiding. The opportunities and challenges which it offers can be followed by a group or by individual

members. The choice is made by the members themselves. The Look Wider Programme is based around eight programme areas known as Octants:

- *Creativity*
- *Fit for Life*
- *Community Action*
- *Out-of-doors*
- *International*
- *Independent Living*
- *Personal Values*
- *Leadership*

Who can join the Senior Section?

A young woman may belong to the Senior Section from her 14th to her 26th birthday.

Similarly the Scouts summarise their curricula using user friendly language on their website as follows:

Figure 2: NI Scout Council Website

Welcome to your page for all your Northern Ireland Scout Section information...

The purpose of Scouting is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. We do this by placing the young person in a section of Scouting relevant to his or her age. In each section we use a structured programme of games and learning activities and adventures to enable each young person to grow.



- **Beavers** are aged 5-8. The Beaver Scout Motto is 'Fun & Friends'. Lots of games and trips will make sure you have plenty of each! You will be able to make things, to sing songs, to listen to stories and to visit places like a fire station. You might also be able to have a sleepover, where you spend a night away from home with the rest of the Colony.
- **Cubs** are aged 8-11. There are loads of fun things that you can do as a Cub Scout. You will get a chance to try lots of different activities like swimming, music, exploring, computing and collecting. If you do them properly you will get a badge which you can wear on your uniform.

Cub Scouts also get to go on trips and days out, to places like the zoo, theme parks or a farm. Sometimes you will be able to go camping with the rest of your Pack. This will mean you sleeping in a tent and doing loads of outdoor activities.

- **Scouts** are aged 11-14. Scouting is for young people aged between 10 and 14 year who want to make friends and develop their widening interests in ways that are both educational and fun - young people who want a break from the usual after school routine of homework, games and watching television.

Our activities are about action and involvement and mean more than just camping. Hiking, rock climbing, gliding, sailing, pioneering, canoeing, parascending, abseiling, putting on shows and exhibitions, motor mechanics, electronics, photography - the list is endless!

Scouts are also given the chance to learn skills in survival, cooking and first aid.

There are often opportunities to go abroad as well. Recently, 2000 Scouts from the United Kingdom attended the World Jamboree in Chile, South America. The next World Jamboree is in Thailand.

- **Explorers** are aged 14-18. As a Explorer Scout, you will be able to decide, along with the rest of the Unit, what you want to do - whether it is powerboating, socialising, hiking or enjoying a trip abroad. Some Units hold their meetings in a hall, or at someone's house, or even up a mountain!

You will be able to gain badges such as the Chief Scout's Diamond and Platinum Awards. The highest award you can earn is the Queen's Scout Award. This is recognised by many employers as the sign of someone that is enthusiastic, dedicated and reliable.

- **Network** are aged 18-25. As a member of the Scout Network, you will be able to decide, along with the rest of the Unit, what you want to do - whether it is powerboating, socialising, hiking or enjoying a trip abroad. Some Units hold their meetings in a hall, or at someone's house, or even up a mountain!

You will be able to gain badges such as the Chief Scout's Diamond and Platinum Awards. The highest award you can earn is the Queen's Scout Award. This is recognised by many employers as the sign of someone that is enthusiastic, dedicated and reliable.

6. findings

These age specific curricula are presented in a more detail in the form of a manual for the youth leader and these manuals form the basis of age specific training for the youth leader.

There is evidence of continuous review of these curricula with most of the uniformed groups having produced new updated curricula and related practical loose leaf manuals in recent years.

There is also evidence of flexibility around the age at which an individual young person will make the transition to the next age band (see Figure 1 above regarding Guides).

Similarly in the Boys Brigade the individual unit will agree the transition in consultation with the leader, the young person and the family. The young person will engage in the curriculum appropriate to his needs rather than simply his chronological age. For example there can be a considerable difference between the developmental needs of children of the same age within the Anchor Boys sections. The BB has found this flexibility increasingly important with the increase in young people with special needs becoming members in recent years.

(b) Non Uniformed Youth Groups

Apart from the uniformed sector there is much less of a focus on written age specific curricula. However, interviewees referred to several examples.

One example from the Controlled Sector was produced by a Working Group of the NEELB Youth Service in the late 1990s entitled *“Promoting the Development of Young People”*.

An extract from the document is in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3: Promoting the Development of Young People, NEELB

This document presents a series of guidelines designed to stimulate among youth leaders an awareness and understanding of how young people can be helped to achieve their potential...

While the guidelines are generally applicable to the different stages of development of young people from your own experience you will know that one must recognise an individual young person's uniqueness and difference.

The model leads from the general developmental stages of young people to the roles undertaken by leaders, to the needs of young people, to the response to needs of young people and finally gives some pointers towards evidence of growth and development...

This is presented in three age specific sections:

- Primary Section (8-10 years old)
- Junior Section (11-14 years old)
- Senior Section (15+ years old)

Each age section is then presented within a framework under the headings:

- Developmental Phase
- Roles of Youth Leader
- Relevant needs of Young people
- Sample of Youth Service Experience
- Evidence indicating development



An example from the voluntary sector is the YMCA PAKT (Parents And Kids Together) Programme which is described a family youth work:

“The PAKT Family Youth Work model, in recognising the centrality of the family unit in our communities, attempts to support and create dynamic processes within the family where the spiritual, physical and social potential of all its members are encouraged and developed.

While respecting and supporting the primacy of the role of the parent it will use a methodology based on traditional youth work methods to engage with all the members of the family in an agreed and transparent manner.”

(YMCA Family Youth Work, National Council of YMCAs of Ireland)

The PAKT programme is delivered in areas such as Ballymena, Bangor and Lurgan. It involves a programme development cycle involving the parent, child, and worker as well as a school and community dimension. A PAKT Manual provided the basis of the programme. It provides an outline of the values and processes and age specific curricula for children, young people, parents and families. This includes skills tutoring, play, social learning, cross cultural learning and an education focus.

Another example from the voluntary sector is the curricula underpinning a range of programmes aimed at marginalised young adults developed and delivered by YouthAction NI including work with young mothers, young men and rural young people (See 6.1.4). The organisation has specialised in differentiation of the curriculum at the older age and bases its youth work practice on:

- Enabling young people to play active and equal roles in their communities.

- Providing transferable skills training for life and work.
- Delivering appropriate and effective training for youth workers and community activists which contributes towards social, economic and political development in local communities.
- Promoting equality of opportunity in respect of gender, race, religion, political belief or disability.
- Developing imaginative programmes and resource materials which encourage an independent and entrepreneurial attitude to life.
- Offering opportunities to children and young people for participation in arts, sporting play and recreational events.

(YouthAction NI Website, 2006)

Other examples of written age specific curricula in Northern Ireland that were highlighted during the course of the research were:

- A range of awards and certified achievements with a set curriculum aimed at specific age groups such as XL and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. For example there is evidence of these awards being used specifically at Key Stage 4 as part of alternative education programmes in the ELBs.

“The xl Programme is a partnership between schools and the Youth Service. It aims to reach young people who are in their last two years of compulsory education and are in need of help to increase motivation, improve attitudes and attendance, raise self-esteem, enable achievement and ultimately avoid the risk of exclusion.”

(SEELB Annual Report 2003)

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- Schools based youth work with a curriculum targeting specific school years including transition focussed programmes such as Positive Behaviour with 10-11 year olds in SEELB.
- A range of peer education programmes with specific written curricula aimed at teenagers. E.g. SEELB Youthbox Peer Mentoring Project aimed at 14-16 year olds.
- A range of leadership development and trainee leader programmes with specific written curricula aimed at 16+.
- Age specific drugs education and sexual health education programmes with written subject focussed curricula with age specific differentiation.
- The Play Work Curriculum “Best Play” aimed at 4-12 year olds (see 6.1.3).

Other interesting examples of written age specific curricula from further afield that were highlighted during the course of the research were:

- The 40 Developmental Assets for Middle Childhood developed by the Search Institute, (USA).

“Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets are concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to raising successful young people. These assets have the power during critical adolescent years to influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults.

The Developmental Asset framework is categorized into two groups of 20 assets. External assets are the positive experiences young people receive from

the world around them. These 20 assets are about supporting and empowering young people, about setting boundaries and expectations, and about positive and constructive use of young people’s time. External assets identify important roles that families, schools, congregations, neighborhoods, and youth organizations can play in promoting healthy development.

The twenty internal assets identify those characteristics and behaviors that reflect positive internal growth and development of young people. These assets are about positive values and identities, social competencies, and commitment to learning. The internal Developmental Assets will help these young people make thoughtful and positive choices and, in turn, be better prepared for situations in life that challenge their inner strength and confidence.”

(Search Institute Website, 2006)

- YMCA of the USA School Age Care Program entitled Meeting Children’s Individual Needs which also takes the asset based curriculum approach for 5-12 year olds; external assets are under the headings of support, empowerment, boundaries & expectations, constructive use of time and internal assets are under the headings of commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies and positive identity. This model also includes Behaviours and Activities for Children for 5-6 year olds, 7-8 year olds, 9-10 year olds, 11-12 year olds under the areas of language and cognitive development, moral development, motor and physical development and social and emotional development.



6.1.2 Needs Based Age Appropriate Youth Work

Many interviewees referred to age specific youth work that was based on identifying needs within the framework of a Model for Effective Practice rather than based on a written age specific curriculum. The emphasis was on needs rather than curriculum.

Examples included centre based youth clubs and projects developed around the needs of junior, intermediate and senior groups of young people: e.g. Junior 5-9, Intermediate 11-16, Senior 16-25. Some interviewees also referred to the development of after schools clubs and homework clubs within youth centres.

There is evidence that the majority³ of groups differentiate between senior and junior work and that specific staff are allocated to each age group, meeting often at different times and with different programmes. In local centres this results in long term participation of young people and also provides a progression route through to senior membership and leadership. There are also many examples of transition work to support young people through different stages such as primary to second level school.

There is evidence that a core value of youth work in Northern Ireland is to be needs led. This is generally resulting in age appropriate work, although not necessarily written age specific curricula. Indeed some professional youth workers interviewed believed that developing further prescriptive age specific curricula in addition to a Model for Effective Practice would indicate a lack of confidence in their professionalism to develop needs led age appropriate interventions.

However an important issue that emerged was that in practice most statutory youth work prioritises the adolescent age group of 13-17 and outside of the uniformed sector most voluntary youth sector participants are also adolescents. Similarly most part time and full time youth work training is preparing youth workers to work with adolescents.

While a Model for Effective of Practice appears to be providing a clear curriculum basis for work with adolescents, those interviewees most concerned with the needs of Under 10s and Young Adults are seeking greater age specific differentiation in addition to this. This need was often expressed as an issue of approaches, methodologies, models and resources rather than simply a need for a written age specific curriculum. Some of this relates to wider structural and resource questions that are beyond the remit of this research.

However the main issues in relation to curricula are discussed further in 6.1.3 and 6.1.4 below.

6.1.3 Under 10s

The main issue that emerged was the discussion on the relationship between play work and youth work and how this should be reflected within curricula. While there are clearly shared values and commonalities between youth work and play work (such as an emphasis on personal and social development and participation), there are also differences and there is a distinctive play work curriculum underpinned by explicit play work values. There are shared values around the concept of a curriculum and a structured educational intervention in play work that could be integrated within a Model for Effective Practice. In fact Playboard NI and

³ However, there are also examples of bad practice, when for example 6 year olds and 16 year olds are mixed without regard to different age specific developmental needs or other issues such as child safety/protection.

6. findings

YouthNet have worked on developing a version of Model for Effective Practice that includes play work.

However there are differences such as:

- Youth work uses activity as the start of a process of social education while play work is not outcomes orientated.
- The particular skills and training required to deliver play work are different from those required for youth work

One model of contextualising the relationship between youth work and play work is in Figure 4 below.

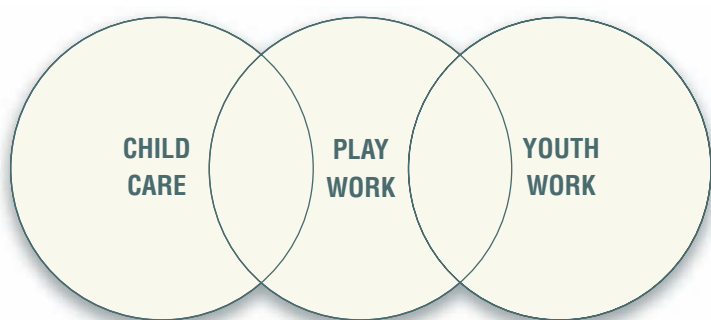


Figure 4 : Relationship Between Youth Work and Play Work

This model reflects some consensus from interviewees around the idea that play leads into youth work and that both play work and youth work takes place with under 10s.

6.1.4 Young Adults

The Report from the Young Adult Policy Panel from the Youth Service Policy Review stated:

“There is general recognition that there is a very significant drop in participation by young people in mainstream youth work provision at around 15. There is plenty of evidence of

engagement of the 18-25 age group if provision is tailored specifically to their needs and if they are actively involved in the programme”

It also stated:

“The current curriculum is not sufficiently focused on the issues that young adults face in modern society.”

The Panel made clear recommendation on additional elements for an age specific curriculum for Young Adults as follows:

“The panel recommends that the curriculum includes:

- Employability
- Gender issues
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Young adults part in the democratic process”

(Report from the Young Adult Policy Panel, Youth Service Policy Review, 2002)

Interviewees engaged in work with Young Adults indicated that 16-25 year old participating in youth service provision were in two main categories:

- Leaders: training and working as leaders, helpers, members of youth councils, governance and management and engaging in international work.
- Marginalised and vulnerable young adults whose transition to adulthood is delayed through a range of issues such as lack of academic qualifications, sexual orientation, young people growing up in care and unemployment.



Once again the expressed need was on approaches, methodologies, models and resources rather than simply a need for a written age specific curriculum for Young Adults.

6.1.5 Ethos

Interviewees and focus group participants were asked to describe the ethos that underpinned existing age specific curricula. Some informants did not identify any overt ethos. However, the main responses were as follows:

- The values of the organisation
- A citizenship model
- Prioritising gaps in provision
- Play work ethos
- The value of working with the older age group

6.1.6 Primary Purpose Of Age Specific Curricula Models

The primary purpose of the age specific curricula models identified was personal and social development, achieving the core values of youth work as presented in the youth service curriculum, a Model for Effective Practice. This involves young people achieving their own potential at their stage of development and growth.

Other primary purposes of age specific curricula that were highlighted in the course of the research are related to this.

They were:

- Development of social and life skills
- Providing opportunities to develop skills and understanding
- Young people developing within their own peer/age group

- Active participation increase incrementally with chronological age
- Supporting young people through transitions to create more opportunities and life choices
- Implementing play work principles including the holistic development of the child and the importance of play opportunities as fundamental to healthy development

6.1.7 Target Groups/Areas

Interviewees and focus group participants were asked to identify any particular target groups and/or areas for age specific curricula.

The responses included both general and targeted groups/ areas. Areas and groups highlighted were:

- Single gender groups (young men, young women, young mothers etc)
- Areas of social need
- Youth work in schools
- Area based projects
- Rural areas
- Inclusion
- Older age group; more marginalised and vulnerable young people including LGBT young people and young people with learning disabilities

6. findings

6.1.8 Programme Areas/Social Issues

Interviewees and focus group participants were asked to identify any particular programme areas/social issues for age specific curricula.

Once again the responses included both general and more focussed areas. Programme areas and social issues highlighted were:

- Health and relationships
- Gender
- Life in a divided society
- Drugs/alcohol awareness
- Sexual health
- Citizenship
- Employment and the world of work
- Achieving awards/certification
- Family transition
- Community Relations
- Detached work

6.2 Benefits and Constraints

Interviewees and focus group participants were asked to identify any benefits and constraints in relation to the age specific curricula. The findings are summarised below.

Benefits

- Age specific curricula are relevant and appropriate to the needs of individuals in each age group of young people and there is a recognition of the different developmental stages
- More appropriate interventions from staff, working at the right level and with more confidence with all age groups
- Progression for young people through different curricula within different age groups and greater potential longevity of participation of young people, particularly in the context of a local centre based group leading to lifelong learning
- Work is more targeted and focussed with clear criteria for standards and quality assurance and easier benchmarking of age specific measures and outcomes
- Curricula inform best practice and there are ready made age specific curricula resources
- Opportunities to specialise with a particular age group and areas such as health and citizenship are at an appropriate level to the understanding
- Age specific curricula support important transitions work
- Support and recognition for those working with under 10s and 18-25s
- Better targeting of resources at different age groups



Constraints

- It is difficult within limited resources (including staff and volunteers) to provide services to all age groups.
- Having to deliver a prescriptive age specific programme could become inflexible.
- Too much emphasis on curriculum could lead to the delivery of a syllabus as in formal education and the developmental needs led process of youth work could be lost.
- Young people's needs, level or abilities cannot be simply defined by their chronological age. Emotional and mental age does not always equate with physiological age.

on a Model for Effective Practice as long as they are developed as a framework or guide and are not imposed in a restrictive or prescriptive manner.

- There is value in the further development of age specific, developmental needs based models and approaches as opposed to curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service. These models and approaches should be based on a Model for Effective Practice and should bring greater clarity to work with Under 10s and Young Adults.

6.3 Relevance and Value

Interviewees and focus group participants were asked the value, relevance, difficulties and/or next steps that should be taken regarding the development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service.

There were three main views expressed:

- There is no value in the further development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service as professional youth workers are already taking a developmental needs based approach that results in age appropriate youth work.
- There is value in the further development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service, particularly for the Under 10s and Young Adults, that are based

7. conclusions



The main conclusions of the feasibility study are as follows:

- 7.1** There is evidence of effective practice within the majority of youth groups, centres and projects, involving a conscious differentiation between “senior” and “junior” work, allocation of specific staff to each age group, often meeting at different times and with different age appropriate programmes.
- 7.2** A high percentage of young people participating in the Youth Service in Northern Ireland are doing so within the context of age specific curricula delivered by uniformed youth groups, whose voluntary leaders are trained in the delivery of age specific curricula.
- 7.3** There is a lesser focus on written age specific curricula in the wider Youth Service. However, there is also a range of examples from across the Youth Service from transitions work, family youth work, young adults work, play work, schools based youth work, peer education programmes, leadership development programmes and health education programmes.
- 7.4** In wider Youth Service provision most age specific youth work is based on identifying needs within the framework of a Model for Effective Practice rather than based on a written age specific curriculum.
- 7.5** While a Model for Effective of Practice appears to be providing a clear curriculum basis for work with adolescents, those most concerned with the needs of Under 10s and Young Adults are seeking greater age specific differentiation in addition to this.
- 7.6** There is a need for the development of age specific, developmental needs based curricula in the Northern Ireland Youth Service, particularly for Under 10s and Young Adults.
- 7.7** There is a need for any further development of age specific curricula to be flexible and to focus on approaches, models and methodologies rather than a curriculum syllabus



8. feasibility options

At the Options Workshop five feasibility options were discussed and evaluated. They were based on the main ideas and practical steps that interviewees and focus group participants had suggested at that stage of the research. The options were as follows:

1. Do not develop age specific curricula.
2. Carry out further research scoping the scale and nature of work within each age range, present findings and discuss issues/options at a cross sectoral conference before proceeding with any further development.
3. Develop age specific curricula within a fundamental review of a Model for Effective Practice.
4. CDU develop age specific curricula based on a Model for Effective Practice and provide related support and training.
5. Establish three linked cross sectoral and cross departmental consortia to develop and support under 10s, 10-16 and 16-25 age specific curricula.

Before considering the options the workshop participants agreed a set of criteria by which they would assess each option. The criteria were:

- Will it make a difference?
- Is it appropriate?
- Is it relevant?
- Does it meet children/young peoples needs?
- Is it in line with children/young people rights?

- Is it deliverable?
- Is it inclusive with reference to Section 75?
- Is it flexible enough to bring different groups and sectors together?
- How does it relate to structural issues?
- Is it in tune with value bases
- Is it value for money?

The participants then assessed the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

The list of advantages and disadvantages recorded for each option are in Appendix X.

The participants then choose their preferred option and the group then attempted to agree on their preferred option.

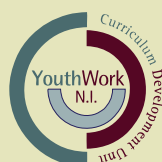
The preferred option was Option 5: Establish three linked cross sectoral and cross departmental consortia to develop and support under 10s, 10-16 and 16-25 age specific curricula with an emphasis on developing models of work particularly with Under 10s and Young Adults.

9. recommendations



As a result of the feasibility study the following recommendations are proposed:

- 9.1** The Department of Education should task the Youth Service Liaison Forum with establishing two linked cross sectoral consortia to develop and support age specific developmental needs based curriculum frameworks (including approaches, models and methodologies) for Under 10s and 16-25s, that are rooted in the values, philosophy and principles of the Youth Service.
- 9.2** The Curriculum Development Unit should continue to promote the sharing of good practice that will maintain and further develop effective work with the 10-16 age group.
- 9.3** The Curriculum Development Unit should lead, co-ordinate and facilitate the recruitment of the cross sectoral consortia, as a strategic priority.
- 9.4** The Curriculum Development Unit should develop a programme of appropriate support and training for the implementation of the frameworks developed by each consortium.
- 9.5** The work of the consortia and the Curriculum Development Unit's co-ordination and support role should be adequately resourced.
- 9.6** The consortia should include representatives from across the youth sector including uniformed organisations, play work organisations and agencies specialising in work with young adults.
- 9.7** The consortia should consult and engage with other relevant government departments and agencies in the development of the frameworks.
- 9.8** The focus of the consortia should be on developing clear flexible curricular frameworks with approaches, models and methodologies that will support the delivery of effective age appropriate youth work across the Youth Service in Northern Ireland from 4-25 years.
- 9.9** The frameworks should become embedded in youth work training and in the professional development of workers.
- 9.10** The consortia should work to a clear time bound action plan based on these recommendations (see Appendix XI).



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Prototype Early Childhood Developmental Assets Framework, Search Institute, (2004)

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Scouts NI Website: www.scoutsni.com

SEELB Annual Report, 2003

YMCA Family Youth Work, National Council of YMCAs of Ireland

Youth Service Policy Review, Department of Education (1999).

Youth Service for a New Millennium, Department of Education (1999)

Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice, NI Youth Work Curriculum Development Unit (2003)

YouthAction NI Website: www.youthaction.org

40 Developmental Assets for Middle Childhood, Search Institute, (2004), www.search-institute.org



appendix I

Telephone Consultations

The studies are exploring:

- Current use of age specific curricula.
- Frameworks for measuring the personal and social development of young people.

The studies will help to inform the work of the Northern Ireland Youth Work Strategy.

Later in the research I will be carrying out a series of more in depth interviews and focus groups, but at this initial stage I am scoping possible sources of information.

1. Can you suggest possible sources of information for the research on age specific curricula?
2. Can you suggest possible sources of information for the research on frameworks for measuring the personal and social development of young people?
3. Are there any individuals or organisations that you think have a particular interest or experience on age specific curricula?
4. Are there any individuals or organisations that you think have particular interest or experience on frameworks for measuring the personal and social development of young people?
5. Reminder re Scoping Workshop on Wednesday the 22nd of March 2006, at 10am-1pm, in Antrim Board Centre, seminar room one.

Telephone Consultations

Gilbert Bell, Youth Welfare Adviser, NEELB

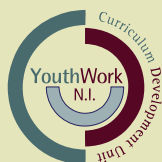
Peter Graham, Education and Training Inspectorate

John McCormick, Director Of Youth Work Services, YCNI

Gerry McIntyre, Youth Officer (Projects), WELB

Jacqueline O'Loughlin, Director, Playboard

Geraldine Stinton, Family Field Officer, National Council of YMCAs of Ireland



appendix II

Letter Requesting participation in Telephone Consultations/Scoping Workshop

Wednesday, 01 March 2006

Dear Colleague

YouthNet and the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), is conducting two short term studies within in the Northern Ireland Youth Service. These studies will help to inform the work of the Northern Ireland Youth Work Strategy.

These studies will explore:

- Current use of age specific curricula
- Frameworks for measuring the personal and social development of young people

Age Specific Curricula

As part of the study, we are seeking to engage with a small number of organisations who use or have developed age specific curricula in the delivery of their youth work practice.

Frameworks for Measurement

As part of the study, we are seeking to engage with a small number of organisations who use or have developed a framework(s) for measuring the personal and social development of young people.

Tony Macaulay, the consultant selected to undertake the study would initially like to consult with a group of people via the telephone. The next phase of the study would involve bringing those people together to carry out a scoping exercise.

The time and venue for the scoping exercise have been agreed as:-

Wednesday the 22nd of March 2006, at 10am-1pm, in Antrim Board Centre, seminar room one.

Overall, the time commitment should involve no more than three hours for any one person interested in taking part.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would agree to be part of this research, and would like your consent for us to forward your details to Tony Macaulay, so that he can contact you by telephone.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries or require further information.

Joe Hawkins
YouthNet

Alastair Scott-McKinley
CDU

appendix III



Wednesday, 01 March 2006

Dear Colleague

YouthNet and the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), is conducting two short term studies within in the Northern Ireland Youth Service. These studies will help to inform the work of the Northern Ireland Youth Work Strategy.

These studies will explore:

- Current use of age specific curricula
- Frameworks for measuring the personal and social development of young people

Age Specific Curricula

As part of the study, we are seeking to engage with a small number of organisations who use or have developed age specific curricula in the delivery of their youth work practice.

Frameworks for Measurement

As part of the study, we are seeking to engage with a small number of organisations who use or have developed a framework(s) for measuring the personal and social development of young people.

Tony Macaulay, the consultant selected to undertake the study will want to meet with representatives from your organisation. This may include senior managers and/or Management Committee members and the youth work staff involved in the use of the curricula and/or the framework. Overall, the time commitment should involve no more than three hours for any one person interested in taking part.

We will consult participating organisations in the development of the final report.

If you are interested in contributing to this debate, highlighting your curricula /framework and influencing the development of quality in youth work practice, please complete the attached form.

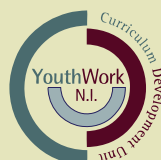
Submissions must reach Curriculum Development Unit by Wednesday 15th March 2006. The visits and structured interviews will take place during April 2006, for those selected to participate.

YouthNet/CDU will select organisations to participate based on ensuring as broad a representation as possible in the sample.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries or require further information.

Yours sincerely

Denis Palmer
Director



appendix IV

Organisation

Is youth work the primary focus of the organisation? YES NO

Please enter main contact person details below

Title	<input type="text"/>	Forename	<input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
Position in organisation	<input type="text"/>				
<i>Correspondence address</i>	<input type="text"/>			City/Town	<input type="text"/>
County	<input type="text"/>			Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Tel. (day)	<input type="text"/>			Tel (evening)	<input type="text"/>
Tel. (mobile)	<input type="text"/>			Fax.	<input type="text"/>
Email address	<input type="text"/>				

From the list below, tick the term that best describes the nature of the organisation

Regional Voluntary Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Community Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Statutory Organisation, Controlled Sector Unit / Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="text"/>

Please tick which studies you would like to contribute to (It is possible to contribute to both).

Age Specific Curricula

Framework(s) for measuring young peoples personal and social development

From the list of statements below, please tick all that apply and specify any relevant details in the space provided.

Statement	Tick	Specify Details, if applicable
Our organisation works within a specific geographic area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Our organisation works with people in a specific age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Our organisation targets young people from a particular background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Our organisation targets a specific Section 75 social group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Our organisation targets/works with all young people in our area/target group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other basis for targeting young people, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

If possible, please identify the people (managers/staff) likely to be part of the study

Name	<input type="text"/>	Position	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>	Position	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>	Position	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>	Position	<input type="text"/>

Will the people, named above be available to take part in the study during the period late April 2006? YES NO

Is the curricula model/measuring framework of practice operated in your organisation written down? YES NO

appendix V



Semi Structured Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me your experience of age specific curricula, developmental needs based curricula in the Youth Service in Northern Ireland?
2. What is the primary purpose of these curricula?
3. What social issues and/or programme areas are addressed?
4. What is the target group or area?
5. How are they structured?
6. How are they delivered? (explore operation, communication and maintaining/embedding)
7. Is there an ethos that underpins the curricula?
If yes, explore.
8. What are the benefits and constraints?
9. What do you think is the relevance and value of further development and support for age specific curricula in the Youth Service in Northern Ireland?
10. Have you ideas/suggestions on a feasible way of developing this area in the Northern Ireland Youth Service?

appendix VI

List of Interviewees

1. Deirdre Bradley, Area Youth Officer, Coleraine/Ballymoney/Magherafelt Area, NEELB
2. Crawford Fitzsimmons, Clonard Monastery Youth Club, Belfast
3. Peter Graham, Department of Education, Education and Training Inspectorate
4. Clare Harvey, Policy/Research Officer, YCNI
5. Joe Hawkins, Peace II Project Manager, YouthNet
6. Francis Loughlin, Team Leader, C/o Glengormley Youth Centre, NEELB
7. Carolyn Lowry, Curriculum Development Officer, CDU
8. Michael McAlinden, Training Development Officer, YCNI
9. Jim McCartney, Senior Youth Worker, NEELB
10. John McCavana, Department of Education, Education and Training Inspectorate
11. Alastair Scott-McKinley, Senior Curriculum Development Officer, CDU
12. Martin McMullan, Deputy Director, YouthAction NI
13. Dr Tony Morgan, University of Ulster at Jordanstown
14. Jacqueline O'Loughlin, Director, Playboard NI
15. Denis Palmer, Director, YouthNet
16. Maurice Shearer, Project Worker, Carrickfergus PAKT
17. June Trimble, Director, YouthAction NI
18. Maggie Watson, Centre Leader, Greenisland/Knockagh Youth Centre, NEELB

appendix VII



Focus Group Participants

SEELB Youth Service : 4th May 2006

- Siobain Byrne, Senior Youth Officer – Curriculum
- David Logan, Full Time Youth Worker Cregagh Youth Centre
- John McCullough, Senior Youth Worker –Ballybeen Area Project
- Mary McGrath, Senior Youth Worker - Community Relations
- Jim Valente, Youth Officer – Ards
- Donna Weir, Senior Youth Worker- Laurelhill YC - Lisburn

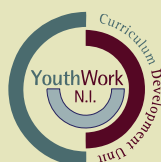
Boys Brigade, Belfast Battalion Training Committee

10th May 2006

- Tommy Burns, Training Committee
- Anne Glenn, Anchor Boy Committee
- Harry Groves, Training Committee
- Irene Lowry, Training Committee Convener
- Sharon Mackey, Junior Section Committee
- Paul McCarroll, Battalion Senior Executive/Company Captain
- Elizabeth Smith, Training Committee
- Maurice Williamson, Battalion Chief Executive

WELB Youth Service : 11th May 2006

- Hugh A Hastings, Manager, Pilots Row Centre
- Una McCartney, Leader-in-Charge, SCYC
- Michael McCaul, Long Tower Youth Club
- Marain McCourt, YouthWorker in charge, Rosemount Youth Centre
- Yvonne McKeever, Area Youth Worker, Bogside and Surrounding Areas
- Brain McMenamin, Long Tower Youth Club
- Michelle Reid, Area Youth Worker, Waterside
- Brendan Wilkinson, Leader-in-Charge, Pennyburn YC



appendix VIII

Age Specific Curricula Feasibility Study

Options Appraisal Workshop

Friday 5th May 2006

10.00am	Welcome and Introductions
10.15am	Criteria for Appraising Options
10.30am	Options Discussion/Appraisal
11.00am	Other Options
11.15am	Preferred Options
11.30am	Close

Options for Appraisal Workshop

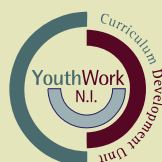
1. Do not develop age specific curricula.
2. Carry out further research scoping the scale and nature of work within each age range, present findings and discuss issues/options at a cross sectoral conference before proceeding with any further development.
3. Develop age specific curricula within a fundamental review of the Model for Effective Practice.
4. CDU develop age specific curricula based on the Model for Effective Practice and provide related support and training.
5. Establish three linked cross sectoral and cross departmental consortia to develop and support under 10s, 10-16 and 16-25 age specific curricula.

appendix IX



Options Appraisal Workshop Participants

- Siobain Byrne, Senior Youth Officer, Curriculum, SEELB
- Liam Curran, Deputy Head of Youth, WELB
- Crawford Fitzsimmons, Clonard Monastery Youth Club, Belfast
- Eva Kane, Playboard NI
- Carolyn Lowry, Curriculum Development Officer, CDU
- Paul McCarroll, Battalion Senior Executive, Belfast Battalion, Boys Brigade
- Gerry McIntyre, Youth Officer (Projects), WELB
- Alastair Scott-McKinley, Senior Curriculum Development Officer, CDU
- Geraldine Stinton, Family Field Officer, National Council of YMCAs of Ireland
- Louise Tohill, Playboard NI



appendix X

Options Appraisal Advantages and Disadvantages

Option 1: Do not develop age specific curricula.

Advantages

- recognition of professional skills of workforce – needs led
- avoids getting stuck in developmental stages thinking
- maintains value on current work
- easier for policy makers and funders

Disadvantages

- opportunity to share practice lost
- Continued generic workforce – not specialised – not meeting needs
- Existing skills not meeting needs
- Youth workers training to work with under 10s?
- It's in the Youth Work Strategy
- Local community identify need for work with younger age
- Stay as we are: disparate/separate
- Play work/ youth work cross age learning opportunity is lost

Option 2: Carry out further research scoping the scale and nature of work within each age range, present findings and discuss issues/options at a cross sectoral conference before proceeding with any further development.

Advantages

- Sharing good practice
- value of continuous research
- getting people in same room to discuss theory and practice

Disadvantages

- Also need to research the training
- “Paralysis by analysis” – enough is going on already to take this forward
- Practical difficulties of research

Option 3: Develop age specific curricula within a fundamental review of a Model for Effective Practice.

Advantages

- None

Disadvantages

- Good flexible model
- Process orientated
- Good elements lost – throwing the baby out with the bath water
- Already sits easier with play work model
- Would slow up process

Option 4: CDU develop age specific curricula based on a Model for Effective Practice and provide related support and training.

Advantages

- Getting it done
- Support and training would help people overcome fears

Disadvantages

- Takes professionalism out of model
- Too much involved for CDU to take on
- Too tight to relate to a Model for Effective Practice
- Needs partnership



Option 5: Establish three linked cross sectoral and cross departmental consortia to develop and support under 10s, 10-16 and 16-25 age specific curricula.

Advantages

- fits better with future policy/strategy e.g. children and young peoples strategy
- buy in from all stakeholders
- creates partnerships working together
- supports best practice
- focus on 16 –25 work
- most potential to make a difference – ownership

Disadvantages

- Resource implication - time/money
- Unwieldy structure
- Is this the right age range – theme not age? Play etc
- Does it need 3 groups?
- Needs support & training
- What is reality of over 20s usage?



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www.youthworkni.org.uk

A Youth Service Partnership Initiative

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