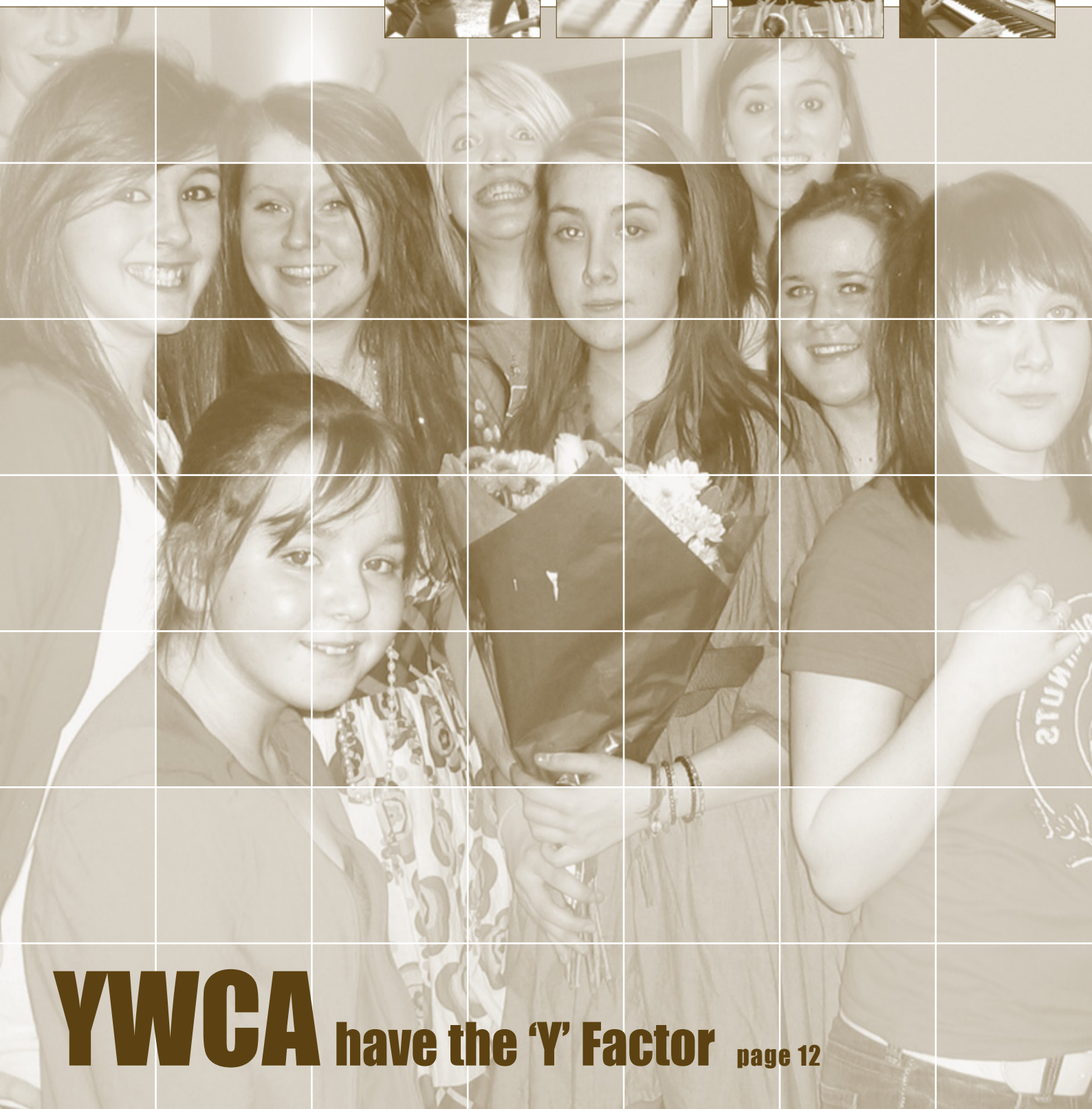
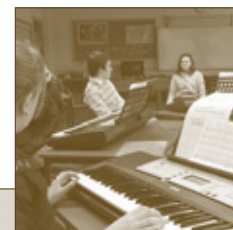
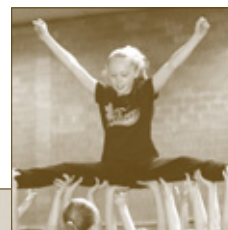
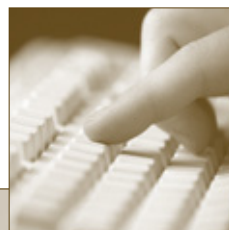
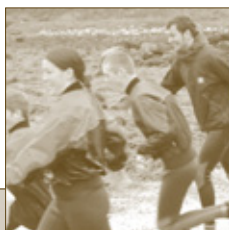


networks

The Journal for Youth & Children Workers in Lothian

Summer 2008



YWCA have the 'Y' Factor page 12

OPINION PIECE

Residentials a No No!

You would think that with the plethora of Scottish Government targets that relate to children's health and the like, that getting kids into the outdoors would be positively encouraged. Well not if the recent experience of two after school groups locally is anything to go by.

A joint venture to take children from their clubs for a few days residential to enjoy the great Scottish outdoors has been kyboshed by the Care Commission!

As a matter of precaution the clubs contacted the Commission to advise them only to be told that they were not covered for residential work and therefore they would breach their registration. It was a "No go" for the kids.

The Commission's rationale was that there are no inspection regimes in place for residential activities centres and those that are undertaken are informal and for youth groups (who are not regulated by the Care Commission.)

But hang on there is a regulating body - the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) who work in tandem with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). These bodies do carry out inspections and issue licenses to outdoor activity providers.

Perhaps the Commission should get together with them and co-ordinate their efforts.

We owe it to the children and their families to offer a stimulating and health conscious programme. To do so is not only right, but is actively encouraged by governments, local and national. For the Care Commission not to be able to deal with groups wanting to take children on properly organised and planned residentials to properly licensed and regulated venues seems to be a significant oversight and perhaps displays an attitude of the Care Commission that needs to change. Otherwise we will deny children in after school provision the chance to take part in a rich and varied programme of activities.



Summer Fun from LAYC

TOPS Sports & Activity Bags

Have you ever looked in your equipment cupboard and thought "Wouldn't it be good to have some new stuff in here?" Maybe LAYC can help you...

Over the last year or two Edinburgh Leisure and LAYC have been running TOPS Sports & Activity courses for all our members. These sessions showed you how to run games, activities and sports using some of the things you'll find in TOPS bags.

TOPS bags which are (sponsored by Sainsbury's) are full of sports, games and play equipment which link in with the TOP Play and TOP Sport programmes. These can form a sporting pathway along which young people can progress according to their age and development. All their programmes and activities are fully accessible to young disabled people and feature resource cards to give you session ideas and tips.

LAYC have 4 TOPS bags which you can borrow for a month at a time. They are free to borrow - the only catch is your group needs to be a current LAYC member and you'll need to come and collect your bag - and bring it back again.

The contents of each bag is different, some of the activities include;

Xpress Yourself

e.g. dance, jive, salsa, cheerleading, martial fitness

Exercise Highs

e.g. skipping, hula, oppy relays, wake 'n' shake, circuits

Xtra Time

e.g. small-sided games, parachute, Frisbee

Xtreme Challenges

e.g. circus moves, tri-golf, rock-it-ball

You don't need any particular sports expertise to run the activity sessions just be prepared to get stuck in and have some fun.

If you're interested in finding out more about the TOPS bags have a look in the TOPS page which is in the Core Services section of the LAYC website. Or better still give us a call, come down to the office and try some of the activities out.

City Youth Work Strategy



Not with a banger ... but with croissants, juice, fruit, yoghurt (and a bacon roll if you wanted one!)

The start of a three month consultation around drawing up a Youth Work Strategy for the city was launched with a breakfast seminar at the Scout Centre in Valleyfield on Saturday 7th June 2008.

The Edinburgh Youth Work Consortium were pleased that Councillor Marilyne MacLaren was able to attend the seminar to see the enthusiasm and commitment on display from the youth workers who attended.

EYWC has produced a Draft Strategy to provide a framework for people's comments. But it was made clear that what was being looked for was full and frank discussion about the issues for youth work in the city by those who are already involved in delivering services to young people and who will be crucial to making sure that the final agreed Strategy will stand a chance of being implemented. The EYWC is looking for as many people active in youth work in the city to get engaged in the consultation and give their views. Get your colleagues involved and the young people you work with too!

The Consultation closes on 29th August 2008 and the final Draft Strategy will be presented to Cllr MacLaren in the Autumn.

Copies of the Draft Strategy can be downloaded from www.layc.org.uk and www.eywc.org.uk. Consultation surveys can be completed online too or pdf and hard versions of the Consultation Response Form can be downloaded for you to complete.

Strangely, even before the Consultation was launched a bundle of leaflets was pushed through the letterboxes both of LAYC and the Scouts (who were hosting the launch) which seemed to be a contribution to the debate about youth work in the city.

The leaflets posed a difficulty for LAYC and EYWC.... they were produced on red paper (which as you will all know is almost impossible to photocopy from). They were also unattributed - some would say "anonymous" - which always raises the question of working out what the intention behind the leaflet was. In the spirit of openness and encouraging free expression on the priorities for youth work the leaflet was made available to those youth workers at the launch and a copy given to Councillor MacLaren.



News

Cashback

10-18? Sign up to CashBack now to get all the info on free stuff to do in your area - direct to your mobile! CashBack uses millions of pounds seized from criminals to fund exciting projects all over Scotland - from football training to music, rugby to acting, there is something for everyone.

And it's totally free!

You'll get a weekly text with updates on what's on in your area and once a month we'll send you the latest CashBack video. Sign up now by texting cash back to 61611 or check out www.cashbackscotland.com.

The first video messages are being sent out now so get involved! The first text will cost 4.5p - but all text updates and video updates are absolutely free!

Please make sure that the adult you live with is happy for you to sign up.

From the Press

'Children & Young People Now' in their 7-13th May issue highlighted 'Parkour' or 'free running' - that thing that features in adverts (and 'Casino Royale') where people get over obstacles in their surrounding environment (walls, buildings, you name it). It is apparently getting really popular with young people ... and you know what's holding people up from helping to meet the demand? Currently there is 'no national governing body' like there is for football or rugby. There's 'a lack of professional guidance' and no 'network for qualifications that you can go through in order to lead an activity'. 'Parkour is not officially recognised as a sport'.

Looks like we all need to spend a few years getting these things in place (sitting round tables at endless meetings more like!) so we can all lend our support to young people then! Just a couple of years to get the proper structures set up - get places for young people to do what they do but in properly planned, organized, supported venues where they want to be ... **Just like we did for skaters/ boarders/ bikers?**

MYDG Rewind 10 years - Stories & Memories

Muirhouse Youth Development Group (**MYDG**) is the umbrella organisation administering the 4 youth groups in Muirhouse: St Paul's, The Klub, The Junction and the Don Bosco. This year sees the combined number of years of existence of these groups as 90! We are proud of this history and to be one of many groups in the area that focus on the needs of young people.

MYDG is always changing to stay true to the needs of local young people, growing in this flexible way over the past 30 years. This allows the organisation to be responsive but makes it difficult to neatly describe 'the history' of MYDG.

So, to find out more about the impact of MYDG's way of working we hosted an event to get young people, management committee members, staff and volunteers that have been involved with The Klub, The Junction, Don Bosco and St Paul's to tell their stories. The day was one of shared laughter that left the organisation with some key messages...

MYDG plays a dual role in the lives of young people through their two strengths: local work and residential work. People who had been involved in MYDG as young people (and often then as youth workers) had a sense of ownership over the clubs as a place to be themselves within the community. Whilst, the residential trips and foreign exchanges were talked about enthusiastically as 'escapes', places to try out new behaviours and new things.

The everyday experience of being a part of MYDG was valued, not because of 'fancy activities' but because of the relationships that developed, as one person said it was "something I cared about and people who cared about me".



The role of MYDG was seen as going beyond the immediate experience to shaping lives; through career opportunities such as volunteering and training. This included opportunities to be youth workers within the organisation but also the role of the youth workers in raising aspirations, encouraging responsibility and being role models.

Of course, the memories also included activities that "backfired". What came out from these stories was what was learnt from them and that MYDG will work with any young person no matter what has happened, as one youth worker said: "we show respect to them as a person but may not respect all their actions".

This is just a snapshot of the different ways being involved in MYDG has impacted on the lives of people, and equally how the people involved have shaped and continue to shape the work of MYDG.

Perhaps, one of the most significant things to come out of the day was the importance of the creation of memories, as one person said "we should be working hard to still be creating memories". And that is what MYDG intends to do.

MYDG is just one of the youth work providers in the area, we all have stories and memories to share, we hope that you can see something of your own experience of youth work in the memories shared at MYDG Rewind! To find out more about some of the youth work in Greater Pilton, look at MYDG's new website www.mydg.org.uk

Vicky Plows, MYDG Management Committee member



Gradings Are Here



The relentless march towards assessing everything that moves, indeed even things that don't, took another significant step recently. The introduction of 'gradings' into the Care Commission inspection from this April has major implications for those groups, particularly After School Clubs, who are registered with them.

To help groups get a better understanding of what this is and how it's supposed to work, a series of jointly organised seminars 'Grading is Coming' were held in April. With over 40 people attending, the level of interest reflected their need for more information and support.

The Care Commission led the sessions with a detailed input which covered the rationale, how grades were assessed, the framework of quality themes and the evidence required.

Based initially on an online pre inspection self assessment and other evidence gathered during the inspection process, grades are awarded against service performance. The grades which are from 1 to 6 (1 being unsatisfactory and 6 excellent) are given for each of the Quality themes. These are Care and Support; Environment or Information; Staffing and Management; and Leadership. Within each of the themes they are broken down into specific quality statements. The Quality themes are informed and relate to the National Care Standards.

As you might imagine a series of issues emerged from the Seminars not least being the level of time required to complete the self assessment! What was also clear was the need for more practical support.

If in the meantime you need some further information check out the Care Commissions website (www.carecommission.com) or phone us at LAYC.

The seminars were the first joint effort from a grouping that comprises of LAYC, City of Edinburgh Council (Early Years Team) and the Scottish Pre School Playgroup Association.

A practical follow up session is being organised by this group for mid September. It is hoped to bring some of the groups who took part in piloting of the self evaluation to talk to colleagues from After School Clubs and playgroups about how they found the new process (and to find out if they have any tips and recommendations for other groups who have yet to have received their letter from the Care Commission and go through the process for the first time).

Remember that LAYC is always interested to hear from After School Clubs about the various issues that they are facing currently - apart from the issue about residential trips raised in the "Opinion Piece" of this edition, recent queries from clubs have been around things like additional requirements around child protection policies being asked for by some officers.

Remember ..."It's good to talk!"

It's also good to write! Why not let "Networks" know about some of the good work that is going on out there in After School Club land? We hear bits and pieces when you come on our courses so why not write an article for the next issue of "Networks".

Or tell us what you would like LAYC to feature in future issues. Give Graham at LAYC a call on 0131 667 1828 or email: graham@layc.org.uk

News

Summer Puppet Fun!

Flotsam and Jetsam Puppets are offering puppet-making workshops to out of school clubs and playschemes again this Summer. These workshops have become a regular fixture for many groups over the past few Summers. They offer a fun mix of storytelling and puppet-making. The children make many crazy and fantastic characters: monsters, aliens, fairies and amazing wand-weilding, special power super-hero inter-galactic space spiders! The experienced puppeteers who lead the workshop can fit any character into the story! And the workshop finishes with the children putting on an instant energy-filled puppet show.

Flotsam and Jetsam workshop leaders have fifteen years experience of performing and teaching with puppets. They are used to working with children in a wide variety of settings. They are also happy to work on particular themes through puppets (for example recycling and environmental themes).

Please give Ailie a call on: 0131 662 9834 or e-mail: flotsam@jetsam.wanadoo.co.uk for more details.



Keeping Young People Safe on the World

Social networking, broadband, megabytes, instant messaging, download speeds, drivers, access privileges - the list of computing terms is endless. Whether or not the words mean anything to you is one thing, but if your club has access to the internet you'll need to start to understand what's going on in cyberspace.

So how much do you know?

Young people are involved in;

- Social networking
- File sharing
- P2P TV
- Blogging
- Gaming
- Chatting

What do you know about all of these? Do you know what risks they can present to young people?

Do you know the benefits these can have for young people? A lot of the above list can be done over a mobile phone so just switching off the internet at your centre isn't really the answer.

The safety of children and young people on the internet is an issue that's never far from the front pages. So even if you're a technophobe and don't know your monitor from your keyboard you'll need to start understanding what all the concerns are about.

The safety of your computer can be under threat from viruses, spam and hijackers (which can take over the control of your computer) but you can generally stop these with software. But making contact with people over the internet can put individual safety at risk and can only be prevented by being careful about who you talk to and what you tell them.

There are a wide range of filters and software which run in the background of your computer that can help you check and control the use of the internet by children & young people. Numerous programs exist like Net Nanny or WebWatcher, most of which have a cost attached, but they cannot be a substitute for you monitoring access to the internet, chat rooms and messaging services.



Here are some suggestions to help you develop your own policy on young people, computers and the internet

Stay public Have the computers in public places in clear view of everyone.

Encourage them to talk about their online friends Check that the young people can name the individuals on their instant messaging and social networking 'friends' lists - if they can't then you need to investigate further.

Do your homework Familiarise yourself with terminology and the basic language used by young people on popular websites. Ask the young people to show you around.

Communicate Speak to the young people about the potential dangers on the internet, and agree basic ground rules for use.

Be cautious of e-mails Encourage the young people not to open attachments from unknown sources as they can contain viruses or pornography.

Watch the clock Limit the amount of time young people are online, and encourage them to take part in other social activities away from the computer.

Be wary if a young person becomes secretive about their internet use.

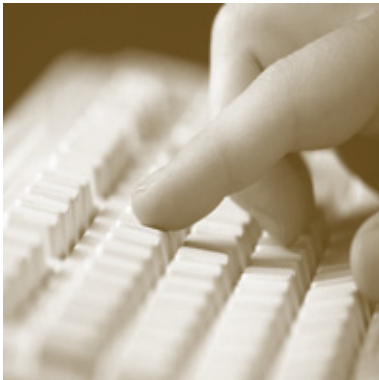
Make sure young people always use nicknames on social networking sites, and ensure they never, ever give out personal information over the internet - even if they know the person at the other end. You never know who else might be watching.

Don't leave your computers on when they aren't being used - they can still send and receive data (and waste electricity).

Keep your anti-virus and anti-spam software up to date There are some good free ones and some even better ones that you have to pay for. All of them have automatic update functions so make sure it's switched on.

Find out yourself Probably the best way to learn is to go and explore the internet, social networking sites, blogs and so on. Maybe the young people you work with will be able to teach you a thing or two - but remember to think about your own safety as well.

Wide Web



Useful Resources

There are lots of sources of information to help you make the most of the internet - most of it is online. Listed below are just a few of the ones we've found helpful.

Think U Know - put together by the Child Exploitation And Online Protection Centre (CEOP). Guide to internet safety and safe surfing for young people from Think U Know. Learn about online safety when using blogs, chatting, online gaming and much more. There are great resources on these sites.

- www.thinkunow.co.uk
- www.ceop.gov.uk

Click Thinking - Internet Safety advice from Scottish Government. Some of the follow up links on this site are out of date - but it has some good ideas for policy & practice. Nothing significant on social networking but the ideas they describe can all be used.

- www.scotland.gov.uk/clickthinking

Kidsmart - a practical Internet safety advice website for school. Mainly geared up for schools but some useful tips and ideas.

- www.kidsmart.org.uk

Childnet International - is a non-profit organisation working with others to help make the Internet a great and safe place for children with lots of useful information on their website.

- www.childnet-int.org

Other websites worth a visit include:

- www.bbc.co.uk/webwise
- www.chatdanger.com
- www.iwf.org.uk

Software

Examples of internet filtering & monitoring software;

- www.netnanny.com
- www.webwatcherkids.com

A search on the internet will find you lots of others - if it's free you will usually find this can be for a trial period so you might need to pay

People you know

Ask around - if you're not a techie get some advice before you buy anything or if you're unsure about things. Don't forget to ask the young people first - you might be surprised at how much some of them know.

LAYC - we might be able to help you think through your own issues over how computers are being used within your group but we can't help you with setting up software or computers (some of us can barely switch them on!)

Remember - the internet, technology and what's popular with young people are constantly changing - so you'll need to review what you have available and the safeguards you have in place on a regular basis.

Let us know here at LAYC what's happening in your group - Have you negotiated your own policies with young people? What problems have you encountered if you have tried to set up your own web presence? Drop an e mail to: rob@layc.org.uk

News

LEGISLATION

Disclosure Checking

YouthLink Scotland recently carried out an online survey around The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act which is set to change the process for vetting adults for child protection purposes. This will replace the current disclosure checking system (as operated under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act) with a Vetting and Barring membership scheme. A key objective is to simplify the process so that those working with children and vulnerable adults on a regular basis, will only need one full police check on entering the work force (or when moving from the old disclosure system).

There is an expectation that when taking up subsequent positions the worker will be considered to be a 'scheme member' and will only require a 'short scheme record check' for employers to see if any new information exists on police records about them. The Central Barring Unit, created by the legislation is set to commence operating in 2009 and the new style of checking will begin at that point.

During the progress of the Bill through Parliament, the voluntary sector extracted some concessions which, it was agreed, would be removed from the original bill and consulted on as part of secondary legislation.

We are currently awaiting the response to the Government's consultation on PVG, and current guidance on POCSA still applies.

The Government has recently released some Supplementary Guidance on making referrals to the Disqualified from Working with Children List and a new referral form, which should be used until the new scheme comes into existence.

LAYC will continue to monitor developments and keep groups informed.

Edinburgh Leisure

Energize this

**I'm bored
There's nothing to do
No-one ever thinks about us**

Ah, the all too familiar war cries of our disenchanted youth. Well, we thought it was high time we turned those cries of boredom into cheers of joy. So a few of us from the Marketing and Sports Development departments of Edinburgh Leisure locked ourselves into a room, barricaded up the doors and promised not to leave until we had come up with a product that would truly entice and excite the youths of Edinburgh to get involved in exercise.

There's so much competition fighting for the attention of 11 - 17 year olds, be it cinemas, television and computer games, that we had to find a different approach to entice young people into exercise. So, we decided that adopting a policy of 'if you can't beat 'em, join 'em' would be a far better approach than going it alone.

We got in touch with Cineworld, Tenpin Bowling, Edinburgh Dungeons and Juiced Up to see if they'd like to join us in our quest to combat the evils of boredom. And the answer was a resounding YES.

They offered some tip top benefits, including £1 off any cinema visit, the 2nd game of tenpin bowling free, 15% off the bill at Juiced Up and free entry to the Dungeons. Along with this, Energize card holders get every 5th visit to our gyms and golf courses for free and they'll enjoy regular promotions and awards for most visits. Everyone will receive regular e-newsletters to keep them up to date with all things health and fitness and the new promotions we'll be starting. And to differentiate the card from the rest of our membership offers, we decided to package it like a snap fax and make the card a key fob - less chance of them losing it (or so we're told)

For more information on Energize visit: www.edinburghleisure.co.uk or phone 0131 652 2178.

BE WISE - ENERGIZE

Golf Coaching

Whether you'd like to learn the basics or polish the finer points of your game, we've got the course for you. From April-October Edinburgh Leisure's Golf Coaching Programme runs at our custom-built golf school at Craightinny Golf Course and offers classes for children 8+. For those between 8-11 years you can attend our Junior Coaching class, where under the guidance of a PGA Professional, you'll learn all you need to know to get started in the wonderful game of golf and receive valuable coaching tips to get you topping the leaderboard in no time.

Our Youth Coaching classes for those aged between 12-17 years offer a chance for up-and-coming golfers of all abilities to receive some first class tuition from a PGA Professional. Not only is it a good chance to improve your game but also a fantastic opportunity to meet other golfers of a similar age and ability. Both our Youth & Junior coaching classes run for 1 hour each week over a 6-week period.

For those of you who want to learn a bit quicker why not take advantage of one of our Golf Summer Camps? Pick a week during the summer break and come along to our golf school for 2 hours each day in either the morning or afternoon and receive some first class coaching from a PGA Professional. It's guaranteed to be a fun week and you can spend the rest of the summer fine tuning your game on one of our six golf courses.

For more information on any of our golf programmes please visit our website: www.edinburghleisure.co.uk



Everybody Dance Now

Give me a C, give me an H, give me an E, give me an E and give me an R! Yes, cheer as Edinburgh Leisure launches cheerleading sessions for only £1.

Funded partly by a Girls on the Move grant, Edinburgh Leisure is delighted to bring you our girls cheerleading programme taking place at six of our venues across the city (Ainslie Park Leisure Centre, Craggs Sports Centre, Gracemount Leisure Centre, Jack Kane Sports Centre, Leith Victoria Swim Centre, Meadowbank Sports Centre).

Targeted at girls who are more likely to wear heels than trainers, our recreational cheer programme aims to introduce participants to stunting, dancing, cheering and chanting as part of a fun and recreational session.

Know some girls that would like to come along? Check out Edinburgh Leisure's website (www.edinburghleisure.co.uk) or phone Shelagh Jackson on 0131 652 4337 for more information and get them involved.

Edinburgh Leisure also launched its brand new Dance programme in January 2008 offering a variety of classes from Under 5's through to older adults. For all those teeny boppers and funky little movers why not try our Boogie Babies, Creative Dance or Little Jazz (3-5 yrs). For those aspiring to be in the next cast of High School Musical why not try either of our Musical Theatre or Street Dance classes.

For more information check out the website or contact

Samantha Langstaff:
samanthalangstaff@edinburghleisure.co.uk or phone 0131 652 2178.

Anti Social Behaviour



Are there problems with people's behaviours nowadays? Or is it the same old issues dressed up in a different way? Is there a thirst, or indeed a hunger to demonise/ criminalise certain ways of behaving and in fact a desire to target specific groups? Are there new problems and risks associated with living in contemporary communities or indeed a preoccupation with behaviour, coupled with an exaggerated sense that certain people are out of control?

This sense of moral panic regarding people and their lifestyles may not be without a reason; it is not a simple figment of our individual imagination, but may be frequently exaggerated by others to crank up a culture of fear and uncertainty. Within this culture, certain terms and stereotypes associated with anti social behaviour have reared their ugly heads in communities today. What are people doing today that their behaviour comes under the microscope? Why then are peoples life's and their lifestyles becoming ever more scrutinised and what can be done to reverse the perceived negative 'spin'.

At Café K, a voluntary youth work project based within the Jack Kane Community Centre located in the Craigmillar area, the organisation attempts to navigate through the behavioural quagmire whilst working alongside individuals and groups who may be deemed as 'anti social' (and that's just the staff!).

Indeed, the project believes that people are and will continue to make positive contributions to the wider community, becoming and developing as active experiential consultants and partners in taking action.

Utilising these themes as significant bodies in combating social exclusion there is an unstinting commitment to employ learning as an agent of social change.

For some families and young people this social change came through identifying that the legislation surrounding Anti Social Behaviour, ABCs and Parenting Orders was in their opinion confusing and vague. Indeed, the original idea originated from a family in Craigmillar whose young person had been affected by the legislation and they were keen to hear what support services were out there.

On attempting to clarify some of the issues that they faced, the legislation became more complex, so in order to illuminate the relevant topics and with the assistance of funding acquired from Portobello and Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership, 'A Rough Guide to end the confusion' booklet was born.

The booklet offers the reader a clear and concise outline of what types of behaviours are deemed as anti social, gives you a low-down on Parenting Orders as well as individual views, ABCs information, backed up with information of where you can receive advice/support and some hot websites to complement peoples knowledge.

Whilst the booklet concentrates on Anti Social Behaviour and the support services which are on offer in this geographical location, the booklet can easily be adapted for area specific support services located within other areas of the city.

If you would like to receive a copy or indeed talk more about this issue then please feel free to contact Emma Kyles/Scott Fraser on 0131 657 1595 or visit our web site on www.cafek.org



News

Amber - making time to talk

On 29th May at 6VT – The City Youth Café, The Cyrenians and SACRO were delighted to launch their DVD 'Having that difficult conversation'. Launched by Ewan Malcolm, Director of the Scottish Mediation Network, the short film show cases the work of the Amber Mediation Service and features families who have worked with the project to resolve conflict and improve family relationships. Copies of the DVD will be sent out to individuals, Voluntary Agencies and Local Authorities interested in homeless mediation services. The film will also be used as a tool for attracting young people and their families who may wish to use mediation but would like to know more about what it involves.

Falling out or having arguments at home can be an inevitable part of growing up but sometimes the stress and strain of it all can lead to young people leaving home in a hurry without having the chance to think it through. Amber offers the option to young people, mums and dads and anyone else in the family to have that opportunity to talk things out, hear the other side of the story and come to an agreement on what the next step should be.

Mediation is a well established process for resolving disagreements in which an impartial third party (the mediator) helps people in dispute to find a mutually acceptable resolution.

Mediation - helping people to have a difficult conversation.

For more information please get in touch with:

Viki Phillipps

Support Co-ordinator, Amber
e-mail: amber@cyrenians.org.uk
web site www.cyrenians.org.uk
phone: 0131 475 2493.

Edinburgh Youth Work Consortium

6VT Becomes 6VG

Dot Horne from 6VT - Edinburgh City Youth Café was recently honoured when she received her award as runner up in the Youth Worker of the Year Awards.

The presentation, by Margaret McLeod, Policy and Information Manager at Youthlink Scotland, took place at the start of the Consortium's recent 'Risk Seminar'.

The recognition was part of Youthlinks National Youth Work Awards launched earlier in the year.

Dot's work at 6VT spans a wide spectrum of innovative practice over the Youth Café's history and was richly deserved.

Gambling Training a Winner

The chance to benefit from some training on offer from TACADE using newly produced materials on problem gambling targeted at young people was quickly grabbed.

With the TACADE Chief Executive Martin Buczkiewicz flying up from down Manchester way it was important to maximise the time available. So two back to back 3 hour sessions straddling a teatime were set up at the end of April.

The result was over 40 youth workers attending the training and taking away the two accompanying resource packs "You Bet!" and "Just Another Game?"

And the training itself? The feedback from evaluations was excellent with over 95% scores of very good or good.

EYWC is keen to continue the relationship with TACADE and alongside LAYC will be seeking to stock the various resource packs that they produce. We will also be exploring other workshops we could potentially be putting on in conjunction with them.



You Say Risk . . . We Say Opportunity

The topic of risk is one that creates continuing debate and disagreement in youth work circles. Introduction of increasing regulations fanned by the likes of child protection and disclosures, has created at worst a culture of mistrust and at best an unwillingness to challenge perceived risk awareness.

With this hot issue, the Consortium organised a recent Seminar entitled 'Youth Work - A Risky Business?' to explore some of the underlying themes. Attended by over 80 youth workers it proved a lively topic.

Leading the Seminar was Dr Stuart Waiton, Criminology Lecturer at Abertay University and Director of Generation Youth Issues, an independent research and development charity.

Stuart has been a critic of the "cotton wool kids" approach whereby concerns about 'risk' overwhelm the other rights of children, families and local communities. This 'culture' also contributes significantly to the shifting perception of children and young people as a 'threatening' and 'problems' to be dealt with.

Examples of policies on Santa Claus not allowing children to sit on his knee or the introduction of a 'no touching' policy for youth workers in a Scottish local authority were sighted as the consequences of accepting this approach.

The introduction of vetting of adults in youth work had compounded the new fears and illustrated most tellingly how these had been captured by institutionalising them. Over a third of the adult population was now disclosure checked which in reality produced an illusion of protection.

This fear that being young in itself is viewed as being vulnerable put in place a chain of reaction that inevitably led to an approach where young people were seen as problems needing to be dealt with. Everything from sex to drink and friendship to gambling were seen in that context.

A plethora of agencies had now been created to 'deal' with this crisis inherent in young people. Youth workers had become unwitting accomplices in this new regime. Bound by new procedures and other forms of regulation decisions previously taken using professional judgements were now governed by policies that are often designed mainly to protect institutions rather than young people.

He concluded that some institutions and public bodies such as local authorities had made safety an "absolute"- taking prime importance over anything and everything else.

This approach went along with labelling young people as "vulnerable", being distrusting of agencies and workers who took a different view labelling them as "irresponsible". Who, Stuart asked the audience to consider whether anyone actually benefits from this increased fear of risk and paranoia about safety? Was it really something which was good for young people?

The seminar concluded with a panel discussion chaired by EYWC Chair Simon Jaquet with contributions from Willy Barr, Citadel Youth Project; Dr Iain Fyffe, Moray House; Margaret McLeod, Youthlink Scotland; and Jackie Stewart, Senior CLD Youth Worker for the City Council.

Finally thanks go to Stuart, Moray House who hosted the event and the panel members who contributed to a significant debate for the youth work sector.

The Big Project



The BIG Project in Broomhouse is leading an exciting songwriting project for 10-15 year olds, supported by an award of £25, 826 from the Scottish Arts Council's Youth Music Initiative.

The BIG Tour and BIG Album Project aims to build confidence, self-esteem, motivation and self-discipline through music making, songwriting, rehearsals, performance and recording opportunities led by Edinburgh-based songwriter Kim Edgar (www.kimedgar.com).

10-15 year olds from Broomhouse and the surrounding areas have already taken part in singing, songwriting and keyboard workshops. Guitar workshops will follow in May.

Now, in the second stage of the project, there will be five intensive Songwriting Workshops in Broomhouse, Livingston, and Ardnamurchan for 15 young people in each of the locations.

Collaboration and communication between the young people across Scotland will be supported by an on-line songwriting forum at www.burnsong.com.

Young people in each area will work towards performing their songs backed by professional musicians including Karine Polwart, Mattie Foulds and Future Pilot AKA.

Four Music Trainees (aged 14 -18) are helping to lead the workshops, develop their own music and youth-work skills. They will join the band on The BIG Tour - a three-date tour from 14 - 16th August 2008, with a local gig in Livingston, Broomhouse and Strontian where the young songwriters will perform with the band. The Music Trainees have recently been short-listed to receive an award for outstanding volunteering in the category of Innovation from the Lord Provost on 5th June.

Recordings of The BIG Tour gigs will create a compilation album, to be launched in Edinburgh in October 2008, with young people from all three projects coming together to celebrate and hear each other's songs.

David McDonald, Youth Music Manager at the Scottish Arts Council, commented:

"This is a really exciting project that offers young people a range of opportunities from creative songwriting, working with professional musicians, performing to making a CD while also providing young trainees with their first steps to gaining experience of the music industry."

The project also creates a valuable opportunity for young people to communicate and make connections with their peers from other areas through a songwriting network. I look forward to hearing the results."

To hear the results of the young people's creativity, mark Friday 15th August in your diary, and come along to enjoy the songwriting talents of young people in Broomhouse - as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe! Details are as follows:
Friday 15th August 2008 (7 pm-9 pm)
The Music Box, Stevenson College
Bankhead Ave, EH11 4DE
Tickets £10 (available from 9th June 2008) Box Office: 0131 226 0000
Purchase online at: www.edfringe.com

News

Youth Music Initiative Informal Sector fund

The Youth Music Initiative (YMI)'s Informal Sector fund re-opened for 2008-09 on 1 April. The deadlines for large grants (£5,001 -£30,000) are 7th July and 6th October 2008. Programmes should run for between 6 months and two years and 10% minimum partnership funding, in cash is required.

2007-08 was a busy but successful year for the YMI in general and the Informal Sector fund in particular. Almost £1.9 million was requested from the fund and we were able to award £725,647 to over 50 organisations.

Competition for the fund is high but we still want to hear from everyone with a great idea for creative music making which aims to widen opportunities for young people. We're looking for programmes that involve high quality and sustainable activity in any musical genre.

Applications for Small grants of between £500 and £5,000 have no deadlines and have no minimum length of programme. Again 10% partnership funding in cash is required

WHO CAN APPLY?

Any organisation working in the informal sector who wants to programme musical activity for young people can apply. This includes local authorities but remember that Instrumental Services who receive the YMI Formula Fund are not eligible to apply.

HOW TO APPLY

Application forms can be found on the general Scottish Arts Council funding pages.

If you need any help or advice contact Jennifer McGlone at jennifer.mcglone@scottisharts.org .uk or ring 0131 240 2466.

YWCA Roundabout have the 'Y' Factor when it comes to supporting a Good Cause

Having seen the shocking images on T.V. and getting regular reports from World YWCA on the developing crisis in Kenya, YWCA 'Roundabout Girls' in Edinburgh decided they needed to help raise money for YWCA Kenya who have been on the front line in supporting women and children most affected by the crisis.

Having heard how the conflict has disproportionately impacted on the lives of women and children they agreed that there was no better way to celebrate International Women's Day than to hold a fundraising event and have some fun while they were at it. The 'Y Factor' was born, their own self-styled talent show, no celebrity panelists need apply, their judges would encourage and inspire all contestants.

In less than a month, the group had found a venue, publicized the event, planned a home-baking stall to add to the fundraising and identified over a dozen acts to entertain their guests. For a number of the girls, this was in addition for studying for the prelims.

On 7th March, the eve of International Women's Day the Capacity-building Project venue in Niddrie quickly filled up with guests and some very talented young women. Act after act of music, dance and song brought the audience to their feet, as the judges and 'clapometer' struggled to identify the winners. Eventually, the honours went to the 'Bindi Babes' and Sarah and Scarlett.

The evening was a fantastic example of how good things can be achieved globally by local action from inspired young women. Over £270 was raised by the sheer determination and leadership of the group members. The money will go directly to YWCA Kenya and will provide significant help to women and children affected by the crisis.



Quotations from the girls

"I can feel the pressure"

"It was a lot of work, but completely worth it!"

"I was buzzin!"

"Come next year"

The YWCA 'Roundabout Girls' group are aged between 12-16 and meet every Friday 6-8PM at the Roundabout Centre, Gayfield Place. The girls plan their own programme, which has recently included challenging racism peer education workshops, DVD-making, henna hand painting and Nepalese and Chinese cultural exchange evenings.

Many of the young women who are over 16 have applied to volunteer with Roundabout's Intercultural and Anti-discriminatory Summer School, 30th June - 25th July 2008, to be held at Drummond Community High School.

This project has provided anti-discriminatory activities for children aged 5-12 and girls and young women only aged 12-16 since 1968 and YWCA Roundabout are particularly keen to recruit enthusiastic, reliable and committed volunteers. If you can volunteer between 9am and 4pm for these dates, please do get in touch.

For more details please call Emma or Laura on 0131 556 1168 or find out more at:
www.ywcascotland.org/where/roundabout.html

Forth Lodge (Special Needs Unit)

The Scout Association in Edinburgh is pleased to announce that following an investment of almost £150,000 to improve facilities, Forth Lodge is once again available for occupation. Forth Lodge is a self contained Special Needs Unit available for groups of young people with special needs and their carers. It is located within the Outdoor Scout Centre at Bonaly on the southern outskirts of Edinburgh.

The accommodation can cater for up to 24 people in small rooms and has been extensively refurbished to improve the lifting and handling and bathing facilities for our guests and their carers. The unit has a large dining room / activity room, kitchen and is for self catering groups.

Our two toilet areas have been completely rebuilt. We have also taken the opportunity to refurbish all the accommodation by painting throughout the building and renewing the carpeting. We believe these improvements meet the modern standards required by our guests and their carers however we will always welcome further suggestions.

Further information about the activities available on the site and access to local amenities can be obtained from Barry Johnston who is the resident manager of our Bonaly Outdoor Centre on 0131 441 1878.

If you would be interested in more information, please call Alan Willoughby at the Edinburgh Scout Centre on 0131 229 3756 or email on area-secretary@edinburgh-scout.org.uk