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

Number 100, August 2009

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

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

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European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010

The EU Commission has designated 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

> "EY2010 aims to raise public awareness of the importance of combating poverty and social exclusion for personal, social and

economic development. It will aim to give a voice to those who experience poverty and social exclusion.

The UK-level objectives for the Year are to:

> 1. Raise awareness for the causes and consequences of poverty and social exclusion;
>
> 2. Facilitate the engagement of all those who have a role to play in combating poverty, especially people experiencing poverty; and
>
> 3. Leave a lasting legacy, through sharing best practice and encouraging ongoing dialogue between policy-makers, practitioners and people experiencing poverty."[1] [p1]

DWP[2] are responsible for hosting the information about the UK's involvement and, as well as producing the newsletter, *EYES on EY2010*, have also published the *UK National Programme*[3] for the Year, which sets out some of the challenges that the UK faces:

> "Through the introduction of reforms to remove the barriers holding people back, to help them into work, and to give them the responsibility and support they need, the Government has already made progress. However, the Government recognises that many challenges remain. More needs to be done to remove the barriers people face or help people to overcome them. This is particularly important when economic times are more difficult. We are particularly keen that the Year reflects and responds to the impact of the economic crisis on the issues of poverty and social exclusion." [p3]

The Programme then goes on to list the key challenges:

- Child poverty
- Working age poverty and social exclusion
- Severe/multiple deprivation and those who are most at risk of social exclusion
- Older people and poverty/social exclusion.

The work for the Year is being coordinated by the National Implementing Body which is formed from:

- "UK: Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). DWP holds the key levers to tackling poverty and exclusion in the UK through the stewardship of the benefit system and its responsibility for policy on

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[1] *EYES on EY2010* 1, September 2009. The newsletter is available to download as a pdf from: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/ey2010-eye-01-0909.pdf.
[2] See: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/european-year-2010/.
[3] *European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion: UK National programme*. DWP, 2009. Available to download as a pdf (184 kb) from: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/ey2010-uk-national-programme.doc.

tackling disability and age discrimination. It is also the department which co-ordinates the National Action Plan on social inclusion across the UK, and the DWP European Social Fund Division is authorised to manage EU funding.
- Scotland: Scottish Government: Equalities, Social Inclusion and sport Directorate
- Wales: Welsh Assembly Government Communities Division.
- Northern Ireland: Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Central Anti Poverty Unit." [p5]

The UK Programme aims to put the broader objectives of the Year into practice by:

- "*Raising awareness* of the causes, prevalence and consequences of poverty and social exclusion, and of UK and European strategies and policies that aim to tackle these issues.
- *Promoting and facilitating the engagement* and participation of a broad range of actors who have a role to play in developing and delivering solutions to tackle poverty and social exclusion, including business and trade unions, voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises, people experiencing poverty, and the organisations that represent them at a local, regional and national level.
- *Ensuring a lasting legacy* from the Year, including the identification and sharing of good practice and knowledge, and the development of effective structures that facilitate ongoing dialogue between relevant actors.

The programme will consist of a mix of activity at national and at local level which will aim to highlight the key aspects of the UK anti-poverty strategy, whilst engaging with individuals and groups who are not normally involved in this strategy in identifying solutions to the challenges that remain. There will be a geographical distribution of activity which is broadly in line with the overall population, and will aim to take account of the reality of poverty and social exclusion in rural and urban areas. People experiencing poverty will be involved in every aspect of the programme, from initial consultation to evaluation. It will be a requirement of all funded activity that people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are included in the planning for and delivery of activity, that activities build in the potential for a good gender balance and the involvement of disabled people and other groups facing exclusion and that, where necessary, funding is available to ensure their participation." [p6]

The Year will particularly showcase good practice, and as well as the priority areas outlined above, will want to ensure that gender equality and equal opportunities and accessibility for disabled people are embedded in all work. There will also be a media campaign for:

- "Raising public awareness of the causes, prevalence and consequences of poverty and social exclusion
- Tackling negative public perceptions
- Creating improved understanding of the issues in society." [p10]

Finally, the NIB has put out a call for proposals[4] to cover activities in the three main areas:

- Regional Activities
- Thematic Programmes (eg child poverty, older people, etc)
- Technical Assistance.

By "Technical Assistance", they mean:

"This proposal is for technical support to the National Implementing Body (NIB) and we invite bids for activity that demonstrably contribute to the following outcomes:
- An effective link and communication channel between the NIB, grassroots organisations or networks and other stakeholders (including local government)
- Effective project planning for the development of a communications strategy and strong media relations
- Raised awareness of the EY2010 and its objectives, and funding opportunities
- Co-ordination of activity at a local, regional, national and European level, and between multiple stakeholders
- Galvanised public support and buy-in during the run-up to EY2010
- The delivery of a sustainable legacy and positive outcomes for EY2010."[5]

There could be real scope for MLAs to get involved in this, and to showcase some of our work. If anyone is getting involved, please could you let John Vincent know?

Did you see …?

Literacy Today

The June issue[6] has a number of interesting articles, including:

- Graham Frater "The elephant in the reading classroom", which looks at the links between deprivation and lack of school achievement, and stresses the importance of early literacy interventions [pp9-10]
- Naomi Danquah "Spotlight on children's reading", which introduces The Reading Agency's new children's reading promotion[7] [p11]
- Jim Sells "Playing the literacy game", which looks at the use of sport as a tactic for engaging boys in literacy [pp17-18]

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[4] See: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/european-year-2010/calls-for-proposals/.
[5] Taken from: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/european-year-2010/calls-for-proposals/.
[6] *Literacy Today* 59, June 2009. For further information, see: http://www.educationpublishing.com/.
[7] For further information about "Spotlight", see: http://www.readingagency.org.uk/children/spotlight/.

- Christina Clark "Young people's reading and role models", outlining the key findings from the National Literacy Trust survey [pp35-36].

Impact

The Autumn 2009 issue[8] includes a lot of interesting material, including:

- Daniel Park "Focus on outreach: Surveys to engage with 'hard to reach' groups" [pp69-70]. This article briefly looks at what happens when consultation involves events held at inconvenient times for the target audience and rigid questionnaires, and recommends an outreach approach, using interview sheets rather than questionnaires.

JOLIS

The *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* is 40!

To celebrate this, *JOLIS* has published an issue[9] that looks both back and forwards. It includes:

- A guest editorial from Edward Dudley, who wrote the editorial for the first issue, which looks at changing lines of communication [pp131-134]
- John Vincent "Public library provision for Black and minority ethnic communities – where are we in 2009?", which assesses what has happened since the publication in the first issue of *JOLIS* of the results of research by Claire Lambert into the library needs of 'Indian and Pakistani communities' [pp137-147]
- John Feather "LIS research in the United Kingdom: reflections and prospects" [pp173-181].

Health & Wellbeing issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

NHS "Teen LifeCheck"

The NHS has been gathering data on young people's views about healthy living via their "Teen LifeCheck" website[10], and has just published the first round of results.

These show a clear class divide in young people's attitudes, concerns and realities:

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[8] *Impact: Journal of the Career Development Group* 12 (3), Autumn 2009. Further information at:
http://www.cilip.org.uk/specialinterestgroups/bysubject/careerdevelopment/whatwedo/impactspring2009contents.htm.
[9] *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 41 (3) September 2009. Further information from: http://lis.sagepub.com/. CILIP members can access articles by logging in at: http://www.cilip.org.uk/publications/researchjournals.
[10] See:
http://www.teenlifecheck.co.uk/Default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1.

"Today's teens are most worried about losing weight and fitting in. But more teenagers from low income families worry about bullying, drugs, and smoking compared to peers from high income families. Surveys for NHS Teen LifeCheck published today reveal social similarities and divides on some of the top teenage concerns.

Of the teenagers surveyed, almost double the number of teens from low income families worried about bullying. However, teens from higher income families are more likely to worry about peer pressure and fitting in.

The research shows:

Worry	-	*Low income families*	-	*High income families*
Losing weight	-	43%	-	30%
Bullying	-	41%	-	21%
Drugs	-	21%	-	13%
Smoking	-	19%	-	10%
Fitting in	-	32%	-	40%
Peer pressure	-	23%	-	30%"[11]

Abbreviations and acronyms

CILIP = Chartered Institute for Librarianship and Information Professionals
DWP = Department for Work and Pensions
LIS = librarianship and information studies
MLAs = museums, libraries, archives and cultural & heritage organisations

This Newsletter was compiled by John Vincent, and all items are written by him, unless otherwise stated. Please send any comments or items for the next issue to:

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[11] Taken from:
http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=406439&SubjectId=2.