

GLOBAL YOUTH ACTION

Global Youth Work is informal education which starts from young people's everyday experiences, seeks to develop their understanding of the local and global influences on their lives and encourages positive action for change.

Leeds DEC is working in partnership with the DEA to set up five Global Youth Action projects in West Yorkshire each year for three years, starting in 2006. Four other regional DEC's across England in Somerset, Derby, Cambridge and Lancashire are working with the DEA on the same project; together we are working to develop Global Youth Work practice in England.

Judy Kelso, Hannah Dalrymple and Richard Borowski are the Leeds DEC staff working on the project and if you have any questions about the project and the services we offer then you can contact any of us at the office, but this information sheet is designed to fill you in with the basics.

Global Youth Action Projects

Global Youth Work has emerged from an interest in the way young people's lives are changing. Globalisation has an increasingly big impact on the shape of young people's lives and we take the perspective that it is important as youth workers to support young people to explore and understand the world they live in – which means looking at the global influences on their lives.

A Global Youth Action Project is an opportunity to try out global youth work through a piece of project work that can last up to a year. Global youth work can be carried out on a day-to-day basis with young people by supporting them to look at the global aspect of anything that comes up, but the GYAPs are an opportunity for the young people to explore a global influence on their lives in some depth – really get to understand it and in so doing, want to take control of that aspect of their lives – make change.

We call GYW young-person-led because the young people are being supported to identify for themselves what is important to them and explore the global dimension of that interest. It's not about designing a project around a preconceived notion of what 'global' is, like looking at climate change or world poverty but starting with young people's real interests, whatever they are, be it music or fashion or computer games and supporting them to explore fully what those things are all about. We won't force the young people to look at the global aspects of those interests but we will lay money on the fact that you can only explore any of those interests for so long before discovering that they have a global dimension – and a global dimension that is crucial to the impact they have on your life.

Case Studies

The most important thing about running a GYAP should be that the young people enjoy the experience. Examples of the kinds of projects that have worked well in the past are.....

- Young people producing a magazine on fair (and unfair) trade in the clothing industry based on their own research and peer interviews about trainers.

- Youth workers and young people making a video on the links between homelessness and refugees & asylum seekers.
- Small group work and creative arts to explore images of poverty in different countries.
- A group of young people exploring how 'youth' is understood and portrayed in different parts of the world, then writing & recording a song that reflected how they felt about what they had discovered.

Running the sessions

The GYAP sessions for each group will be run by the youth workers at your project. Judy and Hannah will be available to help run the first few sessions should you feel you need it and also contribute to any key sessions as the project progresses. Our role is to act as a support to each of the GYAPs and this will take the form of providing information, advice and appropriate resources. We will also be able to put you in touch with other sources of information and support, for instance artists or musicians that are experienced in exploring global issues with young people.

Resources

Leeds DEC has a global issues resource centre with books, videos, games, photos, posters, magazines and musical instruments that can be borrowed by the GYAPs. The resources cover all sorts of issues that affect young people locally and globally, such as racism, sport, the clothing industry and HIV/AIDS. We regularly add to the resources, making sure that they are up to date and relevant to young people today. If you have an unusual request for a resource we can use our development education contacts across the country and further to help you find it. All you have to do in order to borrow from the resource centre is become a member of the DEC, which is free!

Training

Training in the method and practice of Global Youth Work for the youth workers will be provided before and during the GYAPs. The structure and timing of the training will be designed around the time constraints, needs and interests of each youth worker but all training will aim to make the youth workers feel confident in supporting the young people to explore whatever their global interests are. Youth workers will also have the opportunity to attend a 2-day residential training course in Global Youth Work. The course is OCN-accredited (on completion of a portfolio as well as attendance on the course).

Budget

There is £2000 available for each GYAP and the money should be used to make the project as successful and enjoyable for the young people as possible. Whilst it is available to use for all sorts of purposes (the young people should be encouraged to be as creative as possible with how they can create change around the issue they care about) it may also be needed to pay for extra training, travel costs or other expenses. The money will be given to each project in two halves - £1000 at the beginning of the project and £1000 half way through, on the basis of the project contract being met.

Accreditation

We would like to see 60% of all young people involved in the GYAPs being accredited for what they learn over the course of the project. If your project already has an accreditation

scheme in place it would be great if it could be used to recognise the learning opportunities that the young people had taken up through the GYAP. We are in the process of finding an accreditation scheme that we could offer as a back-up for those projects that do not already have one in place. Most accreditation schemes require some paperwork to be filled out by the young people and the youth workers but we think the benefits accreditation offers young people outweighs the bother of paperwork!

Young People's National Network

All the young people involved in the GYAPs will have the opportunity to get involved in a national young person's network for Global Youth Work. The young people in the network will be able to continue their interest in exploring and taking action on global issues, but at a more national level. However the network will also be used as a forum where young people can build a collective voice to contribute to the development of global youth work strategy at a national level – we hope the young people's network could one day be commenting on what youth workers learn in their training!

The young people's network will be launched at the peer education training that is being offered to GYAP members in 2006. We hope the network will hold an event in January 2007, but for network developments from then on.....watch this space!

Peer research and peer education training

The GYAPs will all be working with a small core group of young people but an important aspect of global youth work is building solidarity between young people. The young people may build alliances with young people in all sorts of places but we hope that the solidarity building could begin a little closer to home by encouraging the young people to reach out to the other young people in their communities. We foresee this happening in two key stages; a peer research stage and a peer education stage. The young people will be supported to focus on a global issue that they think is particularly relevant to them and young people in their area. Once they have decided on their focus they will be given training by Leeds DEC to investigate how that issue is impacting on young people in their area and further afield – peer research.

Towards the end of the project the young people will be preparing how to tell people about what they have learned, what actions they have taken, what made them angry and what made them passionate to make a change. Again we would hope that there would be some emphasis on the young people communicating with other young people about all this – peer education. There will be an opportunity for young people participating in the GYAPs to attend a 2x2-day residential OCN-accredited course in peer education methods (expenses paid) – places may be limited on this course and it may only be appropriate for older members of the group, so be careful not to raise expectations in the whole group about attending the course.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The three year Global Youth Work project is designed to improve practice in Global Youth Work in England, so we want to collect lots of ideas about what works well in working with young people around global issues and what doesn't work so well. In order to find that out we are asking each GYAP to monitor and evaluate what they are doing. We have tried to make this process as un-burdensome as possible and all it will require you to do is

- Carry out two evaluation sessions – one at the beginning, one at the end of the project – to find out how the young people have developed over the course of the project both in terms

of their knowledge and understanding of global issues and in terms of personal development such as confidence and communication skills.

- Keep a record of what training and accreditation the young people receive.
- Youth workers attend an evaluation session with Judy from the Leeds DEC to give us your views of how successful the project was.