

CLD

**STANDARDS COUNCIL
FOR SCOTLAND**

September 2011

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COUNCIL
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SCOTLAND

WHAT DOES THE CODE
OF ETHICS MEAN FOR
ME?

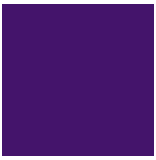
A Youth Work Commentary on a Code of Ethics for
Community Learning and Development



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The individual ethic: <i>There are 13 individual ethical clauses that together form the Code of Ethics. Each individual ethic is restated and then examined in the context of youth work.</i>	
Tag Word Cloud (Beginning): <i>Illustrate the main themes on the page. In this context they are used as prompts for discussion. They are based on youth workers initial observations on the Code. In some cases the words may also run counter to the ethic to provoke debate.</i>	
Questions (Going Deeper): <i>These are designed to be used in a group, or within individual support settings to help practitioners reflect on some of the challenges of applying the Code in a youth work context. Some questions are taken from the Challenging Practice resource which was designed for use with the CLD Competences: http://bit.ly/f4diAi</i>	
Guiding Principles (Applying): <i>These offer some prerequisites for youth workers in applying the ethical clauses in practice.</i>	
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Foreword

Dear colleague,

Thank you for opening this copy of the Commentary on the Code of Ethics for Community Learning and Development. This paper has been prepared by youth workers, youth work managers and others with an investment in ensuring that our contribution to the lives of young people is of the highest quality at all times

This paper is a contribution to that aspiration. It is based firmly on work completed for the Standards Council in 2010 by Professor Howard Sercombe, Strathclyde University and Peter Taylor, independent consultant who, following an extensive consultation proposed the series of ethical statements for consideration.

The idea of a companion commentary focusing on youth work and youth workers arose when a number of youth workers and managers suggested that such a document would be helpful in teasing out issues raised by the Code.

This challenged us all to consider what the values* underpinning work in the ever broadening field of CLD might be. What do they mean for us on a daily basis? What are the challenges for us, our agencies, employers and those in a lead role? These ethical statements are not unique to youth work – these are the same ones that all others involved in CLD should consider- those in community work and development, adult learning and in more formal settings.

The challenge of these statements suggests that we can reflect on our own practice, in the main be responsible for our own contributions, development and impacts on and with young people.

In leading on this exercise, YouthLink Scotland, its members and their youth workers hope that this document can prompt debate and dialogue, challenge perceptions, develop new thinking and result in a growing effective field of practice to build on the excellent work that already exists.

Though a small contribution to the overall CLD panorama, it is a critical one.

The Standards Council for CLD for Scotland is grateful to YouthLink Scotland and its officers, membership and individual youth workers who contributed to this document.

I hope it works for you. Enjoy the debate.

Rory Macleod
Director, CLD Standards Council for Scotland.

* For material on values and associated areas, access www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

The Standards Council for Community Learning and Development for Scotland has produced a *Code of Ethics for Community Learning and Development*. <http://bit.ly/fWyuFt>

YouthLink Scotland was commissioned by the Standard's Council to produce a *Youth Work Commentary* to set the Code in the context of contemporary youth work practice and, in particular the ethical dilemmas facing the 21st century youth worker.

The process

The Commentary developed in two phases. *Phase one*, from December 2010 to February 2011 involved consultation with youth work practitioners through focus groups, telephone interviews, consultation seminars in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth, and a range of other communication tools including social networking sites.

Phase two took place between February and April 2011, the overall content and shape of the Commentary was put in place and then tested by senior practitioners and youth work managers, and with young people.

The outcome

The brief that YouthLink Scotland was given by the Standards Council was to produce a Commentary on the existing Code of Ethics, but what is this?

It's not:

- a new, edited or adapted Code of Ethics;
- specific guidance on what the Code is, how it was established and its function (more information on this can be found at <http://bit.ly/e9R58R>);
- a training resource on how to apply and use the Code in a range of contexts.

It is:

- a brief Commentary that contextualises the Code of Ethics, specific to youth work.
- a collection of prompt questions, scenarios, and illustrations that attempt to bring the Code to life in youth work practice.

THE CODE

CLD Standards Council for Scotland

A CODE OF ETHICS FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Community Learning and Development (CLD) is a field of professional practice constituted by the adult education, community development and youth work professions. While their practices and the constituencies they serve may differ, they have in common a commitment to their constituents as their primary clients, and to the power of informal education to transform situations, structures, communities and individuals.

Education is a prerequisite for democracy and citizenship. CLD seeks to extend the reach of effective democracy, particularly by actively engaging those who are excluded from participation in key social processes that shape their lives, and to widen the scope of democracy to enable full participation in the common wealth. The following principles are informed by this core position.

1. Primary Client

Our primary client (our 'constituent') is the community, the young person, or the adult learner with whom we engage.

2. Social Context

Our work is not limited to facilitating change within individuals, but extends to their social context and environment. It recognises the impact of ecological and structural forces on people.

3. Equity

Our work promotes equality of opportunity and outcome. Our practice is equitable and inclusive.

4. Empowerment

We seek to enhance constituents' capacity for positive action by:

- enabling them to clarify and pursue their chosen priorities.
- building skills of decision-making, engagement and co-operation.
- making power relations open and clear
- supporting constituents in holding those with power accountable.
- facilitating disengagement from the professional relationship.

Our starting point is that constituents are capable of assessing and acting on their interests.

5. Duty of Care

We will avoid exposing our constituents to the likelihood of harm or injury.

6. Corruption

We will not seek to advance ourselves, our organisations or others, personally, politically or professionally, at the expense of our constituents.

7. Transparency

Engagement with the young person, adult learner or community, and the resulting relationship, will be open and truthful. Potential conflicts of interest will be openly declared.

8. Confidentiality

Information provided by constituents will not be used against them, nor will it be shared with others who may use it against them. Constituents should be made aware of the limits to confidentiality. Until this happens, the presumption of confidentiality should apply. Wherever possible they should be consulted before disclosure.



9. Co-operation

We will actively seek to co-operate with others in order to secure the best possible outcomes for our constituents.

10. Professional Development

We will work reflectively, identifying and using the information, resources, skills, knowledge and practices needed to improve our capacity to meet our obligations to constituents.

11. Self-awareness

We should be conscious of our own values and interests, and approach cultural and other difference respectfully. While the need to challenge may arise, we must try first to understand.

12. Boundaries

The CLD relationship is a professional relationship, intentionally limited to protect the constituent and the purpose of our work. These limits should be clarified, established and maintained. The relationship with an individual constituent is based on trust and is not available for sexual engagement.

13. Self-care

CLD practice should be consistent with preserving the health of CLD workers.

THE CODE IN A YOUTH WORK CONTEXT

What do we mean by Ethics in Youth Work?

Ethics are often described as the standards of behaviour that govern the conduct of an individual or the members of a profession. Usually ethical issues in youth work are centred around the welfare or well-being of a young person or youth group.

Having an ethical framework can add clarity to situations which, in turn, can guide practice and aid judgements and decision-making. Sound ethical practices can also help define youth work as a profession and how it interprets and carries out its role. Ethical practice is also inextricably linked to central youth work values of equality and diversity, empowerment and self determination.

In Scotland, a Code of Ethics for Community Learning and Development (including youth work) was ratified by the Standards Council in October 2010. Essentially, this is a Code of generic ethical principles, rather than specific guidance around conduct.

How does ethical practice link to youth work practice?

YouthLink Scotland's 'Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work' is helpful in how we link ethical practice to youth work in Scotland.

"Youth work has three essential and definitive features.

- Young people choose to participate.
- The work must build from where young people are.
- Youth work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in the learning process."



This statement suggests that youth work is about choice, is needs-led and is delivered through partnership. This is the landscape that youth workers inhabit. To have an understanding of ethics in youth work, it's essential to have a firm

grasp of what the youth work role and purpose is, and its distinctiveness.

What Constitutes Good Ethical Practice in Youth Work?

The development of professional ethics is becoming increasingly widespread in occupations that provide services to others. Indeed, although the notion of competent ethical practice has gained considerable momentum in recent years, (largely as a result of complex moral dilemmas in the scientific and medical fields), ethics has now permeated most, if not all, professions including youth work.

To begin to think about your own ideas, you need to consider what constitutes good ethical youth work practice at both individual and organisational levels.

The following ideas have been designed to help you and your organisation reflect on good ethical practice in youth work. The complexity of the territory, however, will inevitably prompt further reading and enquiry.

At an individual level

In trying to scrutinise ethical youth work as a practitioner, the following starting points are useful.

Youth workers need to be able to view their practice through an ethical 'set of lenses'. This means that ethical considerations should always be front stage in relation to their thinking and decision-making processes. Ethics should underpin practice.

Youth workers should be able to reflect systematically on dilemmas and issues they encounter. This could mean being able to account for taking difficult decisions and having sound ethical principles underpinning their thinking, judgement and actions.

Youth workers require to act with integrity and to have clarity around the expectations placed upon them. This includes being clear on agency policies,

agreed working practices, legislation and the organisation's code of conduct. It's also helpful if staff are aware of current youth issues in Scotland for example, citizenship and their place in society. Ethics are rooted in both "time and place" and it's critical that youth workers have a sense of the wider environment in which they operate.

All staff involved in the frontline delivery of youth work services (volunteers, sessional staff and full time staff) require to practice behaviours that re-enforce clear ethical practices. This includes; developing honest and trusting relationships, respecting and reflecting diversity, ensuring that practices put young people at the centre and having a belief that young people can make informed moral decisions and be able to act on them.

Additionally, staff need to demonstrate these desirable behaviours with their peers to amplify the notion of a community of practitioners behaving appropriately within an ethical framework. Youth workers need to feel that they are competent and confident in thinking about ethical situations and dilemmas in their day-to-day practice.

Some first principles in guiding your own practice at an individual level.

- Know yourself well in terms of personal and professional values and be aware of your strengths, limitations and development needs.
- Be able to scrutinise the complexity of situations and take an informed "helicopter view", considering different perspectives, outcomes and consequences of your actions.
- Be able to reflect on difficult situations before arriving at a decision and be able to access and seek support or guidance before making a judgement.
- Include and work with the young person/people in the process of making a decision where ethics are involved.
- Where appropriate, consult with other services and providers where there are ethical considerations and especially where there may be a different emphasis.
- Be aware that you are directly and indirectly modelling behaviour, often around morality, in your interactions with young people.

At an organisational and cultural level

Your organisation has a legal 'duty of care' to help to look after your health, welfare and safety in the workplace. Supervision sessions in youth work are the best place to get support and to explore issues around your own professional development and practice. Often ethical issues can present many challenges and dilemmas for youth workers. A quality supervision process can therefore help workers to consider some of the issues at a deeper level and to reflect on the consequences of a range of courses of action. Supervisors have the opportunity to provide constructive feedback, and to challenge staff to help them explore situations more incisively and from differing perspectives. In addition, supervision should be a "safe place" to explore your own values, attitudes and perhaps underlying prejudices that can interfere with assessing ethical situations with objectivity and integrity. Ethical issues often stir up numerous emotions and feelings too, and it's important that you have an outlet to explore these.

Outwith formal supervision, more experienced staff can play a vital informal role with less experienced staff to help them explore some of the ethical issues that they might face. Again, good ethical practices should be demonstrated throughout the organisation to encourage this.

At a cultural level, day-to-day working practices say a lot about how ethical issues are managed within the workplace. For example, do staff have the opportunity to discuss contemporary ethical issues at staff development events? Do youth workers discuss ethical issues with young people? Do you have an open and supportive climate that builds trust and openness between managers and staff? These all help to cultivate pro ethical practices.

Organisations that are confident around ethical practice tend to be more self assured when it comes to managing risk. Arguably, they are also more likely to embrace innovation and be more able to cope with change.

Individuals, of course, work within organisations and it's the synergy of the two that can lead to very effective and sound ethical practices which support young people.

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE EXPECT?

Ethics and Young People

Youth workers will routinely, and often unwittingly, find themselves involved in wider ethical discussions and dilemmas with young people. It's good practice to encourage such discussion amongst young people whether formally or informally. Education around ethics or ethical citizenship provides many rich opportunities to explore, discuss, and debate contemporary issues that are important to young people or that have wider implications for society.

Discussing ethics also helps young people to develop skills in the logic of argument, how to present compelling evidence, seeing situations from another perspective and so on. Indeed, many of the underpinning skills are readily transferable into other aspects of a young person's life.

Opportunities exist between youth workers and young people to talk together about some of the ethical issues or dilemmas that might exist within their working relationship e.g. confidentiality. It's also possible to adapt some of the language in the Commentary to make it accessible for young people and for them to have a grasp of what they can expect from workers.

Ethics in youth work, by their very nature, involve both youth workers and young people. An on-going dialogue can re-assure young people that workers are adhering to a code of ethical practice rather than being solely guided by their own preferences and intuitions.

Talking with Young People

The Scottish Government supports the provisions of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)¹ and it is in this context that the common principles of Getting it Right for Every Child and Young Person, and other principles and values in working with young people have emerged in policy and practice.

Youth work has a long history of prioritising the rights of young people. Article 12 of the UNCRC states *that children and young people have the right to express their views freely and have their opinions listened to in all matters affecting them.* This is key to embedding the Code in youth work practice.

From this perspective it is necessary to constantly re-assess what young people's expectations are of youth workers. YouthLink Scotland's 'Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work' emphasises the young person and the youth worker are partners in the learning process.

To meet this expectation in the context of ethics, youth workers should engage in exercises with young people to explore their expectations of 'youth workers. In developing the Youth Work Commentary' on the CLD Code of Ethics the following exercises were used with groups of young people, and could be adapted for local use.

Exercise 1: Ideal youth worker

- Draw a full size body outline on flipchart, or wall lining paper. Use a young person or youth worker to trace around (if they are brave enough)!
- Write down key words of what young people expect from their youth worker, for example, values/virtues/behaviour.
- If you're feeling creative, focus on areas of the body to group these, for example, brain, heart, etc.

ALTERNATIVE: Make a montage from newspaper/magazine images and words and then discuss.

Exercise 2: Young people's expectations of youth workers

Adapted from YouthLink Scotland and North Lanarkshire Council's Professional Development Award in youth work, Support Pack:

- Use the following as cards/discussion starters.
 1. They should use language that is easily understood – no jargon.
 2. They turn up for activities in good time.
 3. They do not swear in front of young people.
 4. They are open and honest in their dealings with young people.
 5. They treat all young people equally.
 6. They dress appropriately and are clean and tidy when on duty.
 7. They participate in activities with young people.
 8. They protect young people from harm.
 9. They are friendly towards young people.
 10. They advocate for the rights of young people.

ALTERNATIVE: Do an A-Z of what they expect from their youth worker and rank them in order of importance.

Exercise 3: Youth Worker Virtues

Adapted from Jonathan Roberts: 'Youth Work Ethics', p158

Display some of these virtues around the room. Ask young people to identify which, in their experience, youth workers display.

1. Friendship
2. Integrity
3. Care
4. Accountability
5. Association
6. Equality
7. Listening
8. Overcome discrimination
9. Fairness and justice
10. Put Young People First
11. Value Diversity
12. Don't abuse power
13. Young People make choices
14. Education
15. Safety
16. Improve groups
17. Make it easier for people to take part
18. Tell the truth and check the facts

Exercise 4: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) card exercise

- Use the UNCRC card exercise to test how convergent youth workers' behaviour/ethical practice is with young people's rights.
- Compare and contrast the National Youth Agency (England) Ethical Code and the CLD Code of Ethics.

NYA Ethical Code (summarised)

1. Respect young people.
2. Promote young people's choices
3. Ensure the welfare and safety of young people.
4. Seek social justice for young people
5. Keeping professional boundaries in your work.
6. Be accountable for your work.
7. Achieve competence in your work.
8. Promote ethical practice in your work.

http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/files/CLD_Code_of_Ethics.pdf

Exercise 5: Young people's charter

Develop a charter of young people's expectations of their youth worker or, more generally, youth service provision. This could be based on customer service charters with youth work specific components, or adapted from pre-existing charters: e.g. Protecting Scotland's Children and Young People: The Charter².

Protecting Scotland's Children and Young People: The Charter

- Get to know us
- Speak with us
- Listen to us
- Take us seriously
- Involve us
- Respect our privacy
- Be responsible to us
- Think about our lives as a whole
- Think carefully about how you use information about us
- Put us in touch with the right people
- Use your power to help make things happen when they should
- Help us be safe

Exercise 6: Ethics Commentary Cartoons

- Use the cartoons as a prompt to discuss the ethical dilemmas faced by youth workers when working with young people.
- What do young people in your group make of these cartoons?
- What is/isn't appropriate in their mind?
- This could lead to a simple do and don't list for youth workers composed by the young people.

Young people's perspectives

Some of the exercises above were used with three diverse groups of young people, between the ages of 12-25, in the context of:

- a rural open youth club;
- a faith-based youth group;
- and a young people's advisory service in an urban area.

Despite the diverse nature of these groups there was a surprising overlap in the comments of young people in terms of their expectations of youth workers. These are summarised below.

- Youth workers ought to be fun, fresh, and up to date with young people. They shouldn't be boring or too old in attitude.
 - Refer to ethical clauses 1 and 10.

A salient reminder that at the heart of our ethical practice there should be an attractive, relevant, and engaging relationship with young people.

- Youth workers ought to be able to listen, be supportive, respect privacy and be caring towards young people. They shouldn't be judgmental, condescending, or disrespectful.
 - Refer to ethical clauses 2, 5, 8, and 12.
- Youth workers ought to treat all young people equally and shouldn't have favourites.
 - Refer to ethical clauses 1 and 3
- Youth workers ought to be honourable, trustworthy, and be a good example to young people. They shouldn't be hypocritical or bully.
 - Refer to ethical clauses 6, 7 and 8.

This role-modelling, or mentoring role for youth workers, connects to the expectations of young people in YouthLink Scotland's and MRUK's survey of young people 'Being Young in Scotland'³, 2009.

"When asked what they think makes a great role model for young people, the most chosen characteristics by 11-16 year olds were honest (77%); hard-working (76%); kind/caring (75%) and trustworthy (74%)."

THE YOUTH WORK COMMENTARY

1. Primary Client

Our primary client (our 'constituent') is the community, the young person, or the adult learner with whom we engage.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We place the young person at the centre of our work.
- ➔ We are motivated to serve their best interests.
- ➔ We work from their unique individual starting points.
- ➔ We try to understand life from their perspective.
- ➔ We take account of the individual circumstances of young people and their own unique biographies.

QUESTIONS

- Is the primary constituent in youth work always the individual young person?
- Whose interests should take second place?
- Who gets priority – the individual young person, a group of young people, or the wider community of which young people are part?
- What might putting young people at the centre of practice look like?
- What factors affect our ability to put this into practice?
- How do we balance the young people as primary clients against organisational requirements?
- How does Article 12 of the UNCRC inform this ethic?
- Would you support a group of young people to campaign against something your employer was doing?

RESOURCES

SCCYP (Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Youth People):
<http://www.sccyp.org.uk>

UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child):
<http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

UNCRC – Do the Right Thing: (A response by the Scottish Government to the 2008 concluding observations from the UN Committee on the rights of the Child): <http://bit.ly/hCorqE>

PVG scheme (The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme):
<http://bit.ly/gZzwFA>

Valuing Young People (Principles and connections to support young people achieve their potential. Scottish Government and COSLA): <http://bit.ly/hwKG57>

GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child [also known as "Getting it Right" or GIRFEC] is a national approach to supporting and working with all children and young people in Scotland:
<http://bit.ly/fZ7qZd>

Children First (Children First, previously known as the Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSSPCC):
<http://www.children1st.org.uk/>

*Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: *The Committee recommends that the State party... promote, facilitate and implement, in legislation as well as in practice, within the family, schools, and the community as well as in institutions and in administrative and judicial proceedings, the principle of respect for the views of the child.*



Are your service hours and your own work patterns organised around your employer, or the needs of your community?

2. Social context

Our work is not limited to facilitating change within individuals, but extends to their social context and environment. It recognises the impact of ecological and structural forces on people.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will try to understand young people within the wider social, political and economic context.
- ➔ We will help young people to connect to the wider community and nation.
- ➔ We will work with young people to help them develop an appreciation of other sectors of society with differing views and perspectives.
- ➔ We should view change as a complex process, not solely the responsibility of the individual young person.
- ➔ We realise that barriers for young people are often rooted within wider social attitudes and other institutions in society.

QUESTIONS

- How does poverty and inequality affect the young people you work with?
- How does ageism and stereotyping affect the young people you work with?
- How can you build young people's capacity to challenge structures?
- How can you support young people to facilitate change? Are there limits?
- Are you a 'drive through' practitioner, i.e. do you live outwith the local community? Does this affect how you address this?
- Does your personal social context and biography affect the way you work with young people?
- When did you last chat about issues in the community you work in at the bus stop, shop, street corner, sports centre?
- To what extent is it permissible for youth workers to discuss politics and to politicise young people?
- Do you discuss current Scottish political or social issues with young people?
- To what extent do you help young people think about ethical issues on a wider global scale? Are there any potential pitfalls in having such discussions?

RESOURCES

Young People in Focus: A UK charity, formerly known as Trust for the Study of Adolescence (TSA).
<http://www.studyofadolescence.org.uk/>
The Case Against Adolescence:, Book by Robert Epstein, a longtime researcher and professor and the former editor-in-chief of Psychology Today <http://bit.ly/f6p8vG>
Joseph Rowntree Trust: Charitable trust that funds a large, UK-wide research and development programme. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/>
Action For Children: Action for Children supports and speaks out for the UK's most vulnerable, disadvantaged and neglected children and young people. <http://bit.ly/r5KWn0>
Community Regeneration and Tackling Poverty Learning Network: Scottish Government's Community Regeneration and Tackling Poverty Learning Network <http://bit.ly/gr2yfZ>
NOS Youth Work: Promote equality and young people's interests and welfare: National Occupational Standards for Youth Work – Functional Area 2. <http://bit.ly/eVvUhs>
CLD Competences: 'Know and understand the community in which we work': Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland – Competences. <http://bit.ly/fIMIOU>



What aren't you telling the people you work with?

3. Equity

Our work promotes equality of opportunity and outcome. Our practice is equitable and inclusive.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will be sensitive to the particular needs of individuals.
- ➔ We should actively challenge discriminatory attitudes in our work with young people and in the wider environment.
- ➔ We review our own practices and agency policies to ensure that we are offering an equitable service to young people.
- ➔ We will not shy away from difficult situations or dilemmas regarding equitable and inclusive practice. We will try to find ways forward.
- ➔ We should develop practices to work with the most marginalised and disenfranchised young people in society.
- ➔ We work with other agencies promoting equality and inclusiveness.

QUESTIONS

- Do you treat all young people the same regardless of race, gender, religion, disability, or sexual orientation?
- How do you get beyond the 'labels'?
- Do your personal values and beliefs impact on your practice?
- Do you find it difficult to work with young people who have particular issues or difficulties?
- How many young people do you work with who are dissimilar to you? How do you deal with this?
- Have to taken into account young people's additional support needs?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of targeting services?
- How can you help young people to explore the barriers they face?
- What do you do to challenge institutional barriers that discriminate against young people?



Who's not being heard?

RESOURCES

Key equalities legislation in Scotland: A guide to key equalities legislation in Scotland - Scottish Government's website.

<http://bit.ly/gS2CYn>

GIRFEC: Getting it right for every child (also known as "Getting it right" or GIRFEC) is a national approach to supporting and working with all children and young people in Scotland.

<http://bit.ly/tZ7qZd>

European Youth Portal: The European Youth Portal offers European and national information of interest to young people who are living, learning and working in Europe. The All Different, All Equal campaign and resources focus on equalities.UK 'All different, all equal.' <http://bit.ly/ekXypw>

Videos of Youth Work Equalities Practice: A series of videos featuring good practice in youth work and equalities on YouthLink Scotland's website. <http://bit.ly/dFRXOJ>

Same Difference. Practice Guidance: Online guidance on community learning & development activity with equalities groups. <http://bit.ly/gAIW1>

4. Empowerment

We seek to enhance constituents' capacity for positive action by:

- enabling them to clarify and pursue their chosen priorities;
- building skills of decision-making, engagement and co-operation;
- making power relations open and clear;
- supporting constituents in holding those with power accountable;
- facilitating disengagement from the professional relationship.

Our starting point is that constituents are capable of assessing and acting on their interests.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will be conscious of our position of power in relation to young people.
- ➔ We will give young people increasing levels of autonomy matched to their capacity to manage it.
- ➔ We will help young people to become self determining.
- ➔ We will work with young people to assist them to develop a credible and influential voice.

QUESTIONS

- What are the barriers to young people's participation?
- How do you support 'hard to reach' groups of young people?
- How do you help young people to explore power dynamics and broaden their horizons?
- How can you support them without getting in the way?
- Is the information you provide accessible to young people?
- How do you support young people to make their own decisions?
- What steps do you put in place to manage the expectations of young people?
- Would you facilitate a session with young people knowing that it could fail?



When did you last manipulate to your own ends?

RESOURCES

Engaging Young People in Community Planning: This Advice Note sets out why engagement is so important and looks at the factors which contribute to effective engagement planning and activity. <http://bit.ly/eQ1C4G>

Empowering Young People. Carnegie UK Trust: Empowering Young People The final report of the Carnegie Young People Initiative. <http://bit.ly/eGAYXL>

Dialogue Youth Pack: Dialogue Youth: a partnership between Young Scot and COSLA to embed youth participation across services. <http://bit.ly/ex00Cg>

Better Community Engagement: Resource with guidance on how to improve community engagement. Scottish Executive. <http://bit.ly/envznH>

Hear by Right; Youth Participation: The Hear by Right website is a collection of good practice examples and resources on youth participation. Collated by the National Youth Agency (England). <http://bit.ly/g9YeVg>

Youth Participation: YouthLink Scotland links: Website page on YouthLink Scotland's website providing information and links into youth participation. <http://bit.ly/fnou2G>

5. Duty of Care

We will avoid exposing our constituents to the likelihood of harm or injury.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We should develop clear policies and practices that guide us in managing risk in our work with young people.
- ➔ We will be aware of our statutory obligations in protecting young people from harm or injury.
- ➔ We will operate safe working practices in our work with young people, taking account of related policy and practice guidance in the workplace and, where appropriate, legislation.
- ➔ We realise that the nature of our work involves taking managed risks and that this can lead to very positive developmental outcomes for young people.

QUESTIONS

- Do you avoid risk, manage it, or ignore it?
- What procedures are in place to prevent young people facing injury, harm or abuse through youth work?
- Does the organisation you work with take risks, or is it risk averse?
- How aware are you of relevant current legislation? How does this impact on your practice?
- How do you support colleagues to adhere to this ethic?
- What are the potential limitations for young people when youth workers adhere to this ethic?



What procedures are in place to prevent young people facing injury, harm or abuse through youth work

RESOURCES

- PVG: Disclosure Scotland:** The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme. <http://bit.ly/hmWdeU>
- Children in Scotland Act:** The Children in Scotland Act 1995. <http://bit.ly/hJ529Y>
- Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning:** Report connecting Outdoor Learning to the Curriculum for Excellence and promoting positive risk. <http://bit.ly/edP7rX>
- Play it Safe: SCCYP:** A study of the regulation of outdoor play for children and young people in residential care by Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People. <http://bit.ly/r8eo4F>
- UK Children's Commissioners' Report to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child:** Report focuses on the balance of positive risk against the importance of protecting young people from harm and abuse. <http://bit.ly/gRF98a>
- Health and Safety Executive:** Health and Safety Executive's website with focus on preventing injury and illness at work and promoting safe practices. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>
- CEOP:** Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children. <http://www.ceop.police.uk/>



6. Corruption

We will not seek to advance ourselves, our organisations or others, personally, politically or professionally, at the expense of our constituents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will work towards the best interests of young people rather than be driven by our own self interest.
- ➔ We will not manipulate situations for our own, or our organisation's ends.
- ➔ We will ensure that the interests of young people are at the centre of everything we do.

QUESTIONS

- Do you ever put your own interests before the young people you work with?
- Have you ever used young people as part of a political campaign?
- Has successful work with young people advanced your career? Is that acceptable?
- What are the potential pitfalls in chasing funding sources that change the nature of our work with young people?



Have you ever used young people as part of a political campaign?

RESOURCES

Case example on corruption in Youth Work (p10/11):

<http://bit.ly/ffddsN>.

Online guidance and Commentary on Code of Ethics in Australia freely available from: www.youthcoalition.net Further case examples available in 'Youth Work Ethics' (Chapter 17) Howard Sercombe <http://bit.ly/eUn2Ks>

'Ethical issues in Youth Work' (Chapters 4 and 8): Sarah Banks (ed.): Chapter 4 looks at the ethical dilemmas of resourcing youth work. Chapter 5 addresses ethical issues in faith-based youth work. <http://bit.ly/hUpj3A>

'Seeking out the gift of authenticity.': Heather Smith tackles the difficulty of maintaining authentic relationships with young people. <http://bit.ly/eCwQIH>

7. Transparency

Engagement with the young person, adult learner or community, and the resulting relationship, will be open and truthful. Potential conflicts of interest will be openly declared.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will work with young people in a climate of honesty, trust and respect for the individual.
- ➔ We will be mindful of managing competing interests and expectations of other stakeholders.
- ➔ We will declare any external interests that may conflict or impact on our work at the earliest opportunity.

QUESTIONS

- Do you make it clear to the young people who you work for and what they can reasonably expect from you?
- Do you let other stakeholders have access to young people you work with? Can this present ethical dilemmas?
- Have you knowingly withheld information from young people?
- Is this ever justifiable?
- What are the implications of being 'open and truthful' with young people'?
- Are there boundary issues you need to be aware of? What about your private life?
- Are there situations in your work with young people when it's not possible to be open and truthful?



Are there boundary issues you need to be aware of? What about your private life?

RESOURCES

'Ethical issues in Youth Work': (Chapter 5 – Youth workers as Professionals): Howard Sercombe in Sarah Banks (ed.) <http://bit.ly/hUpj3A> Chapter deals with professional boundaries also available in 'Youth Work Ethics' (Chapter 14) Howard Sercombe <http://bit.ly/eUn2Ks>
 'Youth Work Ethics' (Chapter 6): Jonathan Roberts looks at ethical conduct of youth workers, developed from the National Youth Agency's (England) Ethical Code (2004). <http://bit.ly/hBtxMK>



8. Confidentiality

Information provided by constituents will not be used against them, nor will it be shared with others who may use it against them. Constituents should be made aware of the limits to confidentiality. Until this happens, the presumption of confidentiality should apply. Wherever possible they should be consulted before disclosure.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will respect a young person's right to confidentiality in their working relationships.
- ➔ We will be clear with young people what a confidential relationship involves and the subsequent limitations e.g. if they are at risk or harm we have a clear responsibility to pass information on.
- ➔ We will attempt, where possible, to advise and inform young people of any steps required which breach their confidentiality.
- ➔ We will make effective use of supervision to explore issues around confidentiality when this is appropriate.
- ➔ We will not abuse our position to make information about young people available to others when there is no apparent need.
- ➔ In terms of wider care and protection issues we will work collaboratively with other agencies when required.

QUESTIONS

- What are some of the complexities around managing confidential relationships with young people?
- What difficulties can confidentiality create for the youth worker?
- How do you work out what is in a young person's best interests?
- How do you deal with delicate or sensitive information that you come across from third parties, or unsubstantiated sources.
- How do you get support or seek reassurance that you are managing a confidential situation well?



There's a situation where you're working with an agency whose boundaries of confidentiality are higher or where yours are higher than theirs... What do you do?

RESOURCES

LGBT's Confidentiality Policy: Example of a youth organisation's confidentiality policy, applying equally to members of the National Board, local Advisory Committees, staff and volunteers.

<http://bit.ly/g8Rzie>

Engaging with Hard to Reach Young People: Scottish Government sponsored document providing practical guidelines for professionals engaging with hard to reach young people with a view to reducing offending. <http://bit.ly/flrsMB>

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland: Procedures and guidance on protecting children. Produced by the Scottish Government 2010). <http://bit.ly/dRCnK9>

PVG: Guidance and Training Resources: The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme – guidance and training resources.

<http://bit.ly/gZzwFA>

'Ethical issues in Youth Work' (Chapter 10: Youth Workers as Confidants): Sarah Banks (ed.): Chapter focuses on youth workers as confidants and issues of welfare and trust.

<http://bit.ly/hUpj3A>



9. Co-operation

We will actively seek to cooperate with others in order to secure the best possible outcomes for our constituents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We should have a clear understanding of the essential ingredients in building a partnership approach in working with young people.
- ➔ We will seek to canvass the views of young people to help them articulate their voice to a wider audience on issues that are important to them.
- ➔ We will work collaboratively with other professionals showing due respect for their views, opinions and perspectives.
- ➔ We recognise that joint working has the potential to achieve better results for young people.
- ➔ We will attempt to find a way forward through difficult situations where conflict might be apparent between agencies.
- ➔ We recognise the importance of skills in negotiation, compromise and consensus in moving situations forward.

QUESTIONS

- How well do you work as an extended part of the team within your service?
- What do you think are the key factors that enable related professions to work effectively together?
- What are the key barriers that get in the way?
- How do you manage conflict, differing views, and value systems, in your relationships with other professionals?
- What are the key differences in practice interventions between various professions that work with young people?
- How do you think youth workers are perceived by other agencies?
- What are some of the central skills, qualities and personal/professional attributes that promote co-operative working practices?



If other organisations aren't taking you seriously, how do you deal with that?

RESOURCES

National Standards for Community Engagement: The National Standards for Community Engagement set out best practice guidance for engagement between communities and public agencies. Developed by the Scottish Community Development Centre. <http://bit.ly/jicHsUu>

CLD Competence: 'Develop and Support Collaborative Working': Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland – Competences. <http://bit.ly/gqYWJ5>

NOS in Youth Work. Functional Area 3: Work with others: National Occupational Standards for Youth Work – Functional Area 3. <http://bit.ly/eVvUhS>



10. Professional Development

We will work reflectively, identifying and using the information, resources, skills, knowledge and practices needed to improve our capacity to meet our obligations to constituents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will take responsibility for our own professional development and future training needs.
- ➔ We will try to be reflective practitioners and take account of the views of young people and stakeholders we work with.
- ➔ We will continually develop our skills, knowledge base and values to better serve the young people we work with.
- ➔ We will take account of developments in new media and communication tools in our work with young people and will undertake to refresh our skills in this area regularly.
- ➔ We will take account of up-to-date research to validate the work we do and add credibility.

QUESTIONS

- How are you encouraged to reflect on your practice/direct interventions with young people?
- To what extent are you open about your own mistakes and see them as an opportunity for learning?
- To what extent do you feel that you are part of a professional community with the same underpinning values and beliefs about young people?
- To what extent are you committed to improving your practice in your work with young people?
- To what extent do you drive your own professional development and take responsibility for identifying your future learning?



You are on a board or committee and the financial documents are produced – Do you fully understand them? What would you do if you didn't?

RESOURCES

Donald Schon: The Reflective Practitioner: *Infed article:* Article on the Informal Education website focussing on Donald Schon: author of the Reflective Practitioner a seminal work on using reflection within a professional context. <http://bit.ly/huSPKH>

CLD Standards Council: A learning Culture for the Community Learning and Development Sector in Scotland (CPD Strategy): The Continuing Professional Development Strategy for all those practising in Community Learning and Development. <http://bit.ly/elkEbv>

Principles and Practice of Informal Education (Richardson & Wolfe; eds.) (Ch. 19): A number of authors outlining the basis of informal education. <http://bit.ly/hhIT7h>

Working with Young People (Harrison & Wise) (Ch. 16.): General introduction to work with young people from the Open University. <http://amzn.to/erAZrG>

11. Self-awareness

We should be conscious of our own values and interests, and approach cultural and other difference respectfully. While the need to challenge may arise, we must try first to understand.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We should have a well developed sense of our personal and professional values and be aware of potential conflicts.
- ➔ We should be sensitive to the differing needs of others and be respectful of the values and beliefs that they might hold.
- ➔ We should know our own limitations and be prepared to seek help and guidance when required.
- ➔ We should try to become aware of our 'blind spots'.
- ➔ We should encourage feedback from others, e.g. young people and colleagues, to help us be more self-aware.
- ➔ We should be prepared to ask ourselves difficult questions about our own working practices with young people.

QUESTIONS

- What strategies do you use to help you to become more self aware especially in relation to your practice?
- How well do you respond to critical feedback from young people or colleagues?
- To what extent are you open to change regarding your practice with young people?
- How well do you know your strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you get feedback on your "blind spots"?
- Are you aware of your own personal values and how they interface with the professional values of youth work?



Is there a gap between what you say publicly about your work and what you know to be true?

RESOURCES

Donald Schon and the Reflective Practitioner: Infed article: Article on the Informal Education website focussing on Donald Schon: author of the Reflective Practitioner a seminal work on using reflection within a professional context.

<http://bit.ly/huSPKH>

Belbin's Team Roles: Research and resources on the importance of having a balanced team by Dr Meredith Belbin. Self-Awareness is a key component on knowing how you fit with others. <http://www.belbin.com/>

Myers and Briggs: The purpose of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) personality inventory is to make the theory of psychological types described by C. G. Jung personally applicable. <http://www.myersbriggs.org/>

Learning Styles: Introductory website to a range of learning styles and learning styles theories. <http://bit.ly/h3o3Wz>



12. Boundaries

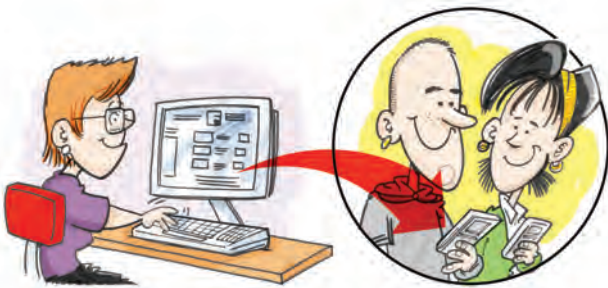
The CLD relationship is a professional relationship, intentionally limited to protect the constituent and the purpose of our work. These limits should be clarified, established and maintained. The relationship with an individual constituent is based on trust and is not available for sexual engagement.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We will have a clear understanding of the responsibilities associated with a relationship built on trust.
- ➔ We will be aware of the need to operate within a professional relationship, whichever context we are in, and what that means in terms of behaviour.
- ➔ We will actively involve colleagues in discussions about appropriate boundaries to ensure that there is consistency of approach in the agency.
- ➔ We will use supervision as an opportunity to explore boundary issues in our work with young people.

QUESTIONS

- What criteria and frames of reference do you use to determine where the boundaries are in your work with young people?
- Specifically, what are the kinds of things that you might say or do that step over the boundaries in your work with young people?
- Should work with young people involve pushing the boundaries e.g. taking measured risks? What criteria do you use to help you make those judgements?
- In hindsight, have you found yourself in situations where the boundaries have become blurred?



What are the kinds of things that you might say or do that step over the boundaries in your work with young people?

RESOURCES

Young People and Social Networking: Guidance on working with young people and the use of social networking by Young Scot, Fujitsu, and YouthLink Scotland. <http://bit.ly/dJSkwc>

'Youth Work Ethics' (Chapter 14) Howard Sercombe: Chapter on 'Professional boundaries and dual relationships'. <http://bit.ly/eUn2Ks>

'Relationships' Mark Smith: An article on the Informal Education website on 'relationships' within education and youth work, by Mark Smith. <http://bit.ly/flxxmE>



13. Self-care

CLD practice should be consistent with preserving the health of CLD workers

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ➔ We should be aware of our role, the expectations placed upon us and our limitations.
- ➔ We should assume some degree of responsibility for our own health and well-being within the workplace.
- ➔ We should know when to ask for help and have a clear established system in place to seek support if required.
- ➔ We should work co-operatively with our employers and take a preventative and proactive approach regarding our health and well-being.
- ➔ We should support and encourage a wider workplace culture that promotes health and well-being at work.

QUESTIONS

- What are the characteristics of an organisational culture that promotes the health and well-being of staff?
- What are the triggers in the workplace for stress, anxiety and burnout?
- How do you manage competing expectations and the resultant pressures?
- What steps can you take to “look after yourself” in the workplace?
- What are the responsibilities of line managers in relation to staff support?
- What can you do to support colleagues at work regarding their own health and well-being?



Workplace triggers for stress, anxiety and well-being?

RESOURCES

Centre for Confidence and Well-Being: Scottish based centre with research and resources around positive psychology. <http://bit.ly/g8GSH9>

Health at work: UK Government website with information on health at work. <http://bit.ly/fSSvm>

Law at work: Legal advice and information on employment law, human resources, and health & safety. <http://bit.ly/eWQVCu>

Trade Union's Council: Information on a range of unions, all of which offer guidance around self-care and further support when the health of workers is infringed. <http://www.tuc.org.uk/>

Healthy working lives. Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives – information and guidance website. <http://healthyworkinglives.com>

THE YOUTH WORK COMMENTARY – THE CODE IN PRACTICE

FIRST SCENARIO

Imagine you're managing a voluntary youth project in a rural area. Recently you've become aware that a lot of chat is taking place between the young people from the project online through social networking sites. You are unfamiliar with the technology, but through conversation with the young people, realise that a youth worker who has recently joined the team has been chatting with the young people online between youth club meetings. One of the other youth workers suggest that the worker's online profile is too revealing about their personal life, and may adversely affect young people's view of them. Having investigated this yourself you are concerned that there are some boundary issues to address, but the new youth worker can't see what the problem is, and has regularly used social networking as a tool for work with young people. What would you do when faced with this scenario?

Ethical Links: How might the following Ethics clauses inform your response?

- Boundaries
- Transparency
- Duty of care
- Self-awareness
- Self-care

Questions

- What are your views on young people and youth workers communicating on social networking sites? When is this acceptable and when is it unacceptable?
- What guidance would you offer an inexperienced member of the team in dealing with issues around social networking sites?
- Are boundaries shifting because of technological and cultural changes, and what does this mean for the privacy of the youth worker? Where do you think the boundaries lie in a situation like this?

- What impact might the youth worker's lack of privacy boundaries have on both the young people and their own future professional practice?
- How do you strike the balance between transparency and openness with the young people and self-care for the youth worker?

What if...

- The new youth worker had only recently been part of the young people's peer group?
- Your worker's online profile is 'respectable', does that remove the dilemmas?
- The setting for the project is urban not rural?
- The worker is also a good friend of the parents of the young people?

SECOND SCENARIO

You're a senior youth worker from a voluntary project commissioned by the local authority, in partnership with an Outdoor Education Team, to work with a mixed BME group of young people, who have been excluded from school. The team-building activity involves abseiling which most of the young people have not attempted before. During the course of the activity one young person who is struggling to learn the technique insults another young person after being goaded. You believe that the insult is racially motivated but can't be sure. Two youth work volunteers from a BME background attempt to laugh the situation off, but the outdoor education worker looks to you for decisive action.

What do you do, when faced with this scenario

Ethical Links: How might the following Ethics clauses inform your response?

- Equity
- Social context
- Empowerment
- Co-operation
- Self-awareness
- Duty of care

Questions

- What is your immediate response? How would you tackle the situation at the time?
- What outcome/resolution do you think would be acceptable?
- How would you deal with the situation after the event?
- How aware are you of your own social context and how this might skew your response? What issues does a situation like this stir up for you?
- What are some of the key differences in the practices of the various professions that work with young people? How aware are you of these?
- How can you empower the young people to find their own solutions to conflict?

What if...

- The volunteer workers are more aware of the social context in which you are working? Does this change how you act?
- The Outdoor Education worker has more knowledge, experience and capacity to challenge the behaviour?
- It's unclear if the Outdoor Education worker or the senior youth worker is in charge? Should this affect how you act?
- A pre-trip risk assessment has been completed. Is this relevant? Does it only cover standard health and safety risks, or have wider ethical and partnership working scenarios been considered?

THIRD SCENARIO

Michael is a part time sessional youth worker, based in a small village in the north of Scotland. He is 20, and lives in the community. He works around 6hrs a week and is popular with the young people who attend. The young people identify with him because he is close to their age, from the local community and understands some of the frustrations and issues that are around for them. Because Michael knows a lot of the young people in "dual contexts" e.g. at the club and in the community, he is feeling that the edges are becoming a bit blurred in terms of how relationships have developed and some confusion of role exists for him in his youth work job. For example, some of the young people see

Michael as more of a friend than a youth worker. This is causing some anxiety and tension for him i.e. being clear of his own personal boundaries without jeopardising the positive relationships that he has developed. Additionally, he has become privy to a range of personal and confidential information about some of the members of the youth club and again this is compromising his position and causing tension in his relationships with members.

Ethical Links:

- Professional development
- Boundaries
- Confidentiality
- Social context
- Primary client
- Self-awareness
- Transparency

Questions

- How would you approach the supervision session with Michael? What prompts/questions would you ask to help Michael to explore the issues?
- What would you want the outcome to be after the supervision session? How might this differ from Michael's preferred outcome?
- What advice/suggestions would you offer Michael to manage this situation? What skills might Michael need to develop if he is to self-manage this situation better in the future?
- As Michael's line manager, what on-going responsibilities do you have to support this situation? How will you monitor the situation?

What if...

- You were a colleague of Michael's rather than his line manager? Would this change your approach, would you still feel ethically obliged to act?
- Michael was older and the dual context he shares is with the young people's parents rather than the young people? Does this change how you support Michael? How does the guidance around confidentiality and young person as the primary client inform what Michael does next?

WHAT NEXT?

This Commentary is a first step to exploring the Code of Ethics in youth work practice but, as that practice is ever-changing, it is likely that, over time, the Code and Commentary will change too.

So rather than give specific guidance which will date in the light of current and future developments, the Commentary explores questions and offers signposts. It is intended as a starting point and there is much more to do to embed the code of Ethics in youth work training and practice. Suggestions include:

- The development of a comprehensive training package for youth work practitioners on applying the Code of Ethics.
- A complementary training package for youth work managers and academics on applying the code at organisational level and within training programmes.
- The development of an online community (blogs, social networking) to continue the discussion.

Feedback from the consultation process will also be reported to the Standards Council, including the issues below.

- Feedback generally positive about the importance of a code of ethics.
- There is a need for the Standards Council, key agencies and training bodies to raise the profile of ethics in policy and practice.
- Need clarification on the connection to the proposed registration process.
- There needs to be clarification of, and a coming together of, the Code with the CLD Competences and Values and the National Occupational Standards.
- The Code of Ethics must be embedded into professional training programmes.

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