

**Dalmarnock Youth Project**

**Dalmarnock  
Youth Project  
Glasgow**

**Background**

The Dalmarnock Youth Project (DYP) is a project based in the east end of Glasgow catering for young people of secondary school age. This project is run by a community based voluntary organization run by a local management committee.

Before the anti-sectarianism project was set up there were problems in the area with inappropriate language, violence, sectarian songs, graffiti and sectarian-linked clothing being worn by the young people attending the DYP. The staff in the group felt that if they challenged it by simply laying down rules that this was not acceptable and rules would be rejected. But if they tackled the issue and the young people took ownership then the 'rules' would be accepted.

The anti-sectarianism project grew from this desire to make sectarianism unacceptable within the DYP. In particular it stemmed from discussions during an art project creating murals looking at the past, present and future of Dalmarnock. One of the themes in the murals showed a green and white hand shaking hands with a blue and red hand; this a symbol of peace in Dalmarnock.

### Dalmarnock Youth Project

#### **The aims**

- Empowering young people to take responsibility for their actions on their terms
- Supporting young people to have a voice to tackle the issue of sectarianism
- Challenging young people to be prepared to tackle issues where their parents won't
- Setting a benchmark in the project regarding sectarian language and behaviour

#### **The project**

DYP invited their young people to participate in the project. 19 people volunteered and took part in the induction. This group contained a cross-section of young people from the area including some of the dominant figures.

#### **The Project – what they did**

##### **Summer 2000 Arts Project**

This project started the idea for the anti-sectarianism project. The young people took part in a number of workshops and discussions on history, bigotry and sectarianism before embarking on the art work. They produced a number of murals examining the past, present and future of Dalmarnock. The young people were interested in gangs, territorial issues etc. therefore they decided to create a project examining these themes.

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### The programme

Day	Morning activity	Afternoon activity
Day 1	Introduction and ground rules, questionnaire workshop, drama workshop	
Day 2	The court of judgement role-play exercise	
Day 3	St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art – tour and education for mutual understanding	7:84 Theatre Company – drama workshop. 'In another person's shoes – what it feels like to be threatened.'
Day 4	Drama workshop and video – The Betty Springfield Show	
Day 5	Ibrox Stadium – stadium tour, video and interviews	Celtic Park - stadium tour, video and interviews
Day 6	Community Vox Pop video – talked to local groups and agencies (many were not prepared to discuss this issue with the DYP)	Debate with invited guests (politicians, voluntary organisations, the media, local people etc.)
Day 7	Video and Drama workshops	
Day 8	Project evaluation	
Follow Up	<p><b>Reflection on project and preparation for community presentation</b> – considered 'What is sectarianism to you?' and 'What is bigotry?' Compared how their views had changed since the start of the project. There was a lot of change. At the start they saw sectarianism as rivalry between football supporters and had no thought to the consequences of it – they are just fashion accessories. The young people's perceptions of sectarianism had changed by the end of the project. They had an understanding of why certain things can be offensive. They also had more recognition of the level of violence involved – they were most shocked regarding this aspect.</p> <p><b>Community presentation</b> to parents, young people not involved in the project and agencies involved in the project (approx. 50 people). The presentation explained what the project was about and what the young people had got out of it.</p>	
Additional Activities	<p><b>Wall of Shame</b> – collection of newspaper clippings about sectarianism, discrimination, territorialism, prejudice and copies of all letters received</p> <p><b>Letter writing</b> – the young people wrote to a variety of journalists and in particular sports papers / magazines. They were very disappointed at the lack of cooperation from the sports media and a general lack of response from newspaper editors and owners.</p> <p><b>Blue Skies Thinking</b> – everyone had to decide on a question then put it in a pot and the young people discussed it. There were lots of questions on 'Does sectarianism affect your social life?'</p>	

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#### The outcomes

- They have arrived at a compromise that they can wear football colours in the project and nowhere else although nothing is worn that is offensive to others, i.e. to take away the sectarian imagery.
- When comments are made that are inappropriate, they are challenged, even by their peers. Positive influence is passed down through friends and family.
- It has made an immense difference to the project in terms of what is acceptable / unacceptable.
- It has created a culture of tolerance. It changed the perspective of adults involved with and in contact with the project.
- It raised the profile of the organisation which helps with funding.
- Donald Gorrie MSP contacted the project when putting a Member's Bill through the Scottish Parliament. In summer 2003 they met up with him and talked about their project – why it was useful and how it could help others.

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#### The future

- The youth workers occasionally think about repeating the project, especially for young people.
- There was a follow-up project on challenging territorialism in the East End which involved the Social Inclusion Partnership, the police, DYP, drama groups and other organisations. The DYP project information was used to create guidelines on how this project would work. It culminated in a production at the Tramway Theatre.
- The ethos of the project remains within the DYP with the concepts passed on through families. The DYP still watch the video occasionally and the posters and photos are still up on the walls to maintain the ethos that sectarianism is unacceptable.

#### Good Practice Learning Points

- **Inclusive approach** – the project was open to everyone to participate, and made ongoing efforts to engage with and include the community in the project, e.g. Community Vox Pop and Community Presentation evening.
- **Holistic approach** – the project did not tackle sectarianism on its own but looked at it as part of the wider issue of discrimination, prejudice and territorialism.
- **Ongoing approach** – the DYP has continued working on this issue since the project finished. It has continued to promote the ethos that sectarianism and other forms of discrimination will not be tolerated. It has also participated in/supported a number of other anti-sectarian projects.

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