Contents

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CC & JD

Introduction

We wrote this book because of the difficulties that we as teachers had in accessing suitable material for our youth work students. Of course there is a wealth of information available online, from the youth work libraries and information centres; the problem is not that information is not out there, but that it did not exist in one accessible textbook. This book brings together for the first time material on youth and youth work with a specifically Irish focus aimed primarily at FETAC Level 5. It would also be useful as a basic reference at other levels of education and for youth work services for volunteers and trainees alike.

A practical rather than a theoretical approach is taken in the presentation of the material. Activities, tasks, 'think abouts' and scenarios are interspersed at relevant stages throughout the text and are designed to provoke thinking, learning and discussion as appropriate. Furthermore, some of the activities are designed to be used as assignments and projects, while others may be adapted for use in youth work services.

The material presented here is more than sufficient for the study of the mandatory components in the Youth Work programme at FETAC Level 5. In addition, resources are signposted at the end of each section so that the learner who wishes to explore further can do so in a structured fashion. These resources are not exhaustive but are readily accessible on the Internet, in libraries and bookshops. It should also be noted that although numerous website addresses are given, they do change over time, but can usually be found under archived material. The role of the youth worker is covered in a general way in Section 2, and there is a focus throughout the book on the role of the youth worker or implications for the youth service as relevant to specific areas.

There are a few sections that go beyond the requirements of the Level 5 programmes. One is the section on child protection, which is covered in considerable detail as it is essential that all those involved with children and young people be knowledgeable and confident in this area. Another is that of equality and diversity. All of the material presented is underpinned by a commitment to principles of equality, which we believe should be intrinsic to all youth work. In this section in particular, the learner is required to be 'active' in their own learning. We also include a small section on peer education, as this approach is pivotal to empowering young people and in youth work practice.

Finally, in writing this book we are bringing together in one place information that will be useful and relevant for all those interested in youth work and as a sound starting point for further studies.

1

Young People and Society

Adolescence and the Theories of Adolescence

Young People in Families and Family Law

Education

Employment

Youth and Justice

Youth Culture, Subculture and Globalisation

This section aims to give a broad overview of the main factors influencing young people's lives in Ireland today. A basic understanding of the period of adolescence is of course essential, but every adolescent grows up in the context of different family, community, social frameworks and cultural influences. A number of these contexts are identified, defined, explored and explained to a degree that will enable the learner to explore these areas in greater depth and to explore other areas not covered here. Descriptions and details of legislation and services are given in the understanding that these are constantly changing, but the resources and guidance provided should facilitate the update of facts and figures.

Adolescence and the Theories of Adolescence

An understanding of the phase of human growth and development known as adolescence is crucial to an examination of the development of youth work approaches and youth services. The purpose of this chapter is to outline basic facts, core theories and relevant issues in relation to puberty and adolescence. Ideas relating to adolescence and adolescent development change over time and across cultures, and these considerations will also be examined. Finally the chapter provides a bibliography to outline further material for a comprehensive and in-depth study of the area.

The meaning of adolescence

According to the World Health Organisation, the period of adolescence occurs during the second decade of a person's life (10–20 years) and can be defined as the transitional stage during which a juvenile matures into an adult. This transition involves biological, social and psychological changes.

The term 'teenager' is often used in Irish society as synonymous with adolescence, but in fact, the term refers to young people between the ages of thirteen and nineteen years. The terms ***tweenie*** or ***pre-teen*** have appeared in recent times and refer to the pre-adolescent period from eight or nine up to twelve years. It seems

that the terms *teenager* and *tweenie* have appeared primarily in the western world initially in the domains of marketing and advertising.

Physical development

Sexual maturation: The pattern of physical development in adolescence appears to be fairly consistent but individual development varies. The term 'puberty' is commonly used when referring to physical development. Growth spurts are generally the most obvious sign that puberty has begun, but many changes will have happened prior to this.

The word 'menarche' refers to the onset of menstruation. In contemporary Western society menarche occurs for 95% of girls between the ages of 12 and 15 years. Typically the first steps of puberty will have begun two years prior to this. The age of onset of menstruation is influenced by diet and health. In 1840 the average age was 17 years whereas today it is usually 12–13 years. Periods may be irregular for a time and fertility delayed after starting menstruation but it is possible to become pregnant immediately. It is this irregularity that probably gives rise to the commonly-held belief that younger adolescent girls may not become pregnant easily.

Table 1.1.1 Indicators of adolescent sexual maturation

Girls	**Boys**
Initial growth spurt Breast development Appearance of pubic hair Appearance of underarm and body hair Vaginal discharge Development of underarm sweat glands Menstruation	Scrotum darkens and testes descend Appearance of pubic hair Penis enlarges Growth spurt Ejaculation Appearance of underarm and body hair Appearance of facial hair Development of underarm sweat glands Deepening of voice and appearance of Adam's apple

Spermarche is the boys' equivalent of menarche, namely when they first ejaculate and become capable of reproduction. The average age of fertility for boys in the Western world is thought to be somewhere in the region of 12–14 years. The outward signs of puberty such as beard growth and voice deepening occurs quite late in the sequence of sexual development.

Behind all these changes is an influx of hormones and the following table broadly outlines the relationship between hormones and development.

Table 1.1.2 Major hormones that contribute to physical growth and development

Gland	Hormone	Aspects of Growth
Thyroid	Thyroxine	Brain development and rate of growth
Adrenal	Adrenal androgen	Development of secondary sex characteristics in girls such as growth spurts and pubic hair
Testes (boys)	Testosterone	Triggers sequence of changes in sex characteristics in boys
Ovaries (girls)	Oestrogen (estradiol)	Development of menstrual cycle and breasts
Pituitary	General growth hormone	Rate of growth and signals other glands

The skeleton: Adolescents may grow 3–6 inches over a number of years. Most girls grow until approximately 16 years; boys continue to grow until 18 years. Some development is uneven (hands and feet grow first, followed by arms and legs) so adolescents may appear gangly and out of proportion. Facial bones also change, with the jaws moving forward and forehead becoming more prominent, resulting in a bony, angular appearance.

Girls continue to develop ahead of boys in the area of fine motor development and joint development; boys do not catch up until they are around 18 years old.

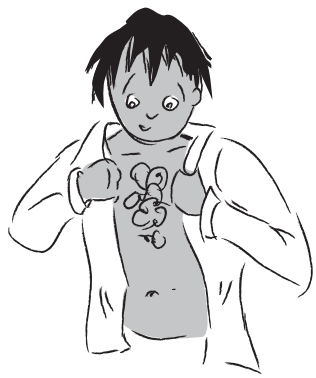
Muscular system: Both boys and girls become stronger as their muscles become denser and thicker, but boys grow much stronger.

In adult men, about 40% of total body mass is muscle and the percentage of fat drops to about 14%.

In adult women, about 24% of body mass is constituted by muscle and fat rises to about 24%.

Heart and lungs: Both increase in size during these years, and the heart rate drops. Changes in both are more marked in boys.

A decrease in body fat, an increase in muscle mass and a lower heart rate all facilitate greater endurance and strength in boys as compared to girls.



Cognitive development and the brain

Growth occurs in parts of the brain that control spatial perception and motor function between the ages of 13 and 15 years and again around the age of 17; at these times more energy is also produced and used in the brain.

The brain also develops in ways that enable young people to think in increasingly abstract terms, allowing for philosophical thought and inventiveness, for example.

Another growth spurt occurs around 17 years, which may facilitate the development of logic and planning functions.

Younger adolescents differ from both children and older adolescents in terms of their brain abilities. As a result, their approaches to life and problem-solving also differ.

As the child develops into an adult, the growth of the brain facilitates a major shift in the young person's ability to think, marking a change from concrete to abstract thought. Abstract thought is based on general concepts and ideas, and not on any particular real person, thing or situation.

- adolescents can think about things that are possible but not observable
- adolescents can plan ahead

- adolescents can think through theories and hypotheses and test them out in their head
- adolescents can think about their own thought processes – this is called metacognition.

Social and emotional development

Social development includes the forming of relationships, interacting with others, the development of a sense of identity and development of life skills

Emotional development includes the expression of feelings and the development of attachment, self-esteem, self-confidence, autonomy and responsibility

The expectations that the young person has of themselves along with the expectations that people around them have of them are very important for psychological adjustment in adolescence. These expectations are definitely influenced by the society and culture in which the young person is growing up. In short, adolescence begins in biology but ends in culture. What is culture? Culture is a set of beliefs, customs and patterns of behaviour that are distinctive to a particular group. Your status as an adolescent, child, woman and man is defined by the society in which you live and the period in history during which you live.

In some cultures the stage of development of adolescence is not recognised at all. In such cultures, a child becomes an adult when they have acquired the knowledge and skills to ensure their survival and that of their dependents.

Think about...

…the life of a 14-year-old girl in California in comparison to a 14-year-old in the Masai tribe in Kenya. The first is at school, dancing, dating, playing games, but primarily her responsibility is to engage in studying to enable her to get a job and support herself financially in maybe ten years' time. The girl in Kenya has a child and is working within her husband's family under the eye of her mother-in-law, her status equal to other young women in her tribe.

Activity:

Find out about the lives and experiences of adolescents in other cultures. Find out about various rites of passage.

The transition to adulthood is marked in most societies, in some more clearly than others. There are innumerable formal *rites of passage* such as endurance tests, trance dancing, killing your first large animal or religious rites such as confirmation and bar mitzvah. In many cultures roles and expectations are clearly marked out for the young person.

No single common rite or clear expectation exists across all Western societies. Entering secondary school, getting a job, getting a driver's license, voting rights and doing military service are all markers in one way or another. But if a group of young people in Ireland was asked when they would consider themselves to have become adults, you would get a variety of answers.

The transition to adulthood is ambiguous, so it could be said that many of our young people live in a sort of limbo. Peer pressure is often (although not always) viewed as negative in our society, but in others it tends to be viewed as positive, giving courage and strength to the young person to go through with a particular task or rite of passage.

Because of cognitive changes and the ability to think increasingly in the abstract, the young person's self concept becomes much more complex. Whereas the younger child will focus more on the physical and quantifiable, e.g. 'I came first in the race, so I am a good athlete', the adolescent will focus on more abstract or ideological traits about humanness, beliefs, psychological characteristics, morals and values, e.g. 'Why is it so important to win a race anyway?'

They will even begin to think about thinking itself!

Understandably, self-concepts predict behaviour: if a young person thinks they are good at something, they will persevere with it; if a young person sees themselves as unlovable, they will be less likely to persevere with relationships; young people from relatively happy and stable family backgrounds seem to form longer-lasting relationships at a younger age. Obviously, lots of other variables are at play also.

Girls seem to be more objective about what they are good at and how they compare with others than boys, who seem to attend more to internal, self-defined standards. Perhaps this is a cultural influence.

Theories of adolescent development

Erik Erikson (1902–1994): Psychosocial Theory

Erikson posits a stage model of human growth and development of which adolescence is the fifth stage. According to Erikson, the central crisis in adolescence is 'identity versus role confusion'. The child's sense of identity (reached through earlier stages of secure attachment and sense of autonomy) becomes challenged amid physical growth, hormonal changes and a growing awareness of future adult roles and responsibilities. A new identity must be formed so that the individual can adapt to their various adult roles, including occupational, sexual, social, religious and other roles. At this point the individual enters what Erikson calls a 'psychological moratorium'. Basically, the person in adolescence goes through a period when they explore and test out various ideas, beliefs and goals. Some of these will directly contradict those of their parents, and at this stage the peer group becomes an important source of support and new ideas. The peer group can give a sense of security and become to some extent be the young person's buffer against emotional distress, but in the end, each adolescent must achieve an integrated self with his own pattern of beliefs, occupational goals and relationships. Adolescents who do not successfully negotiate a mature adult identity suffer what Erikson terms 'identity confusion'. Identity confusion occurs when the young person is unable to negotiate a clear identity for themselves from the profusion of choices available.

David Elkind (1931–): Theory of Adolescent Egocentrism

David Elkind introduced the concepts of adolescent egocentrism, imaginary audience and personal fable.

Adolescent egocentrism refers to the heightened self-consciousness and self-absorption that is characteristic of the young adolescent. The term 'imaginary audience' seeks to describe the phenomenon whereby adolescents believe that all eyes are on them, all comments are about them and everyone is interested in them, whether the attention is positive or negative. A young person tends to care deeply about what this imaginary audience thinks of them. The 'personal fable' is a name for the adolescent belief that 'it won't happen to me' and can help to explain irrational and risk-taking behaviours; it can also help to explain the belief that 'no one understands me'.

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927–1987): Theory of Moral Development

Lawrence Kohlberg focussed on the moral development of the adolescent, and his theory posits three broad stages: preconventional, conventional and postconventional.

The early adolescent may have a heightened sense of fairness and sharing (preconventional reasoning). On reaching the conventional reasoning stage, the young person is now paying more attention to wider issues and is not just concerned with feeling good personally. Characteristic of this stage is a respect for authority and a belief in doing one's duty. Postconventional moral reasoning is concerned with broad moral perspectives and universal principles, with which the person is able to consider conflicting perspectives and different standpoints and make judgements based on them. For example, human life is sacred and the taking of life is wrong, but there are times when this is not so clear cut such as when considering euthanasia or fighting to defend one's community in wartime. Relationships are very influential in moral reasoning. A sense of fairness and responding to someone in need are also influential.

Anti-social behaviour and moral reasoning:

Prosocial behaviour co-relates to higher moral reasoning and anti-social behaviour to the lowest levels of moral reasoning.

Young people who engage in anti-social behaviours are thought to have immature moral reasoning. They have difficulty seeing a situation from someone else's perspective. Obviously, family and social issues are huge influential factors here. Those with the most disturbing patterns of delinquency have exhibited worrying behaviour much earlier in their lives, usually as a result of their own stressful and complex experiences. Efforts to influence their behaviour must focus on a variety of social and emotional contexts.

James E. Marcia (1902–): Psychosocial Development

Marcia's Theory of Identity Achievement is based on Erikson's ideas. He suggests that adolescence has two key parts:

- Crisis
- Commitment

Four identity statuses are possible:

- *Identity diffusion*: no crisis, no commitment. At this stage the individual is just not interested in exploring alternatives. This is primarily associated with the younger adolescent who continues to accept parental values, beliefs and guidance.
- *Foreclosure*: the person accepts parentally or culturally defined commitment without crisis. This is characteristic of a young adult who accepts their parent's choices for them unquestioningly.
- *Moratorium*: crisis is ongoing and no commitment has been made; typical of many contemporary Western middle-class young people.
- *Identity achievement*: crisis is over and person has committed to an identity. Life choices have been made about career, religion, marriage, etc.

According to Marcia, to achieve a fully mature identity the young person must have examined his/her values and goals and have reached a firm commitment.

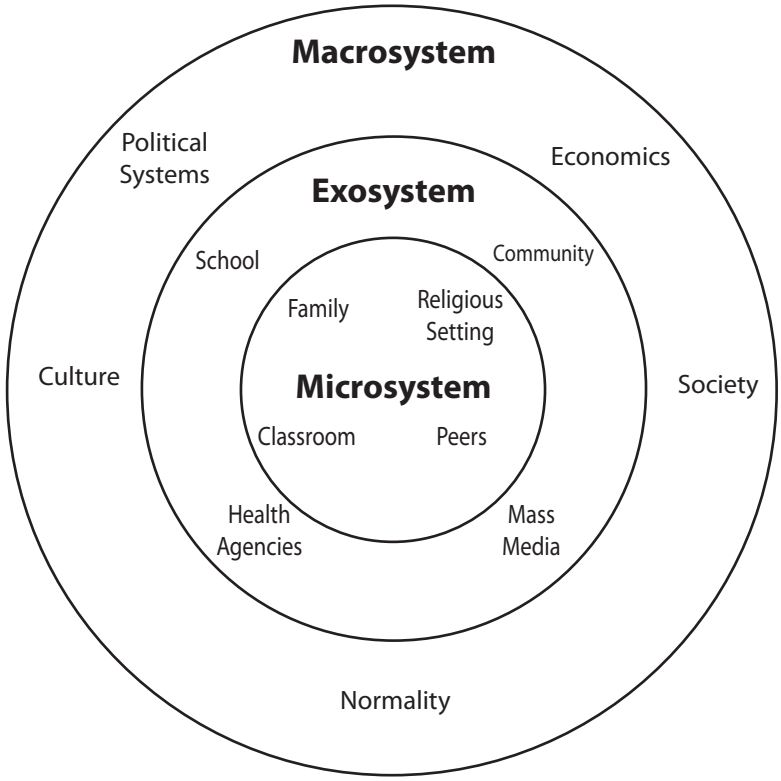
Jean Piaget (1896–1980): Cognitive Stage Theory of Development

Piaget focuses on the intellectual processes that occur in developmental stages; these include *Sensorimotor*, *Preoperational*, *Concrete Operational* and *Formal Operational*.

Generally speaking, the young adolescent is moving through the Formal Operational stage, which begins around the age of eleven years. During this stage thought becomes more abstract, incorporating the principles of formal logic. Thinking becomes less tied to concrete reality. Formal Operational thought can be abstract, idealistic and logical.

Abstract thinking is probably easiest understood by comparing it to concrete thinking. A concrete thinker will look at a picture of the Statue of Liberty and see a statue of a woman with a torch in her hand; an abstract thinker may think of freedom and justice. Formal operational thought is also logical or as Piaget called it 'hyper-deductive reasoning' when a young person begins to work things out systematically and scientifically. The development of abstract thinking allows an adolescent to begin to think about their own thoughts and to become idealistic, i.e. to develop metacognitive understanding.

Urie Bronfebrenner (1917–2005): The Ecological Systems Theory



This is an ecological, holistic model that looks at adolescence in the context in which the adolescent lives. The Ecological Systems Theory states that the world in which adolescents live has a huge impact on young people and vice versa. They are influenced by

- the times that they live in (chronosystem);
- the general social, economic, political and cultural aspects of the society in which they live (macrosystem)
- the wider community, mass media, government agencies, church (exosystem)
- the family, school religion, friends (microsystems)
- and finally, by the relationship between two or more of these systems (mesosystem)

Scenario:

A group of young people attending a youth service has an assignment due for assessment as part of a FETAC course. The teacher does not give out the next assignment until the current one is completed.

Sam and Joseph have worked steadily through the last few weeks and have their assignment ready for submission.

Joanne has a part-time job and was called into work to cover for someone who is ill, so she did not finish the assignment.

Sarah and Stephen always leave things until the last minute, but this time, despite staying up all night, the assignment is not ready. Another two days will do it!

Cliona knew Joanne wouldn't be finished, so, hoping for an assignment extension, she went to a party on Saturday that lasted until well into Sunday morning. She has not finished either.

There is a dilemma: if the teacher gives an extension, then there will be less time to get the next assignment covered. However, if those who have not finished the work are not allowed to submit, then they will fail the module and will not get their certificate at the end of the year. What might be a fair solution? Would adolescents at different stages come up with different solutions?

Gender identity

Sex Role Identity: refers to gender-related aspects of the psychological self. This is seen as a continuum as opposed to distinctly female- or male-related. Thus a female can have masculine characteristics and vice versa.

Four basic sex role types:

- Masculine – traditional masculine traits include toughness, competitiveness, independence.
- Feminine – traditional feminine traits include caring and compliance.
- Androgynous – both masculine and feminine traits.
- Undifferentiated – lack of any identifiable masculine or feminine traits.

Ethnic identity

Ethnic identity means identification as a member of a specific ethnic group, commitment to that group, its values and its attitudes. It can be difficult to maintain

an ethnic identity when the majority of a population belongs to a different ethnic group. If, as someone with a minority ethnic identity, you attempt to join the majority group you may be ostracised by your own, smaller group; if you stick with your ethnic group, your choices may be limited. Studies suggest that Western culture values individual achievement and the individual more than some other cultures where community and commitment to the family is given high status. Thus minority ethnic adolescents growing up in a 'traditional' household with Western cultural values may indeed find life very hard and confusing. This is very relevant in contemporary Ireland for young people who are first- or second-generation immigrants but whose upbringing and family values are more 'traditional'.

Think about...:

The following young people, who are in the same club: Rachel, who is the oldest; Jennifer, whose family is experiencing financial hardship; Derek, who is hard working; and Omar, who is a very skilled football player. One afternoon they thought it would be a good idea to play football with some of the younger club members. Rachel helped for 2 hours, as did Jennifer and Omar. Derek helped to set up the matches and cleaned up afterwards, and so worked for nearly 4 hours in total. At the end, the group leader gave them €20 and they had to decide how to divide it up. The young people's decision as to which way to divide the money could be influenced by their personal, family or community beliefs and traditions. The decision could be based on three different ideological approaches:

- **Need-based** – Jennifer would get the most (This would be characteristic of a social welfare approach.)
- **According to effort** – Derek worked the longest and hardest, so he gets the most. (This would be characteristic of a labour-based approach.)
- **Collectivist** – all four get the same amount because they all helped, and because without any one of them the activity would not have gone ahead. (This would be based on equality and community need.)

Thinking about this situation should help a youth worker to understand how young people from different backgrounds or cultures may have different thoughts on fairness and justice and to appreciate that all young people in a group regardless of culture may have differing expectations and views.

How do you think the money should be divided, and why?

Social relationships in adolescence

Relationships with parents:
Conflict between parents and adolescents is recognised and has been well researched. More worryingly, conflict appears to be generally expected, yet one researcher in the US found that it only causes major disruption in the parent–child relationship in about 5–10% of families. The conflict arises principally from the primary goal of adolescence, to strive for independence within the confines of close familial relationships.

Attachment:
Across a variety of cultures and social groups, research has shown that the majority of people come through adolescence with a strong attachment to their parents, although this sense of attachment does seem to dip at around 15 or 16 years.

A strong bond with parents in early childhood seems to be a good indicator of how things will go in adolescence. Parenting styles and family structures also affect the relationship between adolescents and their parents.

Peer relationships:
Loyalty, faithfulness and intimacy become very important during the adolescent period. Friendships last longer than they did in childhood in part because adolescents work harder at conflict resolution. Maintaining friendships and continuing in activities appear to be linked to and contribute to stability in friendships. It is suggested that girls seem to prefer other girls with the same level of romantic attachments, whereas boys' preferences tend to be linked to activities or athletic achievement. It is not surprising, therefore, that girls seem to spend less time with their girlfriends when they have a boyfriend than the opposite.

Peer groups:
Peer group attachment and involvement is at its most potent around the ages of 13 or 14, during which time conformity to the group identity peaks while self-esteem dips slightly. As self-identity grows stronger, the peer group, though stable, may have less influence.

Thus while Erikson and Marcia are right in asserting that the peer group has a major influence, that influence is neither all powerful nor all negative.

Peer group structure:
The main structures of adolescent peer groups have been identified as ***cliques***, ***crowds*** and ***couples.*** Cliques tend to predominate in early adolescence and tend to be same-sex; they may also have identifiable shared characteristics or interests. Crowds are mixed-gender and are label-based – think nerds, sporty types, Goths, etc. By Leaving Certificate age, crowds became less important than significant friends and couples.

Romantic relationships:
The shift from same-sex friendships to romantic relationships is fairly gradual but more rapid with girls. Although sex drive is a force, social and cultural factors are just as important. Again, relationships with parents and earlier friendships do seem to signpost the ease with which an adolescent moves into romantic relationships.

Intimacy, communication and reading social cues are just as important at this stage as physical sexuality. Engagement in sexual acts depends on a lot of variables including the stability of the family background, sense of security, religion and culture. According to Santrock (2010) early dating and sexual activity appear to be more common among the disadvantaged of every ethnic group.

For the vast majority of young people, their pathway through adolescence includes a progression in peer relationships from same-sex cliques to mixed-sex groups to heterosexual dating pairs. Yet for a significant proportion of young people, their sexual orientation will be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Studies of prenatal hormonal patterns suggest that sexual orientation is programmed before birth, but these studies do not rule out the influence of environmental factors.

Many LGBT adolescents face a high level of stress due to ridicule, prejudice and discrimination. See 'LGBT Adolescents' on page 17 for a more in-depth analysis.

All of the theories, research and studies clearly indicate that how any one person matures through adolescence into adulthood depends on a combination of factors. Any one theory or study does not tell the whole story, but background research and knowledge should enable the youth worker to be both more understanding and to offer more appropriate support.

Adolescent health

Adolescence is the healthiest, heartiest period of life, when, other things being equal, the individual is at their healthiest, fittest, strongest and most fertile. That said, there are health issues specific to adolescence, for example mental health problems and eating disorders (see p. 16). Other issues, though not generally age-dependant, are

of particular concern to adolescents, such as sexual activity, drugs and alcohol. Culture, religion and ethnicity are significant factors in considering these concerns, keeping in mind that across all societies and cultural groups, those who most abuse substances and/or are most sexually active come from disadvantaged groups or have experienced significant problems earlier in life.

Psychosomatic symptoms are more prevalent in adolescents than in adults, and generally appear in response to stresses or perceived stresses. Risky behaviours and risk-taking can be associated with need for acceptance by peer group or showing independence; it also fits with Elkind's theory of the personal fable. Sensation-seeking is heightened and accounts for an increase in accidents in this age group.

Sex, violence, drugs and alcohol are big issues in terms of this desire for new, heightened experiences. The media tend to portray sex, violence and substance use, but not their consequences.

Sexual behaviour:

Social factors and moral beliefs are hugely important to sexual behaviour and related risks. Boys are found consistently to be more sexually active than girls. Risk-taking is evident here, as adolescents are less likely to use contraception or protection. The younger they are, the less likely they are to use either. Research indicates that alcohol abuse is associated with over a quarter of adolescent sexual encounters. (Santrock, 2010)

Teenage pregnancy:

Social class, advantage and disadvantage are inversely related to teenage pregnancy, i.e. the more disadvantaged young people are, the more likely they are to be at risk. Still, relatively few girls under 15 years of age get pregnant in Ireland. See section on Demography, p. 25. On the whole, teenage pregnancy has increased enormously in the last 50 years because of socio-cultural factors, but in the UK and US it has actually fallen. Pregnancies have increased among older adolescents. Across all ethnic groups, less than one fifth of young adolescent parents maintain their original relationship one year after the birth.

Peer and parental rejection, early sexual activity and high unemployment all increase likelihood of a young adolescents conceiving.

On the other hand, doing well at school and having a goal has the opposite effect. So providing purpose, formulating goals and increasing self-esteem and confidence is helpful in preventing pregnancies – not forgetting, of course, sex education.

Substance abuse:
Sensation-seeking, a characteristic of the adolescent, is a factor in drug and alcohol abuse. In Ireland, recent research indicates that heavy and binge drinking has increased enormously among young adolescents. Alcohol poisoning and liver damage is a risk for all, particularly for girls who overindulge, because the female body is less able than that of males to process the toxins.

Tobacco use seems to be less to do with sensation-seeking and more with peer influence. Research shows that even young people who are very aware of the effects may still take up smoking. Parents seem to have the most influence over whether children will take up a smoking habit.

Eating disorders indicate significant mental health problems. See Section 4 for more on health and well-being.

- **Bulimia** – binge eating followed by induced vomiting. The individual tends to be obsessed by their weight, and it is nearly always girls who present with bulimia. Bulimia is unheard of in places where food is scarce. Consequences include tooth decay, stomach irritation, lowered body temperature, chemical disturbances, hormonal imbalances and loss of hair.
- **Anorexia nervosa** – extreme dieting, excessive exercising, fear of gaining weight and vomiting. Again, mostly prevalent in girls and young women. Consequences are very serious and consistent with starvation: sleep disturbance, cessation of menstruation, insensitivity to pain, loss of hair, cardiovascular problems and low blood pressure are just some of the potential effects. Some sufferers die from starvation or complications of the above symptoms.

Self-harm, suicide, sexual health and substance misuse is covered in more detail in Section 4.

As stated at the beginning, the purpose of this chapter is to furnish broad outlines and basic information about the period of adolescence. More in-depth study should be undertaken, and the following are recommended resources. Much of the information in this chapter was gleaned from these sources.

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LGBT adolescents

LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. ***Homosexual*** is now considered a bit outdated, as it was originally a medical term to refer to, mainly, men who were attracted to other men.

- **Lesbian** – a woman who is attracted to other women
- **Gay** – can refer to men attracted to men or women attracted to women. Currently the term 'gay' can also be used as a term of abuse and as a means of homophobic bullying.
- **Bisexual** – refers to men or women who are attracted to both sexes
- **Transgender** – refers to people who do not feel that their biological sex matches their gender identity. The term is used to describe a wide variety of different gender identities and gender presentations.
- **Transsexual** – refers to person who is living or desires to live as a gender other than the one they were born into.
- **Transvestite** – refers to a person who sometimes dresses in clothes considered more appropriate to another gender; a transvestite may be gay, transgender or heterosexual.
- **Heterosexual** – a person who is attracted to people of the opposite sex.
- **Heterosexist** – the assumption that heterosexuality is better and/or more natural than other sexual orientations. The assumption that everyone around you is heterosexual is a form of heterosexism.
- **Sexual orientation** – the emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to persons of a particular sex.

- **Sexual identity** – refers to whether we consider ourselves to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
- **Coming out** – refers to the decision to tell others of your sexual orientation, which begins with an acceptance of one's own sexual orientation, sometimes referred to as 'coming out' to oneself.
- **Homophobia** – a fear or hatred of someone who is or seen to be lesbian or gay. Related terms are ***biphobia***, ***transphobia***.

The adolescent years are challenging years for all young people; it is a time when they are seeking to develop their identities, what they will become as adults and where they fit into family, community and society. They are also going through puberty, which brings enormous physical, psychological and emotional changes. For many young LGBT people this can be a very difficult time in their lives, and for some, will mean that they feel that they cannot be true to their identity.

Maycock et al. (2009) undertook a comprehensive study of young LGBT people and their lives in Ireland. Key findings were as follows:

- The age when most LGBT people discover their sexual orientation is 12.
- The average age when young, vulnerable LGBT people first self-harm is 16.
- The age when many young people begin to come out to others is 17; the average age is 21.
- This means that most LBGT young people conceal their identity for five years or more throughout their adolescence, which as stated above is the most challenging and critical period of development for all young people.

Young people found the prospect of coming out and coming out itself particularly stressful because of

- Fear of rejection
- Fear of isolation
- Fear of harassment and victimisation

Such fears are often confirmed for the LBGT young person when they come out and subsequently experience discrimination, homophobic bullying and social exclusion, all of which has serious implications for their mental health.

The 2009 report documents the school and day-to-day experiences of LGBT young people.

In school,

- over 50% had been called abusive names by fellow students.
- 34% reported homophobic comments by teachers.
- 20% missed or skipped school because they felt threatened or fearful.

In day-to-day life,

- 80% had been verbally abused.
- 40% had been threatened with violence.
- 25% had been punched, kicked or beaten.
- 10% missed work because they felt threatened or fearful.

Key findings in relation to LGBT people's mental health:

- 27% had self-harmed
- 18% had attempted suicide
- Over 33% under 25 years of age had seriously thought of ending their lives

On the positive side, the report demonstrates that it is the fear, threats and isolation that give rise to the mental problems among the LGBT community, and that those who had support, felt included and enjoyed positive reactions to their sexuality experienced less stress. Hence it can be concluded that being LGBT in itself is not stressful, but rather, real or perceived negative reactions and lack of social support caused stress.

Think about...

…all the terms you have heard used in reference to LGBT people: the good, the bad and the just plain ugly.
…all the terms you have heard used to refer to heterosexual or straight people.
…which list is the longest?
Break down the terms into those that convey positive or negative messages.

Straight Questionnaire

1. What do you think caused you to be straight?
2. When and how did you decide that you were straight?
3. Is it possible that being straight is just a phase that you are going through?
4. If you have never slept with a person of the same sex, how do you know that you're straight?
5. Who have you told that you were straight? How did they react?
6. A disproportionate number of child abusers and molesters are straight. Do you consider it safe to expose children to straight teachers and youth workers?
7. Why do straight people feel they have to persuade or seduce others into joining their lifestyle?
8. Why do straight people place so much emphasis on sex?
9. Do your parents know you are straight?
10. Is it possible being straight stems from a neurotic fear of others of the same sex?

The above was adapted from a questionnaire devised in 1972 by Dr Martin Rochlin, a gay mental health professional and the creator of the Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian and Gay Issues, part of the American Psychological Association. A full copy of all questions included on the questionnaire can be obtained at *www.lgbtyouthnorthwest.org.uk/.../straight_questionnaire* (accessed 4 June 2012)

Clearly, these are examples of questions that LGBT people face all the time about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Did answering any or all of the questions above challenge any of your own ideas about sexual orientation or gender identity?

Consider that 'coming out' refers to the decision to let others know of one's sexual orientation, but only LGBT people have to! As explained below, it can be a particularly stressful time, one when support and affirmation can have a particularly positive effect.

> '[Coming out] was a long process and something I still have to do on a regular basis… The whole idea of coming out seemed to dominate my thoughts at that stage. I was always stressing about how to tell people, who to tell and when to do it. I dreaded having to say the words "I am gay".'

> 'It's hard to pick a moment when you "came out" as it's something that you will have to do to different people at different times throughout your life… I thought I was out to everybody and could leave all that stuff behind. In the last year, I found this to be not quite true. There will always be new people in your life who find out or need to be told or old people in your life you somehow missed.'

Or

> 'It took me seven years from the time I realised that I wasn't really into girls before I could actually work up the courage to do anything about it.'

> 'I guess I have always known that I was gay… towards the end of secondary school I realised I had feelings for a girl in my class, and that terrified me, so I jumped back into the closet for another couple of years, never admitting it to myself or others. Then I told myself I was bisexual; that seemed better to me as I would just marry a man and no one would ever know.'

> 'When my parents asked me I just vomited into the nearest bin. I was so terrified. I cried a lot, I shook from head to toe…'

These are real life extracts taken from 'Coming Out – A Resource Guide and Testimonial' put together by the USI LGBT Rights Officer and produced by the Union of Students in Ireland in 2009. Can you identify any common trends or feelings evident in the testimonies?

Describe the role of the youth worker in supporting a young person who is coming out.

Homophobic bullying:

Homophobic bullying is bullying based on prejudice against LGBT people, towards people who are or are perceived to be LGBT or against friends and family of LGBT people. Homophobic bullying can be used in the context of more general bullying against any young person at all. It is similar to all forms of bullying and includes:

- **Verbal abuse** – name-calling, jokes and teasing. Includes the use of the word 'gay' in a negative way.
- **Non-verbal abuse** – such as gesture or mimicry; also includes ignoring, excluding and isolating the person.
- **Threatening behaviour** – both verbal and non-verbal.
- **Physical assault** – punching, beating, kicking and so on.
- **Spreading rumours**
- **Anti-LGBT graffiti**, images and notes
- **Cyber-bullying** – including texting, posting material on social networking sites and malicious phone calls.

The seriousness of homophobic bullying cannot be overstated as can be deduced from the figures revealed in the 2009 study referred to earlier.

Legislation:

- Equal Status
- Employment Equality
- Education Act

Because homosexuality was only decriminalised in 1993, and education services were largely overseen by the Catholic Church (which even now does not accept the practice of homosexuality) the choices of LGBT people have been and continue to be very restricted and their lives overshadowed. One of the many results of this is difficulty in establishing what proportion of the population is LGBT, estimated to be somewhere between 5 and 10%. Put simply, if you are working with a group of ten young people, chances are that at least one of them will be LGBT. While the law now reflects a more enlightened approach in many areas, and discrimination against people based on their sexual orientation is now outlawed, it takes time and education to change people's attitudes.

How youth workers can support LGBT young people:

It is in the remit of the youth worker to educate and support all young people regardless of their sexual orientation.

In doing this, the youth worker or youth service should:

- Recognise the diversity of the group by using posters, promotional material and leaflets. Make LGBT a visible issue in your service.
- Acknowledge the LGBT young people in the group.
- Affirm the value of diversity.
- Model a positive attitude and appropriate behaviour.
- Challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Support young people who come out or are coming out.
- Take action to combat homophobic bullying in all its forms.

Any organisation providing services for young people should have clear policies and procedures to cover all aspects of sexual orientation and related concerns.

All staff and volunteers (including managers) should not only be offered training, but should be expected to attend training.

This excerpt from a *Rolling Stone* article highlights the real dangers of homophobic bullying but also the need for clear policies and procedures.

> *After nine suicides, a federal lawsuit, and the glare of the media spotlight, Minnesota's Anoka-Hennepin school district has at last rid itself of the policy that helped create a virulently anti-gay environment in its schools. In a 5–1 vote on Monday night, the district's school board repealed its Sexual Orientation Curriculum Policy, which required teachers to be 'neutral' on homosexuality. Teachers throughout the district had been so confused about how to enforce the policy that they'd avoided any mention of homosexuality, even when it meant ignoring anti-gay bullying; the result was a toxic environment in which LGBT students were marginalized, demoralized, and subjected to unchecked torment.* (www.rollingstone.com/politics Feb 2012)

References, resources and further reading

NYCI and Youth Net, 2012, *Access All Areas: A Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector,* Dublin: NYCI and Youth Net. See Section 3, 'Working with LGBT Young People'. This Toolkit has guidelines for working with a variety of marginalised young people.

Maycock, P., Bryan, A., Carr, N. & Kitching, K., 2009, *Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of the Mental Health and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*, Dublin: GLEN & BeLonG To.

The organisations listed below have resources, training packages and supports throughout the country or can supply links to fellow organisations that will provide supports:

www.belongto.org
www.glen.ie
www.lgbt.ie

Young People in Families and Family Law

Demography
Definition of family
Changing family forms
Young people as parents
Marriage
Nullity, separation and divorce
Children and divorce
Unmarried parents
Rights and duties of parents and guardians
Registration of births
Civil Partnership
Domestic violence
Implications of family circumstances for youth work

Demography

The consideration of any issue, service or approach to youth work and young people must first take account of the nature and extent of the population that is under consideration.

General statistics are available from the Office of Central Statistics at www.cso.ie

Demography: the study of patterns and characteristics of human populations. In this case the study of the young population of Ireland.

It is not just the number of young people in total that influences current issues and services but also the proportion of young people in the population and the density of young people in any one area. The following tables show that around 10% of the population between the ages of 16 and 18 live in the Dublin City area. Even when towns of similar size are compared, the proportion of young people can vary widely.

Table 1.2.1 Different populations 2006

Age	Dublin City	Monaghan	Connaught	Mayo
16	5238	881	6836	1820
17	5302	836	7122	1807
18	6274	842	7291	1773
Total	16814	2559	21249	5400

Table 1.2.2 Different towns

2006 15–24 years				
Bray	4952	V	Mallow	1401
Roscommon	683	V	Enniscorthy	1468

Table 1.2.3 Proportion of population

Age	2006
0–14	20.5%
15–24	15.1%
25–49	38.0%
50–64	15.4%
67–79	8.3%

(Only former Yugoslav republic has a higher proportion in the 15–24 range.)

For example, while Bray and Mallow have a similar total population size, Bray has almost four times the number of people between the ages of 15 and 24.

When compared to Europe, Ireland has a higher proportion of young people between 15 and 24; Europe has an average of 12.7% in the 27 EU countries compared to 15.1% in Ireland.

Activity:

- Go to www.cso.ie.
- In the top right-hand search box, type 'interactive tables'.
- When the options come up, click on 'Interactive tables-CSO-Interactive Tables'.
- Next click on 2006 Index (or 2011 Index when it becomes available).
- Two columns will appear: 'Folders' and 'Census'
- In the first column, click on the + sign beside the word 'demography', then + census, then +2006 Small Area Population Statistics, then +SAPS Themes by Alphabetical List of Towns, then click on Theme 1;
- In the second column, two options will appear. For now click on the first one, Theme 1.1; a list of towns will appear, scroll down to the one that interests you. If you then click on the word 'Total' in the second column, you will get a breakdown of every age group. For example, you can see that in 2006 there were 29 young people aged 17 in Abbeyfeale in Limerick: 17 males and 12 females.

	0–14 years	15–24 years	24–29 years	Total
Local area/town				
Local Authority area				

Find out the number of young people in your area and the wider local authority catchment area.

Definition of family

The definition of the family used by the UN and broadly reflected in many sociological studies is as follows:

> 'Any combination of two or more persons who are bound together by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement and who together assume responsibility for, *inter alia*, the care and maintenance of group members through procreation or adoption, the socialisation of children and the social control of members.'

The constitutional definition of families in Ireland includes only those based on marriage:

> Article 41.1.1
> 'The State recognises the Family as the natural primary and fundamental unit group of Society, and as a moral institution possessing inalienable and imprescriptible rights, antecedent and superior to all positive law'.

> Article 41.3.1
> 'The State pledges itself to guard with special care the institution of Marriage, on which the family is founded and to protect it against attacks.'

Whatever the definition or view of the family, it is the primary agent of socialisation for children. Socialisation is the process by which human beings learn the values, rules and expectations of the society in which they live. While it is recognised that secondary agents of socialisation – peer group, community, clubs, and the media, for example – are becoming increasingly important to the young person, the family continues to be a central influence, and the young person's ongoing experience of family life has a huge impact on peer relationships and how the young adult emerges.

Changing family forms

An examination of census figures may yield a better understanding of the forms and types of families in which young people in modern Ireland are living.

The tables overleaf give some idea of the extent of that diversity and suggests that the notion of 'normal' fixed family life experience no longer exists, if it ever did.

Private households with no children are not included in this table, although childless households are the fastest growing family type in Ireland. See cso.ie for Census figures.

An examination of the figures from the 2002, 2006 and 2011 Censuses reveals that there is considerable and increasing diversity in family structures and forms in modern Ireland. The traditional family form of husband, wife and child(ren) has decreased significantly in the last decade and accounts for only 31.5% in the most recent census; this is down from 35.9% in 2002. The percentage of cohabiting couples has increased (from 2.28% in 2002 to just under 3% in 2011) as has the percentage of lone parents with children (from 11.7% to 12% in the same period).

Same-sex parents with children were included in the 2011 census for the first time numbering 230, and this is believed to be an underestimate. See Table 1.2.4.

The increasing need to recognise the diversity in family forms is also evidenced by the fact that a number of national organisations, such as One Family, Treoir and Marriage Equality, focus on the need for constitutional change in order to afford equal rights to all families regardless of type or structure.

Table 1.2.4 Composition of private households

	2002	2006	2011
Husband and wife with children (any age)	462,283 (35.9%)	477,705 (32.5%)	522,959 (31.5%)
Lone mother with children (any age)	111,878 (8.7%)	130,853 (8.9)	155,264 (9.9%)
Husband, wife, children (any age) and others	41,819 (3.24%)	28,247 (1.9%)	26,226 (1.6%)
Cohabiting couple with children (any age)	27,188 (2.1%)	39,626 (2.7%)	54,911 (3.3%)
Lone father with children (any age)	19,313 (1.5%)	21,689 (1.8%)	24,497 (1.5%)
Lone mother with children (any age) and others	15,785 (1.22%)	13,994 (0.95%)	15,190 (0.9%)
Lone father with children (any age) and others	3,658 (0.28%)	3244 (0.22%)	2,986 (0.9%)
Cohabiting couple with children (any age) and others	2,445 (0.18%)	3,467 (0.24%)	4,233 (0.3%)
Same-sex parents with children	—	—	230
Total private households	1,287,958	1,469,521	1,654,208

One Family – the national membership organisation of one-parent families
Treoir – the national information centre for parents who are not married to each other

Marriage Equality – an organisation that lobbies for recognition of and equal rights for families with same-sex parents.

Table 1.2.5: Children living with a lone parent enumerated by child's age

	2002	2006	2011
0–4 years	33,958	50,652	45,129
5–9 years	37,528	52,410	54,981
10–14 years	42,890	48,950	58,657
15–19 years	47,162	50,340	55,867
20–24 years	35,812	35,918	40,075

There have been other significant changes to family life in Ireland in the last 50 years or so.

The increasing participation of women in the workforce can mean that children experience more care from people outside the immediate family, e.g. in a crèche or with a child-minder. There are pros and cons of women working outside the home, as it can also mean less poverty and more material comforts due to a second income in a two-parent household.

A falling birth rate means that children in families today have fewer siblings to relate to and to look after or be looked after by. It may also mean that individual children get more attention from parents.

A fluctuating marriage rate and increasing numbers of children being born outside of marriage is in part a result of couples getting married later in life, and many having children prior to marriage. The proportion of children born to parents who are not married has hovered around one-third for a number of years. See tables overleaf.

Because the family in whatever form remains the primary socialising unit for children, the changes that occur within families between the birth of the child and their reaching independent adulthood have a significant effect on the emotional and psychological well-being of the young person. The existence of a stable and secure environment is an essential element in a child's development. This includes the emotional environment and the relationships that the child experiences while growing up. A significant factor in this is family breakdown and/or reconstruction.

Table 1.2.6 Number of persons in private households by age

	2002	2006	2011
under 5 years	273,610	300,246	337,240
5–12 years	431,350	450,720	487,782
13–18 years	361,420	340,367	329,742

Table 1.2.7 Children living with one or both parents by age (CSO Volume 3 Table 33 G)

With both parents	2002	2006	2011
0–4 years	216,777	242,653	290,140
5–9 years	213,949	229,605	253,305
10–14 years	232,182	218,185	232,133
15–19 years	238,567	211,695	203,942
20–24 years	166,538	148,252	147,347

Firstly let us consider the lone-parent family. While an increasing number of children are being brought up by lone parents, this may not be the case throughout a child's life. Consider the following scenario:

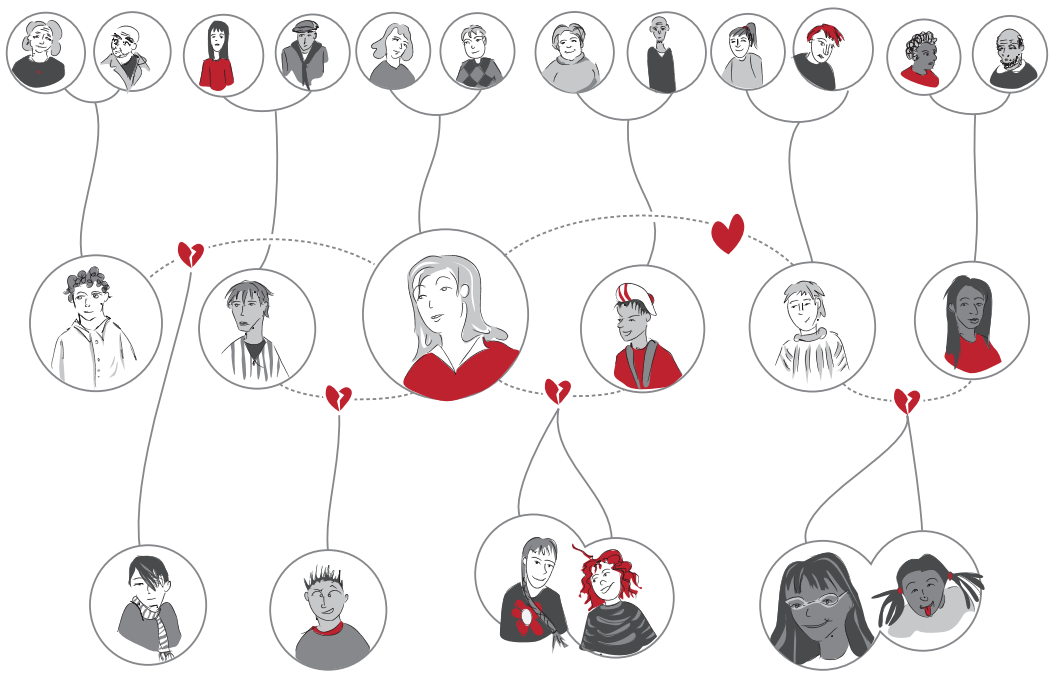
Scenario:

Sarah had her first baby, John, when she was 17 and living with her parents. John's father, Mark, remained involved for a short time, but then the couple lost contact when he moved to another part of the country. When Sarah was 19, she had another baby, Kevin. The relationship between Sarah and Kevin's father ended before he was born.

Sarah's family home was now quite overcrowded, and Sarah was housed nearby with her two children.

After a time, Sarah met Nick, and when John was five years old, the couple moved in together. They subsequently had two daughters over the next five years, but then Nick lost his job, the relationship deteriorated and finally ended when John was twelve and the youngest baby two years old. At present, Sarah has developed

a new relationship with Ian; Ian is committed to Sarah and the children but neither wants to rush into things, particularly because John is very antagonistic towards Ian and the relationship. Just recently, John has been badgering Sarah about making contact with his father, Mark. To complicate matters, Ian has two children from a previous relationship with whom he keeps in close contact.



Activity:

Draw a timeline of John's life marking out changes in his experience of family life in the previous scenario.

How children experience changes and how they cope with their experiences depends on a number of factors, not least how supportive their parents manage to be. Many parents find it difficult to support their children through emotional upheavals when they themselves are going through a traumatic period. Relationship breakdowns often mean practical changes for the children including moving house, changing school and friends and being less well-off financially. Contact with the absent parent

is often fraught with tensions and disappointments. Although research shows that all the factors mentioned influence how a child copes, adolescents find changes in family structure more difficult than younger children, and boys find it most difficult of all. Family breakdown has always been a feature of family life in Ireland, but since divorce was introduced in 1997 there has been legal recognition of those breakdowns that also facilitates the establishment of stepfamilies and second families. In the UK, stepfamilies have been described as the fastest-growing family form. Principal statistics show births, marriages, deaths, divorce figures, and give some indication of the level of marriage breakdown, but there are to date no studies that reveal how many children are living in 'blended families' in Ireland.

Blended families are family units in which one or both of the couple have children with other partners, and may have children together, all of whom share in the life of the family.

The longitudinal study 'Growing Up in Ireland' is looking at the lives of 8,500 children, and began when they were 9 years old in 2007/2008. The follow-up report was published in 2012 when the children were 13 years old, and the same will be done every four years. This will be an invaluable source of information on many aspects of the lives of young people in Ireland including their experience of family life and the changes therein.

Activity:

Go to the 'Growing Up in Ireland' website and examine the family structures and family forms of the children, note the percentage of children who have experienced changes in their families since the study began.

Young people as parents

Another very important group that is growing in numbers each year is young persons who themselves are parents. In the 2006 census there was a total of 4,662 people under age 20 who were counted as parents; 1,956 (42%) of these were enumerated as lone parents, and a further 46.3% were cohabiting.

Table 1.2.8 Persons enumerated as lone parents

		2002	2006	2011
15–19 years	male	8	76	39
	female	642	1,889	1,491
20–24 years	male	147	323	251
	female	7,014	13,483	12,003

Table 1.2.9 Persons enumerated as couples

		2002	2006	2011
15–19 years	married male	107	159	323
	married female	328	379	520
	cohabiting male	353	550	NA*
	cohabiting female	1,112	1,609	NA
20–24 years	married male	1,939	2,616	2,930
	married female	5,136	6,372	6,452
	cohabiting male	8,070	21,282	NA
	cohabiting female	14,602	36,681	NA

** NA: not available at time of going to print.*

Research suggests that particularly in the case of younger couples, cohabitation seems to be more transitory than marriage, so these figures would indicate that a sizeable proportion of children born in Ireland to young parents will experience changes in family structure at some point. The tables above show that the number of lone parents is growing significantly, and within that, the number of lone fathers, although still small by comparison with lone mothers, is also increasing.

The experience of a young parent is influenced by many factors, including their living situation, their financial situation and their relationship with the other parent. Early research in Ireland suggested that young mothers tend to be afforded more 'adult' status than they were before they had children. The situation of young fathers appears to be very different, and in fact little research has been done in this area. One study done on young disadvantaged fathers (Corcoran, 2005) paints a bleak picture of young men who, if they are interested in the child at all, are alienated and often 'allowed' only

occasional access and asked for some financial support. Figures from the Department of Social Protection suggest that about 20% of children born to young unmarried parents do not have the father's name on the birth certificate. Anecdotally, this seems to be because mothers are afraid that to do so would give the fathers more rights to interfere later on, or will render the mother ineligible for lone parent's allowance, even though this is not the case. Certainly, not placing a father's name on the birth certificate is a two-edged sword; on the one hand it facilitates the exclusion of the father, and on the other, it allows fathers to shrug off any responsibility they might feel more easily.

Crucially, from the child's point of view, not having their father's name on their birth certificate denies them one of their fundamental rights. Under Article 7 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are granted 'as far as possible the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents'. At the time of writing, this was in the process of changing.

Marriage

Under the Irish Family Law Act 1995, in order for a marriage to be valid, both parties must be 18 years old, and three months' written notice of the intention to marry must have been given to the Registrar where the marriage is due to take place. Most religious denominations have premises registered for the administration of civil marriages but there may be additional denominational regulations which have no bearing on the civil legality of the marriage. In addition to the legal requirements outlined above, other conditions must be fulfilled in order for a marriage to be deemed valid. These are as follows:

- Each party must be free to marry.
- Each must be of sound mind and aware of what the marriage contract means.
- Neither party must be forced to marry against his or her will.
- One person must be female and one male.
- The parties must not be more closely related than first cousins.
- Regulations regarding residency and recognition of foreign divorces must be adhered to.

If a marriage does not work out there are now three options available in Ireland to a couple choosing to end their civil contract and to split up:

- Nullity
- Separation
- Divorce

Nullity, separation and divorce

Nullity

An annulment is a declaration that the marriage never actually existed. There are six grounds for establishing nullity and they are related to the regulations governing marriage. The six grounds are as follows:

1. There was an already existing valid marriage.
2. One or both were underage at the time of the marriage.
3. The formalities were not adhered to, e.g. three months' notice was not given.
4. Full consent was absent, e.g. they were forced or tricked into the marriage.
5. They were too closely related.
6. They were both the same sex, that is two men or two women.

Marriages may also be annulled if facts emerge at a later date which would have had an influence over either party's decision at the time of the marriage, for example if a past psychiatric history was concealed.

Separation

Separation may be by order of a court (a judicial separation) or by agreement between the couple without recourse to any law.

Either a mutual agreement or a judicial separation merely means that the husband and wife no longer have to live together. They are not free to marry another person and they are free to be reconciled.

The grounds for a **judicial separation** are:

- Adultery
- Unreasonable behaviour
- One year's continuous desertion
- One year's separation with consent, or three years without consent
- No normal sexual relationship for at least a year
- Indisposition

In some cases a combination of these grounds may exist.

Divorce

Divorce gives legal recognition to the fact that a marriage has irretrievably broken down and no longer exists in anything but name. It gives both parties the right to remarry if they so wish.

In Ireland, all four of the following conditions must be fulfilled in order to obtain a divorce:

1. The spouses have lived apart for at least four of the preceding five years.
2. There is no reasonable prospect of reconciliation.
3. Both spouses and any dependent children have been properly provided for.
4. Either spouse lived in Ireland when the proceedings began (or lived here for at least a year before that date).

Children and divorce

If a couple divorces the court will always make orders relating to the children. Matters such as **custody**, **access**, **guardianship** and **maintenance** of children will invariably have been dealt with in some manner by the couple, given that they must be living apart for at least four years before a divorce can be granted. See overleaf for details. The court may request reports to be made about any issues that affect the children's welfare.

> Legal Aid is available to couples who cannot afford to pay legal fees.

Marital breakdown has serious consequences for children. It is generally recognised that it is not the separation or the divorce that causes problems for the children, it is rather the problems and friction that preceded it, combined with how the parents deal with the split afterwards. How children react to and cope with disruption to family life depends on how their needs have been met prior to and during the upheaval. It also depends on the nature of the marital split, i.e. whether it was reasonable and amicable or involved aggressive rows and animosity. Research indicates that all children are affected by the separation of their parents, and some children are severely damaged. Parental and family breakup combined with adolescence can be intensely traumatic. Children may experience some or all of the following prior to, during and/or after the breakdown, depending on their personality, the nature of the split and their age and stage of development:

- grief
- anger
- resentment
- denial
- sadness and loss
- insecurity

- relief
- emotional distress
- behavioural difficulties

The effects of the above may be long lasting, resulting in poor performance at school and work; children may also have difficulties in their future relationships as adults. There are also significant negative after-effects for the 'absent' parent (the parent who no longer lives with the children on a daily basis), who is more likely to lose contact with the family, and the family may be less well-off materially as a result of the breakdown.

When parents are helped to manage their problems, conflicts and separation in a positive way, it is more likely that the children will be better able to cope with the situation. Some recent studies suggest that it is less harmful for children to live with two parents who are not getting on than for those two parents to separate; however, other studies suggest just as strongly that it very much depends on the nature of the family relationships.

The government is committed to providing support for couples and their families who are separating and the following measures are in place:

- **The Family Support Agency** aims to promote and support families and to prevent family breakdown.
- **Legal Aid** has been increased, both in terms of expansion of the numbers of centres and in terms of who is eligible.
- **A Family Mediation Service** is a free service that is available to separating couples to help them sort out their affairs agreeably so that the trauma and disruption to the children can be kept to a minimum.

Unmarried parents

When a child's parents are not married to each other, the child has rights pertaining to both parents, including rights to maintenance and inheritance. These rights are laid out in the Guardianship of Infants Act 1964, which was the first piece of modern Irish legislation to address the needs of children born outside of marriage or in the event of marriage breakdown.

The Status of Children Act 1987

- abolished the concept of illegitimacy
- gave unmarried fathers legal rights to be appointed guardians or to seek access and/or custody
- provided for the establishment of paternity through presumption, declaration or blood test
- updated and extended the law in relation to maintenance payments.

The Children Act 1997 further amended and expanded the law with regard to guardianship, custody, access and maintenance.

Rights and duties of parents and guardians

Guardianship

A guardian is a person who has legal rights and duties in respect of a child. The guardian is entitled to have a say in all decisions relating to the child's upbringing, including:

- where and with whom the child lives
- choice of school
- consent to medical treatment
- consent for passport application
- religious upbringing
- consent to adoption
- responsibility to ensure the provision of adequate care.

A mother is always and automatically a guardian. Under the Children Act 1997, an unmarried father can become guardian of his child without going to court, provided that the mother and father sign a sworn agreement to this effect. Otherwise, the father must apply to the local district court to be appointed a guardian, which might involve proof of his paternity. When a marriage breaks down, both parents may retain joint guardianship, or the court may appoint just one parent as guardian or appoint an independent guardian.

Custody

The person or persons who have custody of a child have charge and care of the child on a day-to-day basis. The mother of a child born outside marriage has sole custody of the child and the father must apply to the courts for formal custody. The 1997 Act allows for joint custody orders to be made.

Access

When one parent has full custody of the child, the other parent can apply for access to visit the child regularly or at specified times. The 1997 Act allows that other persons, such as grandparents, may also apply to the courts for access.

Maintenance

Maintenance refers to the payments made by one person to another towards the children's cost of living. Unmarried parents do not have a responsibility to maintain each other. Maintenance can be voluntary or by order of the court. Orders made by the courts will take into consideration the earnings of the person against whom the order is being made. Paying maintenance **does not** give any rights of access or guardianship.

Except where parents are in agreement, all decisions about guardianship, custody and access are made by the court, with the first and primary consideration being given to the child's interests and welfare. While the mother's views will be considered in making a decision about any of the above, the court may grant an order in favour of the father without the mother's agreement.

When unmarried parents are having difficulty agreeing on shared parenting issues such as times of access or the amount of maintenance, the Family Mediation Service may be an alternative to going to court (which is expensive and tends to be confrontational).

There are many positives to be gained from going to mediation, including that:

- it encourages and supports co-operation between the parents;
- it allows parents to be in charge of their own decisions;
- it promotes partnership and positive communication.

Registration of births

By law, the birth of a child must be registered within three months of the birth and a surname must be chosen for the child.

- **When a mother is married** there is a presumption in law that her husband is the father of the child and the birth will be registered in both parents' names automatically.
- **If the parents are not married to one another**, both parents can go together to the Registrar's office to place the father's name in the Register of Births. (See note below re: proposal from the Law Reform Commission.) Alternatively, one parent can bring a statutory declaration with them that names the father of the child.
- **If the child has been registered in the mother's name alone**, it is possible to re-register at any date in order to place the father's name on the birth certificate. If the mother is married but the child's father is not her husband, her husband must sign a declaration that he is not the father before another man's name can be entered on the certificate.

  The entering of the father's name on the birth certificate does not confer guardianship, access or custodial rights. It is just proof of paternity as stated earlier.
- **Where parents marry after the birth**, the child automatically becomes a child of the marriage and there is no requirement to re-register if the father's name is already entered into the Register. Additionally, on marrying the mother, the father automatically becomes a joint guardian of his child.
- **If the mother subsequently marries another man**, any orders made in favour of the father will remain in force. If the new couple wants the husband to adopt the child, then the father's consent will be required if he has been appointed guardian/custodian.

  The Law Reform Commission proposes (2012) the following system for a non-marital father to register his name on the birth certificate of a child in the absence of agreement with the mother. The father can make an application to the relevant Registrar of Births to be entered on the birth certificate as the father of the child. The Registrar would record the application and inform the mother of the child that the application has been made. The mother would then have 28 days to object to the name of the man being entered on the birth certificate as the father of the child. If no objection were made, a final entry of the father's name would be entered on the birth certificate. If the mother were to make an objection, the Registrar of Births would refer the matter to the District Court, whose only power would be to delete the entry if it were

established by the mother that the man was not the father of the child. The Commission also recommends that there be a similar process to enable the mother of a child to enter the name of a man on the birth certificate as the father of the child without agreement. The mother can inform the Registrar of the name of the alleged father of the child. The Registrar would then contact the man and he would have 28 days within which to raise an objection to his name being entered on the birth certificate. Again, the District Court would, on appeal, determine the issue if there was a dispute.

Establishing Paternity

If a man's name is on a child's birth certificate, then paternity is presumed. If there is a court order for maintenance, access, custody or guardianship which names the father, then that is accepted as proof. If there is a dispute, then a paternity test can be done. A court order can be obtained in respect of this if it is not undertaken voluntarily. A positive paternity test does not automatically confer any rights in respect of that paternity, i.e. the man will still have to apply through the courts for access, etc.

Civil Partnership

The Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010 brought about major changes to Irish law regarding families and relationships. It recognised for the first time the relationships of same-sex couples and unmarried, cohabiting couples whether they are same-sex or opposite-sex. Under the new laws introduced in 2010 any two unmarried adults of the same sex can enter into a Civil Partnership. Civil Partnership extends a number of rights and responsibilities to same-sex couples which had previously only been available to opposite-sex couples in marriage. It covers areas such as protection from domestic abuse, the recognition of foreign civil partnerships and same-sex marriages as civil partnerships, inheritance and the dissolution of a relationship. Perhaps the most important aspect of Civil Partnership is that the partners are formally recognised as 'next of kin' in the eyes of the law. For example, if one partner is seriously ill or hospitalised, the other partner is allowed to visit them and to have a say in what medical treatment they should receive if the patient is unable to decide for themselves. Though civil partnerships are commonly regarded as being 'just like marriage' there are a number of key differences. The 2011 report by Marriage Equality, 'Missing Pieces', found 169 legal differences between marriage and civil partnerships. The most disappointing failure of the Act, for many, was the lack of provision for children. Any children of

a couple in a civil partnership do not, in legal terms, have two same-sex parents but rather one parent (either adoptive or biological) and no legal relationship to the second adult in the household. Should the legal parent die or desert the family, the children have no automatic right to their second parent. In the event of relationship breakdown, the second parent cannot apply for custody or guardianship, although they can hope for 'access'. As well as providing for same-sex couples who wished to formalise their relationship under the law, the Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010 contains a redress system for cohabiting couples who have lived together in an intimate relationship for at least five years, or two years if there is a child.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence refers to violence in the home perpetrated by adults against their partners, parents and/or children. The most common forms of abuse are emotional, physical and sexual, and all abuse occurs across all social classes. The extent of domestic violence is difficult to gauge as it is grossly under-reported. Women are slow to report incidents often for fear of reprisals but also because they often feel that they have no hope of escaping the relationship. Men may be slow to report for the same reasons, but also because of fear of ridicule. Domestic violence may also be under-reported because people find it difficult to admit that their relationship is abusive.

Any attempt to reduce domestic violence must address gender issues and power imbalances in society, all of which is an area of concern in youth work practice.

Cosc (the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence) was established in June 2007 with the key responsibility of ensuring the delivery of a well coordinated 'whole of Government' response to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence against women and men. One of Cosc's primary tasks has been the development of a National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence. The strategy was approved by the government in 2010 and Cosc will now focus on ensuring its implementation.

The Domestic Violence Act 1996 has gone some way towards increasing protection for adults and children who experience abuse. The main provisions of the Act are as follows:

- The law has been extended to cover any adult with whom the person shares residence, not just a spouse.
- Power has been given to the Department of Health and Children to apply for protection on behalf of a person.

- If a person breaks the law, for example by ignoring a Barring Order, they can now be arrested without need for a warrant.

Under the 1996 Act, four types of court order can be obtained to protect a spouse, partner, dependent child or persons in other domestic relationships:

- A **Safety Order** prevents the person named from using or threatening to use violence against the applicant, molesting or frightening the applicant. If the applicant lives in the same house, the respondent (the allegedly abusive person) does not have to leave. It is effective for five years.
- A **Protection Order** has the same effect as a Safety Order, but it is an interim order that is effective until a decision on another order can be made.
- An **Interim Barring Order** and **Barring Order** both require the respondent to leave the shared home.
- **The Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act 2002** directs that the respondent be notified of the order and the reasons as soon as possible. When made *ex parte* (without the respondent being present in the court) the order must be confirmed or rescinded within eight days.

Application by Health Authorities

The Domestic Violence Act empowers the Health Authorities to apply for an order to protect a person of any age if they believe that person to be in danger and unable to pursue an application for a Barring or Safety Order themselves, perhaps because of fear.

Implications of family circumstances for youth work

The beginning of this section covered demographics because an understanding of same is obviously necessary in planning, but also because in evaluating services, youth workers must be aware of the nature and size of the population in their local area.

Every young person has a family background and it is essential to see young people in the context of their family as it gives insight into the supports and stresses that they have in their lives.

The basics of family law are laid out here, and there are signposts to the resources that are available. Youth workers should access accurate information on aspects of family law both in order to be aware of any implications for young people in their service regarding access, guardianship, barring orders, etc., and to be able to offer accurate guidance and appropriate support.

References, resources and further reading:

Corcoran, M., 2005, *Portrait of the 'Absent Father': The Impact of Non Residency on Developing and Maintaining a Fathering Role* in The Irish Journal of Sociology, Vol 14 (2), 2005, pp. 134–154

Donohoe, J. and F. Gaynor, 2011, *Education and Care in the Early Years* (4th ed.), Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.

Nestor, J., 2011, *An Introduction to Irish Family Law* (2nd ed.), Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.

Minister for Health and Children, 2006, *State of the Nation's Children*, Dublin: Department of Health and Children.

Growing Up In Ireland: National Longitudinal Study at www.growingup.ie

For general population statistics www.cso.ie

Treoir: Information for Unmarried Parents at www.treoir.ie

One Family Ireland: www.onefamily.ie

Bunreacht na hÉireann, 1937, Government Publications: Stationery Office

Education

Laws, issues and services

The Education Act 1998 is the main legislation that currently drives the education system in Ireland. Funding for education in Ireland is one of the lowest in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries. Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 6 and 16. Parents can choose to educate their children outside the school system by home-schooling, but there is limited practical, official support for parents who choose this option. In practice, more parents choose home-schooling at the primary level, but will send their children to formal schooling for second level education because of the examination system.

Formal education is provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) at primary, secondary and third level. Education is provided, free of cost, at primary and secondary level. Although 'free', there are considerable costs attached to education – books, uniforms, so called 'voluntary' contributions and other extras, which can amount to considerable expense, particularly for large families. At primary and secondary level, supplementary welfare grants are available for those who are in receipt of long-term benefits or who can prove that the costs would cause undue hardship. At third level, a grant is available to individual students, but this is means tested.

The senior cycle at secondary level is not compulsory, as the child will have reached 16 years or completed the Junior Certificate cycle. The senior cycle lasts two or three years depending on whether the school offers a transition year programme. Almost three quarters of schools offer the transition year, but in many of these,

individual students may opt to complete the cycle in two years by skipping transition year. During these final two years students have three options:

- **The Leaving Certificate** is the main basis on which entry requirements to third-level education is accessed.
- **The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme** (LCVP), which focuses on technical and vocational areas.
- **Leaving Cert Applied** (LCA), which focuses on preparation for working and adult life.

Activity:

Grants, allowances and costs change from year to year. In order to familiarise yourself with the costs of going to school, imagine you have a 15-year-old attending your local school in Junior Cert year and an 18-year-old starting college. Find out the costs of attending the secondary school. Brainstorm all of the costs, and contact the school for more information. What allowances, grants, etc., are available? For the older child, find out what college 'fees' apply, and whether your child may be entitled to a grant.

Educational disadvantage

Educational disadvantage must be combatted at many levels, quite apart from financial support to individual families who are experiencing hardship. Recent figures and research (ESRI, 2010) show that

- approximately 1,000 pupils per year fail to make the transition between primary and secondary school despite the law on school-leaving age.
- about 11% of students have significant literacy problems on leaving school.
- pupils who live in disadvantaged areas experience severe literacy problems that are three times that of the national average.
- about 9,000 students or 20% leave school before the Leaving Certificate examination each year; about 3% leave school without any qualification at all.
- absenteeism is a common forerunner of dropping out.
- the nationwide average absentee rate is 14 days per year; in disadvantaged areas this increases to 21 days.

- children from areas of disadvantage are more likely to drop out.
- boys are more likely to drop out than girls. (ESRI, 2010)

There are many implications of dropping out, and students who do are more likely to:

- be unemployed;
- earn less;
- have lower standards of literacy and numeracy;
- become involved in crime, drug abuse and/or unplanned early parenthood.

Education and inequality

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds don't do as well as those from more privileged backgrounds.

The secondary education system does not cater well for young people who have additional needs.

Some schools seem to take more than their fair share of pupils who have multiple additional needs.

The need to address the following issues of inequality has long been recognised:

- improving access to early education
- improving literacy and numeracy standards
- improving the involvement of parents and communities
- supporting school attendance and progression
- recognising the need for specifically trained, quality teachers for schools in areas of disadvantage
- monitoring and evaluation
- streaming, which definitely has a negative impact

The Education Act 1998 defines educational disadvantage as 'the impediments to education arising from social or economic disadvantage which prevents students from deriving appropriate benefit from education in Schools...' (Section 32(9) Early school-leaving or dropping out is related to the issue of educational disadvantage.

Activity:

Aim: to gain an insight into reasons for school drop out.
Profile an early school-leaver versus a student who successfully completes school.
Brainstorm all the characteristics of the two students and all the possible reasons behind their choices.
Following this, consider therefore what might be the optimum approach to encouraging students to return to or stay in school.

Combatting disadvantage and inequality

The Education and Welfare Act 2000 addresses the issue of early school-leaving, and in the past decade a number of schemes have been put in place in an effort to combat disadvantage. Many of the schemes and programmes outlined below involve the provision of extra resources to support the disadvantaged children, including extra classes, extra teachers and smaller classes. These fall under a broader programme for Social Inclusion funded and supported by the Department of Education and Skills called 'Social Inclusion – Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools'. More information on the schemes outlined here can be obtained on the Department's website www.education.ie.

- **Home School Community Liaison Scheme** aims to support students at risk of failing or dropping out through home visits by Liaison Officers who encourage the parents to support the child's education.
- **School Completion Programme** targets individual young people of school-going age, both in and out of school, and aims to address inequalities in education access, participation and outcomes.
- **Support Teachers Project** targets children whose learning is affected by their behaviour, which may be disruptive, disturbed or withdrawn. Support Teachers focus on social, emotional and personal development in working with children, and allow children to experience success in their school life by working on their strengths. Such work may require the curriculum to be adapted to suit the child's level of need.
- **Giving Children an Even Break** involves the provision of additional teaching and financial allocations to participating schools in order to combat

disadvantage; it means a reduction of class sizes in the participating schools and additional resources.

- **Breaking the Cycle** seeks to discriminate in favour of schools in selected urban and rural areas which have high concentrations of children at risk of not reaching their potential in the education system because of their socio-economic backgrounds. Strategies include extra staff and additional funding and coordination.
- **Disadvantaged Area Scheme (DEIS)** As part of this scheme, schools seeking disadvantaged status are assessed and prioritised as to need on the basis of socio-economic and educational indicators such as unemployment levels, housing, medical card status and information on basic literacy and numeracy. In addition, disadvantage assessments take account of pupil–teacher ratios. Support involves increase capitation grant and extra finance for materials and classroom equipment.
- **Literacy and Numeracy Schemes** involve facilitating extra training of teachers to deliver programmes aimed at improving literacy and promoting mathematical skills. Programmes under this scheme include First Step, Reading Recovery and Maths Recovery.

Programmes for early school-leavers

Programmes such as the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, Youthreach and Post Leaving Certificate courses aim to improve young people's access to second-chance or alternative education.

- **VTOS** is the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, which offers unemployed people an opportunity to return to structured learning in an adult setting. Applications for inclusion in the scheme is open to people who are over 21 years of age and who have been in receipt of a social welfare payment for over 6 months.
- **Youthreach** is delivered through Centres for Education managed by Vocational Education Committees (www.ivea.ie). The programme is also delivered in a network of Community Training Centres funded by the Department of Social Protection and 'Justice Workshops' funded by the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform. A parallel programme in a culturally appropriate setting is delivered in Senior Traveller Training Centres (www.sttc.ie).

The programme is directed at unemployed early school-leavers aged 15 to 20, and offers them the opportunity to identify and pursue viable options within adult life, and provides them with opportunities to acquire certification. It operates on a full-time, year-round basis.

- **Back to Education Initiative** (BTEI): The Back to Education Initiative provides part-time Further Education programmes for young people and adults while allowing them to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities. Those in receipt of unemployment payments or means-tested social welfare benefits, and holders of medical cards and their dependants are entitled to free tuition.

  The Back to Education Allowance is paid by Department of Social Protection to facilitate people to retain payments while participating in full-time education courses. For those on Jobseekers Allowance you must be over 21 years to qualify for BTEI, but some who have been on long-term allowances since age 16 may qualify at 18.

Education for children with additional needs

Education for children with additional needs may be provided in ordinary classes in mainstream schools, in special classes in mainstream schools or in special schools. In mainstream schools they may get help from learning support and resource teachers and from special needs assistants (SNAs). These supports for children with special educational needs are available in primary and post-primary schools.

Under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 each child assessed with a special educational need should have a personal education plan, though this has not yet been fully implemented. **The National Council for Special Education, Special Educational Needs Organisers** (**SENOs**), the **Special Education Support Service** (**SESS**) and **The National Educational Psychological Service** (**NEPS**) are the principle organisations and structures that support and co-ordinate services for children with additional needs.

There are also some extra resources for education of children from the Traveller community and for children for whom English is not their first language.

The recent recession has resulted in serious cutbacks in education generally but particularly to some of these programmes.

Education beyond secondary school

When their secondary education has ended, young Irish people have options to progress to further education courses, diploma, certificate and degree courses in Institutes of Technology and in universities. Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses are post-secondary education programmes of integrated general education, vocational training and work experience for young people and adults who have completed upper second-level education or equivalent. It is a one- or two-year full-time course designed to enhance students' employment prospects or progression to third-level education. Part-time options at this level are also available under the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI).

These courses offer students the opportunity to gain a FETAC Level 5 and 6 certificates in a broad range of vocational areas including youth work, art, dance, fashion design, childcare, hair and beauty and media studies. In the last few years it has been the fastest-growing education sector in Ireland and offers opportunities to those who

- wish to get back to education having left school early.
- want to acquire a vocational skill to enhance their employment opportunities.
- did not score enough points for a particular university course and want to try again through the FETAC entry route rather than repeating the Leaving Certificate.

Higher or third-level education: Higher education in Ireland consists of seven universities (with associated colleges of education), 14 Institutes of Technology and a number of private independent colleges. The universities and Institutes of Technology are autonomous and self-governing, but are substantially state-funded. The minimum academic entry requirements for the majority of third-level courses are determined at individual institution level and are generally based on national examination performance, namely CAO points and the Leaving Certificate.

The role of the youth worker in education

It is very important that youth workers be aware of the different schemes and educational avenues open to young people in their area. Young people may need individual advice and guidance and the service should be able to support them or point them in the right direction. Additionally, the youth service can be proactive by providing talks by career guidance services or other young adults who have been

through the system. Careers, further education and training make excellent topics for peer education and provide focus for trips to colleges' open days. It is equally important that youth workers be good role models by embracing learning themselves, and by being positive and encouraging in all whenever the topics of school, learning and education come up.

Youth workers may also be in a position to notice that a young person is struggling, and may be able to arrange support and intervention at an early stage.

References, resources and further reading

More information can be obtained on the following websites:
Department of Education and Skills *www.education.ie*
The Irish Vocational Education Association *www.ivea.ie*
The National Coordinating Unit for Senior Travelling Training Centres *www.sttc.ie*
For information about careers and qualifications: *www.qualifax.ie*
www.springboardcourses.ie

For information about third-level courses and entry requirements:
www.cao.ie

Byrne, D. and E. Smyth, 2010, *No Way Back? The Dynamics of Early School Leaving*, Dublin: ESRI, NCCA and DES.

Employment

Employment regulations relevant to young people
Income, maintenance and welfare entitlements
Training and work experience schemes

Quite a number of young people engage in part-time work while still at secondary school and an even larger percentage undertake part-time work to finance themselves in further education. A significant number leave school at 16 and go straight into employment, and a further cohort dependent on income from parents or from the state are unemployed. In these recent times of economic hardship, an increasingly high proportion of young people under 25 all over Europe are in a state of extended unemployment.

Each year the budget introduces changes to allowances; economic pressure in the next few years may bring about other unforeseen changes. The main aim here, therefore, is to give a broad view as to how things stand at the time of writing. To facilitate updates of this information, a list of sources with associated activities is given so that youth workers can access up-to-date information for the young people with whom they are working.

Employment regulations relevant to young people

This is probably the area that is least likely to change, as these regulations were drawn up with the welfare and rights of young people in mind rather than in relation to any temporary economic issues or pressures. The relevant law is **The Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996**.

Anyone who is working has general rights in relation to their employment. The following are relevant to all young people, who if employed should receive:

- **a written contract of employment** within one month of taking up employment;
- **correct rates of pay and a payslip** – there are different rates of pay in relation to age groups particularly at the younger ages. The minimum wage applies to

all those 18 years or over; those under 18 must be paid at least 70% of the minimum wage rate;

- representation from a **Trades Union representation** if there are difficulties – in most workplaces the relevant Trade Union would have a shop steward or representative;
- **protection from bullying and sexual harassment** – regulations in relation to this should be posted in a public place;
- a summary of the **Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996**;
- a summary of the **Code of Practice** (in relation to young people employed in licensed premises).

Regulations regarding working hours

Children under 16 years:

- Must not work before 8.00 a.m. or after 8.00 p.m.
- During school term 14-year-olds must not work at all.
- For young people between the ages of 14 and 15 years, holiday work should consist of light work to a maximum of 7 hours in any 24-hour period and to a maximum of 35 hours in any one week.
- 15- to 16-year-olds should only work 8 hours per week during school term.

Children over 16 years:

- 16- to 17-year-olds must not work before 6.00 a.m. or after 10.00 a.m. except when employed in licensed premises, where they can work until 11.00 p.m.
- Must have at least 21 days off during school holidays.
- Must have two consecutive days off each week and 14 hours off in each 24-hour period.
- Workers are entitled to a rest break after four hours' work.

Employers:

Under the law employers have statutory duties in relation to young people in their employment. It is the employer's duty to examine the worker's birth certificate so that they are clear about the age of the young person, and if under 16 years, the young person must provide written permission from their parents indicating parental approval. Employers must keep records of all young people in their employ and of the starting and finishing times of those young people.

Complaints in relation to infringements of the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996 may be referred to **The Inspection Services of the National Employment Rights Authority, Government Buildings, O'Brien Road, Carlow.**

Income, maintenance and welfare entitlements

Parents are responsible for the maintenance of a young person until they reach their eighteenth birthday. As a result, anyone who has left school at 16 years and is unemployed is not entitled to any payment from social welfare.

For a person aged 18–24 years, an application for social welfare payments is means-tested and assessed under 'benefit and privilege'.

Means test: an assessment of all the sources of income a person has in order to assess whether they are eligible to receive income support. The means test may vary according to the kind of maintenance being applied for.

'Benefit and privilege' is the assessment of the monetary value which living with parents has for a young person. It means that the parents' income is considered in the means test, which is then applied to all young persons under 25 years who are living with their parents. However it does not apply if the young person is married or if they have a dependent child.

Basically, the amount assessed as benefit and privilege is based the parents' income. It is likely that the amount and assessment will change from budget to budget, but can always be checked **www.citizensinformation.ie** or on the website of the **Department of Social Protection.**

If the young person has been living independently for three years and returns to their parents' home, the total 'Benefit and Privilege' is taken as €7.00 for assessment purposes at the time of writing.

If the young person has been working for two years and made PRSI contributions they may be entitled to **Jobseekers Benefit**, which is not means-tested or assessed under benefit and privilege.

There are numerous other payments that may be afforded to a young person who has health problems or additional needs. For example, a young person with a disability may get a **Disability Allowance** after their sixteenth birthday, but this is means-tested and their disability is assessed.

A **Supplementary Allowance** may be provided for a young person who is not supported by parents and is in need of urgent or emergency funds. The application is made to the local social welfare officer who usually operates out of the local health centre.

Regulations in relation to a young person who is living in Ireland but comes from another country

If that country is outside the EU and the young person is a(n):

- **Refugee**, they are entitled to the same assistance and assessment as an Irish person if they have been granted refugee status.
- **Asylum seeker** aged over 18 and accommodated in direct provision centres, they receive €19.60 per week. They are not allowed to seek employment.
- **Unaccompanied minor**, they must be under 18 years and have arrived in Ireland alone. They are placed in the care of the HSE, generally in direct provision centres. In this way, they are treated differently from Irish children who are out of home and in care.

If the young person is from another EU country: they are entitled to the same services as Irish young people, but must first prove that they have been living here or in the Common Travel Area for a certain length of time.

The **Common Travel Area** refers to the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and Ireland, a zone through which you can live and travel without a passport.

Training and work experience schemes:

There are usually a number of training and work experience schemes available for all unemployed people and some are especially aimed at the young and unemployed. At the moment these include:

- JobBridge – an internship/work experience scheme.
- Community Training Centres (CTC) offer training to early school-leavers.
- Local Training Initiatives (LTI) target young people who are 18–25 years old.

Details of payments, regulations and schemes change regularly and particularly after the Budget, which is published annually early in December. It is important to check that any information given out to young people is up to date.

References, resources and further reading

www.welfare.ie The Department of Social Protection website includes all the information in relation to all benefits and allowances. It also outlines rules of eligibility and payment rates. From 2012, the Department of Social Protection will be delivering a new integrated service for jobseekers following the merger with the Employment Services and Employment Programmes (formerly administered by FAS; see CTCs and LTIs above) and the Community Welfare Service (formerly with the HSE).

www.citizensinformation.ie This website is managed by the Citizens Information Board and includes information about rights and entitlements on all life events which people in Ireland experience. The information is available in several languages. The Citizens Information Board also publishes a resource pack with activities and quizzes that could be used by youth workers to educate young people about their rights on a number of issues.

www.youthworkireland.ie Youth Work Ireland runs a range of Youth Information Services throughout the country providing information on all aspects of life including rights and entitlements.

www.employmentrights.ie Covers a broad range of information on rights and entitlements for employees and employers.

www.revenue.ie Covers everything to do with tax, including forms and how to apply for a PPS number and tax rebates.

www.equality.ie Covers information on all issues relating to equality and steps to take if a person feels that they are being discriminated against.

www.entemp.ie Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation website covers a broad range of information on employment and enterprise.

www.spunout.ie Spunout is a youth-led media initiative covering all aspects of youth information such as health, lifestyle, travel, family and employment. The site lists all the services on a county-by-county basis.

Youth and Justice

Legislation

The Children Act 2001 is the main legislation governing children in the juvenile justice system in Ireland. The Act was amended by the Criminal Justice Act 2006 and The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2007

The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has overall responsibility for development of policy in the area; there are three other departments involved, namely:

- The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- The Department of Education and Skills
- The Department of Health and Children

Under the legislation, the age of criminal responsibility has been raised to 12 years. Although it has been raised from 7 years, it remains one of the lowest in Europe. An exception is made for 10- and 11-year-olds charged with very serious offences, such as murder, rape or aggravated sexual assault. The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) must give consent for any child under the age of 14 years to be charged.

Legislation focuses on prevention, diversion and rehabilitation. The use of detention for a child is to be a last resort.

Activity:

In the group,

- list the crimes, misdemeanours and/or undesirable behaviours that you think are most commonly committed by young people.
- identify the victims.
- divide the list into behaviours that you consider to be criminal and not criminal.
- split the crimes into categories (e.g. vandalism, drug and alcohol use, anti-social behaviour, gangs, teen violence against teens, shoplifting, etc.) For each category, consider what factors might have lead the young people into these behaviours.
- consider who might be involved in terms of social class, gender, ethnic group.
- consider the risk factors for the young people involved, such as their family, school, community and/or peers. Who do the risk factors affect and how?

The Principles of the Children Act 2001

- Any child who accepts responsibility for his/her offending behaviour should be diverted from criminal proceedings, where appropriate.
- Children have rights and freedoms before the law equal to those enjoyed by adults and a right to be heard and to participate in any proceedings affecting them.
- It is desirable to allow the education of children to proceed without interruption.
- It is desirable to preserve and strengthen the relationship between children and their parents/family members.
- It is desirable to foster the ability of families to develop their own means of dealing with offending by their children.
- It is desirable to allow children to reside in their own homes.
- Any penalty imposed on a child should cause as little interference as possible to the child's legitimate activities, should promote the development of the child and should take the least restrictive form, as appropriate.

- Detention should be imposed as a last resort and may only be imposed if it is the only suitable way of dealing with the child.
- There should be due regard for the interests of the victim.
- A child's age and level of maturity may be taken into consideration as mitigating factors in determining a penalty.
- A child's privacy should be protected in any proceedings against him/her. (OMCYA, 2011)

The Irish Youth Justice Service

Set up in 2005, the Irish Youth Justice Service is the office responsible for services, policy and development. The following were introduced under the 2001 Act:

- The establishment of a Garda Diversion Programme.
- The establishment of a Children's Court.
- The introduction of a fines system.
- The introduction of a curfew.
- The introduction of court orders to compel parents to exercise proper control over their children.
- A limited 'clean-slate' approach in respect of most offences committed by children.
- Placing the burden of proof on parents whose children are found begging.
- Provisions in relation to safety of children at entertainments.
- Updating the law on abuse and exploitation.
- Establishment of a Special Residential Board (on a statutory basis).
- Introduction of family welfare conferences.
- The establishment of Children's Detention Services.

Garda Diversion Programme

There are two arms to this programme:

1 *The Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme* which operated informally since 1963 was formally established under the 2001 Act. The programme is implemented by Juvenile Liaison Officers (JLOs) while overall responsibility lies with the National Juvenile Office. The aim of the programme is to give children, particularly those between the ages of 12 and 17 years, a second chance by cautioning them, instead of entering them into the full justice

system. In short, when a child commits a crime, the relevant JLO will be alerted in order to assess whether the child is suitable for the programme; in order to be included the child must accept responsibility for his actions and agree to be cautioned and supervised. Following this, a Programme Conference will be convened where mediation and planning will take place. The child, his/her family and, if appropriate, the victim will all be involved in the conference.

2 *The Garda Youth Diversion Programmes* are local community-based projects which seek to divert young people away from activities and behaviours which are against the law. The projects offer opportunities for education, training, employment and the development of a range of talents and interests. The projects also aim to support healthy relationships between Gardaí and local communities.

In addition, there is also a **Schools Programme** involving visits by Gardaí to schools, both primary and secondary, to educate young people about crime, crime prevention and their rights and duties as citizens.

Another initiative is a programme called '**Copping On**', developed by Youthreach together with a network of Juvenile Liaison officers with the aim to raise awareness among young people about the consequences of criminal behaviour for everybody concerned. There are training resources and support available to various groups and agencies working with young people.

The Children's Court

The Children's Court is a special court held to deal with children who are in trouble with the law. The hearings are held separately to hearings held to try adults; in Dublin there is a special courtroom to hear children's cases; in other parts of the country the hearings are on special days or at special times. A particular effort is made to help children and their parents to understand and participate in what is going on. These courts are mostly held *in camera.*

Definition of *In Camera*
This legal term means 'in private'; there is no public access as there would be in a courtroom, and there is a limit on press reporting during these hearings.

Young Persons' Probation

Young Persons' Probation (YPP) is a division of the Probation Service. It aims to:

- help young offenders avoid re-offending;
- provide social work services;
- convene Family Conferences with young offenders, their families and victims on behalf of the Courts;
- implement Community Sanctions. These are used instead of detention and allow the child to remain in his/her community and in school or training. Parents and probation officers are expected to support the child in completing the sanction.

There are ten Community Sanctions available to the Courts, namely:

- **Community Service Order** – A child of 16 or 17 years of age agrees to complete unpaid work in the community for a set total number of hours.
- **Day Centre Order** – A child is ordered to go to a centre at set times and, as part of the order, to take part in a programme of activities.
- **Probation Order** – Places a child under the supervision of the Probation Service for a period during which time the child must meet certain conditions set by the Court.
- **Training or Activities Order** – A child is ordered to take part in and complete a programme of training or similar activity. The programme should be designed to help the child learn positive social values.
- **Intensive Supervision Order** – A child is placed under the supervision of a named probation officer and has to attend a programme of education, training or treatment.
- **Residential Supervision Order** – A child is placed in a suitable residential facility. The facility is to be close to where they normally live, attend school or go to work.
- **Suitable Person (Care and Supervision) Order** – With the agreement of the child's parents or guardian, the child is placed in the care of a suitable adult.
- **Mentor (Family Support) Order** – A person is assigned to help, advise and support the child and his/her family in trying to prevent the child from committing further offences.

- **Restriction of Movement Order** – Requires a child to stay away from certain places and to be at a specific address between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. each day.
- **Dual Order** – Combines a Restriction of Movement Order with either supervision by a probation officer or attendance at a day centre.

– adapted from the OMYCA website

Restorative justice programmes:

There are two initiatives provided for under the Children Act 2001; one is a conference delivered through the Probation service and one is included under the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme (see above).

In restorative justice, emphasis is placed on enabling the child to address the consequences of their actions by engaging with the victim. This could be by listening to the victim, making good the damage done, and/or apologising.

Detention

The courts will only sentence a child when all other options have failed or are not feasible – in other words, it will do so only as a last resort. This is extended to all children under 18 years and is the responsibility of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. It is now illegal to sentence a young person under 18 years to prison.

There are currently four places of detention for young people; the most controversial is St Patrick's Institution, because it is managed by the prison service and is located close to Mountjoy Adult Prison Service. St Patrick's is a closed centre for young men aged between 16 and 21 years. Currently the main detention services and schools are all located in Lusk, Co. Dublin, and there are plans to develop these facilities to ensure an integrated and unified service to children who are remanded or committed by the courts. When it is completed, 16- and 17-year-olds will no longer be accommodated in St Patrick's Institution. The main focuses of these detention services are care, education and rehabilitation.

Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)

ASBOs were introduced in 2007 under the Criminal Justice Act 2006. An ASBO is a civil order produced by the courts in conjunction with the Gardaí, which demands that a child (or adult) stop behaving in an anti-social manner. Anti-social behaviour is defined as anything that causes or is likely to cause the following:

- harassment;
- significant or persistent alarm, distress, fear or intimidation; or,
- significant or persistent impairment of their use or enjoyment of their property.

Behaviour warnings and ASBOs can be issued against any child between the ages of 12 and 18 years. The introduction of ASBOs was controversial and their use continues to be controversial, mainly because they are seen to blur the lines between civil and criminal law; it criminalises what is normal youthful behaviour and ignores the right of the child to privacy as the child's identity must be revealed in order to oversee compliance.

The Children's Rights Alliance, Youth Work Ireland and the National Youth Council of Ireland joined together and set up asbowatch.ie to monitor the use of ASBOs. More about the orders and the concerns can be found on that website.

References, resources and further reading

Lalor, K., de Róiste, Á., and M. Devlin, 2007, *Young People in Contemporary Ireland*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.

Children's Rights Alliance, Youth Work Ireland and the National Youth Council of Ireland *www.asbowatch.ie*

Irish Youth Justice Service *www.iyjs.ie*

Department of Children and Youth Affairs *www.dcya.gov.ie*

Youth Culture, Subculture and Globalisation

Culture

Different societies have different cultures. We learn the cultures of our society through a process called socialization. Socialisation is the process whereby human beings learn the rules, expectations, values, norms, language, etc., of the society in which they live. Primary socialisation occurs in the context of the family, and secondary socialization occurs when the individual begins to have contact with and be influenced by the wider community. In the context of the adolescent, the most significant group in the wider community is the peer group.

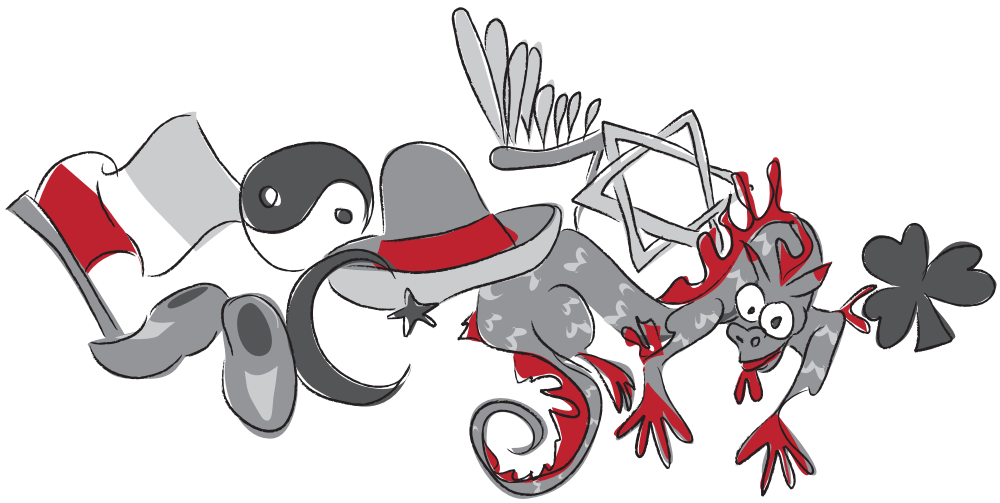
There are five major components of culture:

- **Language** – the way in which members of a group communicate and share meanings; it includes the use of jargon and slang.
- **Symbols** – representations of ideas by a group; this includes clothing, logos, flags and traditional arts.
- **Values** – the enduring concepts and ideals of a group. Values are driven by beliefs and influence the behaviour, emotions, thoughts and actions of a group.
- **Norms** – agreed ways of behaving correctly, and include common manners, such as how members of the group greet each other, or what is appropriate dress for an occasion.
- **Material objects** – all the goods and products that people use in their everyday life such as tools, cooking utensils, machines, decorations and musical objects. Material objects often give clues to the status of a person.

Activity:

Using the five headings on p. 66, make a chart identifying aspects of the culture of your native country and another country or culture that is familiar to you. Examine the similarities and differences between the two cultures.

Exercise: Norms are important! Try this – when you next get into a crowded lift, face the back wall instead of the doors. What happens?



Subculture

A group of people who make similar adaptations to some or all of the five components above constitute a *subculture* that distinguishes them as somewhat 'different', yet still part of the larger culture to which they belong. According to Paul Hodgkinson (2011), members of a subcultural group have:

- **Commitment** – this commitment should have at least a degree of influence on one's daily life in that time is spent interacting with like-minded friends in the real or the virtual world; the symbols and material artefacts of the subcultural group are used – things that might include clothing, posters and music.
- **Identity** – a sense of belonging to the group is felt and one is able to recognize others who belong.

- **Distinction** – a sense of standing apart from other groups, having some values and beliefs that are unique to the group.
- **Autonomy** – being independent of and from other groups.

In essence, a subculture brings together like-minded individuals who feel that elements of the major culture has little relevance to them and together they develop a sense of identity.

Subcultures can help the process of adolescent change, and can help individuals to cope and adapt to that change. Being part of a subcultural group is often seen as a necessary part of the journey from childhood to adulthood in the Western world where, in modern times, that change can happen very quickly.

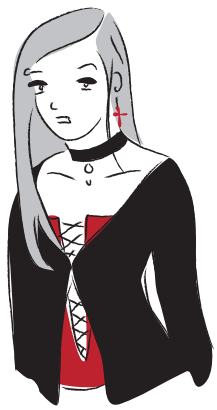
Youth subcultures often manifest themselves in general themes such as:

- rebelling and rejecting the expectations of the adult world regarding work and conformity; rejecting the status quo.
- expressing their rebellion through a shared interest or a common activity – listening to/playing a specific type of music, drug use, fighting, creativity in the arts, political activism, experimenting with different religions, soccer hooliganism, online gaming and so on.
- claiming territory, as is typical of street gangs or different subcultures co-existing within a space, such as 'Goths' hanging out in a different space to the street dancers.
- moving in a tight social group outside of family; from a developmental stance, the subcultural group can lend a sense of security and support while the young person is trying to move away from the narrow confines of family.
- showing a distinctive and sometimes symbolic use of style and fashion. Nearly every subculture has a distinctive style, even if it's a question of what 'not to wear'.
- seeing mainstream society as banal, irrelevant or headed in the wrong direction leading to counterculture movements such as: the hippie movement of the '60s; the punk movement of the '70 and '80s; hip-hop and gangsta rap in the 1990s and 2000s; the Make Poverty History movement of the 00s and more recently the Occupy Wall Street movement. Of course, not all of these are purely youth movements, but they do seek to harness the energy and idealism of youth.

Activity:

Identify the major features of some youth subcultures (e.g. Goth, punk, etc.), such as:

- music both listened to and played.
- political associations, if any.
- peer influences including recognised leaders and followers and behaviour associated with the group.
- use of technology including mobile phones, laptops, particular online social networks.
- clothes and hair styles.
- patterns of behaviour such as use of drugs and alcohol, sexual behaviour, aggression including self-harm.



The increase in youth subcultures today

There are various theories to explain why there appear to be more youth cultures today than ever before, the most common of which are:

- The size of the society and the size of the youth group; where there is a large population there may be a need to be able to identify with a smaller group.
- The rate of change; in a society with a slow pace of change (such as traditional, pre-industrial societies) young people carry on much as their parents did, fitting into a relatively stable social context, whereas in a fast-moving society,

young people realise they cannot rely on the previous generation's way of coping, so they search for new ways and new identities that are more relevant. Youth subcultures help the dominant culture to evolve.

- The position of youth in our society; childhood and adolescence have grown longer in Western societies over the past 100 years so that young people do not consider themselves to be children and are not yet considered to be adults, and so are 'floating' and looking around for anchors for their identity. In line with theories of adolescent development, they are filled with excitement, energy and opinions. Many have lots of spare time and a fair proportion have expendable income.
- The impact of globalisation; it is easier for individuals and groups to see and interact with others who are like-minded even though they are not living in the same neighbourhood.
- Subcultural movements can spread more easily with the advent of new information technologies which, among other things, facilitate the use of social media.

Globalisation

Stiglitz (2002, p. 9) defines globalization as:

'…the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world which has been brought about by the enormous reduction of costs of transportation and communication, and the breaking down of artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge and … people.'

Information, ideas, money and people move around the world quicker than ever before, and new language has sprung up to describe the phenomenon. The concept of the *global village* (a term coined by Marshall McLuhan in 1968) is used to describe how the world seems to be smaller through the use of information technology, particularly the Internet. *Global youth culture* refers to the fact that young all over the world from Sydney to Sao Paolo and from Kanturk to Kampala are listening to some of the same pop songs and rock bands, adopting similar styles of dress and can eat similar foods. Just as 'Google it' has become an equivalent term for 'look it up', 'McWorld' (Barber, 1992) aptly describes the rise of such popular culture. American

cultural imperialism (sometimes broadly referred to as Westernisation) has dominated this global culture. Significant features of this Westernisation are individualism and consumerism.

'You're not going anywhere looking like that, young lady!'

Individualism meaning the culture of the 'I', in which individual needs, attainments and independence are considered more important than those of the community.

Consumerism is the drive to buy and use ever-increasing amounts of products, from food to clothing to the latest technology.

It can be argued that global youth culture has become the culture of individualism and consumerism.

Consumerism is being exploited by the economic interests of a handful of global enterprises and big industries, and the choices being made available to young people today is ever-increasing.

Young people in the Western world have huge buying power; they represent a significant part of the market in Europe as around 25% of the population in Europe is between the ages of 15 and 29 years (Eurostat, 2009). It is important to big business around the world that young people are helped to feel that they must have the latest gadget or fashion item to stay 'cool'. There is now a growing research field in business that involves 'Merchants of Cool' or 'Ambassadors of Cool' who seek to influence or discover the next 'cool' idea and be first to exploit that market. Businesses are aware that as soon as a product goes mainstream, it will soon cease to be 'cool' and so the cycle continues.

This business model affects youth populations in countries far removed from Western-style capitalism, with the culture of young people in a Peruvian or an Indian village being influenced by cultural artefacts that have little relevance to their lives.

The challenges for youth work

There are many issues associated with globalization but among the most challenging for youth work and youth workers in Ireland are:

1. How to develop a sense of identity and belonging in a way that brings the local and the global together.
2. How to provide a relevant and inclusive service to the significant number of young people who have migrated from other areas, people whose identity is tied up with a completely different culture when compared to the community in which they now live. Although there is a certain amount of homogeneity in global culture, there is also a significant diversity across local communities.
3. How to empower young people for whom access to modern technology and a growing array of commodities on which to spend their money may not necessarily equate with an increase in power. Unemployment, decreasing opportunities and increasing dependence on parents and/or social welfare are realities for a considerable number of young people in Ireland today, all of which may increase feelings of powerlessness.
4. How to address the fact that there are a considerable proportion of young people in the developing world who are living in abject poverty, slavery and war. For some of their communities, much of this misery, poverty and violence is caused by the demands of the large multinational companies for raw materials and for ever-cheaper labour to produce the commodities to meet the demands of young consumers in the West.

Youth work organizations are already addressing some of these issues, and notably in Ireland there is 'One World Week', a youth-led awareness-raising, education and action that takes place throughout Ireland annually, usually during November. It seeks to enable young people to learn about local and global justice issues, to make connections between the two and take action to bring about change. Past themes have been 'Images and Messages in Development' (2010); 'A Rich Man's World – Consume with Care' (2011) and 'Bouncing Back' (2012). Young people around the country vote on the theme that they feel should be covered. Another development

in Ireland which has been covered elsewhere in this book (see Section 2, p. 83) is the establishment of Dáil na nÓg, which seeks to give young people a voice about matters that concern them.

At local level, youth workers can use modern technology to enable young people to produce film, exhibitions, drama and so on to add their voices to the dialogue about the world in which they live – local and global. In doing so, they will also have an opportunity to explore their own identity, culture and direction in a global world.

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Gidley, J., 2001, *Globalization and its Impact on Youth, Journal of Future Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, August 2001, pp. 89–106 available: *http://rmit.academia.edu/JenniferGidley/Papers/254927/Globalization_and_Its_Impact_on_Youth. Accessed 19.6.2012*

Information about 'One World Week' and back issues of the workshops and exercises are available from *www.youthdeved.ie* or *www.nyci.ie*

Further resources available at *www.developmenteducation.ie*

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