



OPEN Project Case Study

Seminar: Ethnic Minorities and Immigrants – actions to promote tolerance and respect

Case Study Title: Time to Play

Organisation

Community Integration Partnership (CIP)

Summary

Time to Play is a project designed to enhance play opportunities and activities for newly arrived and host communities in targeted areas of Birmingham.

The project had a vision for more and improved play provision for isolated refugee children. Bringing refugee and host community children together in a safe environment to play and learn together was designed to build positive relationships between people from different communities, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

The challenges

- Create opportunities for play between children of newly arrived backgrounds and 'host' community children to encourage positive experiences between these two groups and their parents.
- Initial engagement from families from newly arrived communities and ongoing participation in the sessions.
- Encouraging children to play with other children, which was uncommon for children that did not attend very often.

The solutions

Initial engagement and participation of newly arrived families was achieved through close partnership working with support workers and childrens centres, who signposted and encouraged families to attend.



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Parents were encouraged to contribute to the planning of the following sessions and share play methods used within their countries, incorporating the interests of both child and parent. This led to more frequent attendance and helped children to play with other children.

Sessions were advertised in partner agencies newsletters, in health centres, schools, places of worship and libraries to increase maximum exposure.

Work with housing providers identified a significant need for play provision in hostels. 'Time to Play' delivered an additional session within a hostel.

Develop innovative and culturally diverse (including UK culture) play activities at outreach settings and within the CIP nursery in Birmingham.

Promote the participation of parents/carers of newly arrived children in play opportunities to enhance their skills, knowledge and confidence in encouraging play.



Develop skills and knowledge of accepted UK theory of play and its practical application amongst women from newly arrived communities who are volunteering in the nursery, to build their confidence in bringing cultural play into their planning of activities and build the skills of future bi-lingual childcare practitioners

Produce and disseminate 'best practice tip sheets' for practitioners working with children from diverse backgrounds.

Run child-led play activities designed to meet the needs of children affected by war and torture.

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Share best practice with other groups supporting refugee children by inviting practitioners into their settings to view how they deliver cross-cultural play activities. The practitioners participated in parent led sessions where parents use play activities used in their home countries.

Hold a winter festival each year to disseminate the learning of the project to other professionals, as well as providing them with an opportunity to participate in cross-cultural play sessions and have an opportunity to see the different cultural resources used.



The results

- Engaged over 330 children over the two years.
- Recruited and supported over 20 volunteers from newly arrived communities in gaining an accredited childcare or play qualification. A number of the volunteers on the 'Time to Play' Project went on to find employment within nursery settings, having completed their NVQs. The remainder of the volunteers are currently undergoing NVQ training, and participating in other training sessions such as first aid and health and safety training to improve their prospects of employment.
- Created new play opportunities for newly arrived communities.
- Disseminated the learning gained through the project to other professionals.

Learning points

- Recognising the experiences and skills of some people from newly arrived communities, in guiding projects and services that meet the needs of clients who may not have engaged previously.
- Maintaining good communication networks and setting up effective referral routes with partner agencies played a key part in recruiting participants on to the project.
- The 'Time to Play' project worked closely with housing providers delivering NASS housing to ensure very newly arrived families were made aware of the sessions and encourage to take part.

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Comment

This project is promoting tolerance and respect towards ethnic minorities and immigrants by increasing the opportunities for refugee and host community children to play together and encouraging parent participation so that activities are cross-cultural. While the project methodology is not new, this type of scheme makes a valuable contribution to community life and the well being of young people. The learning about different types of play is an innovative feature and embeds valuable learning for all involved. The sharing with other professionals is also a strength.

Contact

For more information please go to the CIP [website](#) or email info@cip-uk.org.uk. Alternatively you can phone 0121 454 9000.