

‘We’ll never be the same’: learning with children, parents and communities through ongoing political conflict and trauma: a resource (Barnardo’s 2004)

We’ll never be the same’ is the title of a comprehensive resource relevant to a wide range of organisations concerned with children, young people, families, community and society. It is comprised of one main document and five accompanying booklets developed by Barnardo’s Parenting in a Divided Society project through action research, group work and evaluation. The work was independently evaluated as **‘groundbreaking’ and ‘of the widest relevance within N. Ireland and further afield’** (R.O’Hara, Charities Evaluation NI., 2004), and has won an award for ‘excellence and innovation’ in the research category of a UK wide competition of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP, August, 2004).

Target audience

The **purpose** of the resource is to contribute to the resilience and well being of children and young people, parent/family support, trauma support and peace building. In particular, to help make a difference in the lives of children, young people and parents/carers and adults who have experienced life threatening events either directly or indirectly. This requires what we have called the **‘development of extraordinary skills for extraordinary circumstances’** among all those adults concerned with children and young people.

The **main document** (green cover) is organised in a structure that considers the context, the work with groups, the model of work, and key learning:

- The first part of the document, **Considering the Context**, describes the purpose of the resource and the context of the work - organisational, political and social, policy, and research as well as starting points, principles and underpinning values, intended outcomes and evaluative framework.
- In **Considering the Work**, there is a description of the methods, context and work with two groups of parents in two different communities, and examples of interventions in the groups.
- In **Considering the Model**, the process and content of the model based on working with parents are outlined with the rationale and summary of the main theorists used.
- The last section, **Considering key learning**, examines notions of ‘what works’ and effectiveness, and provides evidence of effective interventions from the point of view of parents/group members and group facilitators, followed by key learning/initial recommendations, and key findings on the impact of the conflict on children, young people, and parents and the wider family.
- Finally, the main document provides a bibliography and further information.



The **five accompanying booklets** focus on:

Considering trauma and recovery (red cover) explores definitions of trauma, and seeks to offer a more appropriate definition for the context of over 30+ years of violent political conflict in the north/N.Ireland. It describes models of trauma recovery, working in groups, how trauma is transmitted from generation to generation (transgenerational) as well as horizontally (across families, communities and social systems), looks at issues of leadership, and finally, provides further information and websites.



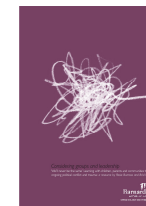
Considering children and parents/carers (orange cover) offers a brief description of recent research and theories on child development, the process of attachment and attunement and the role of parents/caregivers. It provides a focus on children and trauma and a framework for working with children and adolescents, then presents information on loss and bereavement, and concludes with a bibliography and further information.



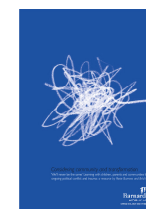
Considering victims and workers (pink cover) explores definitions of 'victim' - both since 1994 post-ceasefire N. Ireland and more widely applicable, general definitions. It looks at victimisation, implications for workers, and the various empowering and disempowering ways workers can relate to 'victims'. A model for working with victims is summarised, then set in the context of wider societal relationships and the roles of victim, perpetrator, rescuer, and bystander. A bibliography and list of websites is provided.



Considering groups and leadership (purple cover) explores group life, including the group as different levels of 'system' and as a 'field', supporting group process and development, the role of the group leader, trauma focused groups, and experiential approaches to participatory education using the work of Paulo Freire. The booklet concludes with a bibliography.



Considering communities and transformation (blue cover) asserts the centrality of addressing the cultural and political context in this work. It provides definitions of community, sectarianism, prejudice and discrimination, as well as a map of trauma recovery and political conflict as a process of personal and collective transformation. A bibliography is provided.



Available from:

Barnardo's, 542-544 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3HE Tel. 90672366.
Cost: £5 for community groups, £10 voluntary organisations, £25 statutory organisations. It's also available to download as pdf files from www.barnardos.org.uk (look under resources, then research and publications, community and scroll down to title of resource). Presentations and training to accompany the resource are available. For information on support for workers contact: Rosie Burrows on 028 90672366 or email: rosie.burrows@barnardos.org.uk