



Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS)

Equality and Diversity Characteristics Guidance

This guidance is to assist with assessments plans and intervening with children and families. In particular, it should be considered when completing the “Young Person’s Self Identity” question in the Personal Family and Social Factors section in AssetPlus.

The factors in the “Young Person’s living arrangements and environmental” sections are not designed to be asked directly. Although some helpful questions are indicated the practitioner will as ever exercise their professional judgement and careful curiosity.

There is no expectation that every part is addressed in assessments but rather that is used as relevant.

Most sections contain some guidance in italics. This part of the guidance is to address where children and families are displaying discriminatory behaviour in relation to the specific characteristic.

Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Race	Is self-defined ethnicity stated? Are they supported in their racial identity?	Do all members of the family share the same heritage? If not, are differences	How do you describe your ethnicity/ racial heritage? Acknowledge any difference in your background and show careful curiosity.	Plan appointments to work around dates, events and activities that are important to family.	Don't ask “Where are you from?”, “Where are your originally from?”, “Where's your family from?”

	<p>What does it mean to them?</p> <p>Is the child part of a community that has race/ethnicity in common?</p> <p>How does their cultural background support/uplift/benefit them?</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination (eg unfair rules, exclusion, stop and search, overt racism, reduced opportunity).</p> <p>Is the voice of the child captured?</p> <p><i>Does the child hold racist beliefs? How do they manifest?</i></p>	<p>celebrated or do they cause tension?</p> <p>Are there people in the immediate network who can support positive identity development?</p> <p>Is the family part of a community that has race/ethnicity in common?</p> <p>Have they or are they experiencing discrimination? How does this impact on them/the child?</p> <p>Is the voice of the family captured?</p> <p><i>Does the family hold racist beliefs? How do they manifest?</i></p>	<p>What is your family story? Would you be happy to tell me more about what this means for you?</p> <p>What is important to you about your culture/heritage?</p> <p>What does an average day look like?</p> <p>Have you experienced racism? How has that affected you?</p> <p>How could I show respect (and avoid disrespecting) your culture while I'm working with you?</p> <p><i>You said/did... Tell me more about your attitude towards...</i></p>	<p>Incorporate family/community activities in desistance plan (and timetable where appropriate).</p> <p>Be clear about what you can and can't be flexible about.</p> <p>Amplify voices of children and families who have experienced discrimination.</p> <p><i>Does the plan address racist attitudes and/or behaviour if applicable?</i></p> <p><i>Do staff/volunteers/others need protection?</i></p>	<p>This carries implication that the subject of the question doesn't belong.</p> <p>Don't contradict lived experience - even if you think there is another explanation.</p> <p><i>Don't let racist words/action go unchallenged, even if only to state you don't agree.</i></p>
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Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Religion / belief	<p>Are beliefs identified?</p> <p>What does this mean to the child?</p> <p>Do they attend a place of worship?</p> <p>Are they part of a faith-based community?</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination?</p> <p>Is the voice of the child captured?</p> <p><i>Does the child hold anti-religious beliefs? (eg islamophobia) How do they manifest?</i></p>	<p>What prominence does faith have in family life?</p> <p>Do the home/family share faith with child? If not, are differences celebrated or do they cause tension?</p> <p>Are there people in the immediate network who can support positive identity development?</p> <p>Is the family part of a faith-based community?</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination?</p>	<p>Do you have a religion? What does that mean to you?</p> <p>What/when/how do you celebrate?</p> <p>What rules do you follow?</p> <p>How could I show respect to your faith when I'm working with you?</p> <p>Does faith provide opportunity for the child for community links, positive engagement, work experience, reparation?</p> <p><i>You said/did... Tell me more about your attitude towards...</i></p>	<p>Plan appointments to work around dates, events and activities that are of religious importance.</p> <p>Incorporate chosen religious activities in desistance plan (and timetable where appropriate).</p> <p>Be clear about what you can and can't be flexible about.</p> <p>Amplify voices of children and families who have experienced discrimination.</p> <p><i>Does the plan address discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviour if applicable?</i></p>	<p>Make assumptions about beliefs based on religion – understand there is wide variance.</p> <p>Conflate strong beliefs and radicalisation. Do the 'prevent' training and know the difference.</p> <p><i>Don't let words/actions that stereotype people from a faith-group go unchallenged, even if only to state you don't agree.</i></p>

		<p>How does this impact on them/the child?</p> <p>Is the voice of the family captured?</p> <p><i>Does the family hold anti-religious beliefs? (eg islamophobia)</i></p> <p><i>How does it manifest?</i></p>		<p><i>Do staff/volunteers/others need protection?</i></p>	
Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Language	<p>What is the child's first language?</p> <p>Does school accommodate language needs?</p>	<p>What is the first language of the primary caregivers?</p> <p>What is the preferred language for communication with professionals?</p> <p>If the preferred language is not English, what is the precise dialect spoken?</p>	<p>What is your preferred language to talk to me?</p> <p>What language do you speak at home/with friends?</p> <p>Do you need any support with communication?</p> <p>Do you need help with anything from a more fluent English-speaker?</p> <p>What language should the interpreter speak?</p>	<p>Request interpreter for telephone and face-to-face meetings. Plan appts in sufficient time to get the right interpreter.</p> <p>Get important letters interpreted.</p> <p>Consider Is the main language a written language?</p> <p>Can they read?</p> <p>Do they understand?</p>	<p>Use the child or another family member as an interpreter – especially for sensitive topics.</p> <p>Exclude a primary caregiver because language is a barrier – even if another care-giver can communicate in English.</p> <p>Make assumptions about level of</p>

		<p>Are there concerns or preferences in relation to choice of interpreter.</p> <p>Does lack of or limited English impede daily life? (eg shopping, completing forms etc)</p> <p>How does this impact on the child?</p>	Do you have any concerns/preferences about using an interpreter?	Use plain English and symbols if possible in written English.	understanding in a person's own language.
Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Sex	<p>Does the child feel supported according to their sex? What does it mean to them?</p> <p>Do they have a positive gender identity?</p> <p>Do they have friends principally of the</p>	<p>Are the rules, values, expectations, and/or aspirations different for boys and girls in the family.</p> <p>Are there people in the immediate network who support positive gender identity formation?</p>	<p>Do you identify to a particular gender?</p> <p>How do you prefer your gender to be described?</p> <p>Acknowledge any difference in your background and show careful curiosity.</p> <p>Would you be happy to tell me more about what this means for you?</p>	<p>Amplify voices of children and families who have experienced discrimination.</p> <p>Try to match with worker of preferred gender where feelings of safety are concerned.</p> <p><i>Does the plan address</i></p>	<p>Do not make assumptions.</p> <p>Share information without consent.</p> <p>Don't contradict lived experience - even if you think there is another explanation.</p> <p><i>Don't let words/actions that</i></p>

	<p>same/different gender.</p> <p>Do they have positive gender role models *(male, female & other if applicable).</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination?</p> <p>Do they feel safe with male/female workers?</p> <p>Voice of the child captured? <i>Does the child hold discriminatory views in relation to gender? How do these manifest (eg domestic abuse, toxic masculinity)</i></p>	<p>How is gender represented?</p> <p>Have they or are they experiencing gender-based discrimination?</p> <p>How does this impact on the child?</p> <p>Is the voice of the family captured?</p> <p><i>Does the family hold discriminatory views in relation to gender? How do these manifest (eg domestic abuse, toxic masculinity)</i></p>	<p>Tell me about the things you like about yourself</p> <p>Tell me the things you don't like about yourself.</p> <p>What is important to you about the gender you have chosen to identify with?</p> <p>What does this look like in your day-to-day life?</p> <p>Have you experienced discrimination relating to your gender? How has that affected you?</p> <p>How could I show respect (and avoid disrespecting) your gender while I'm working with you?</p> <p><i>You said/did... Tell me more about your attitude towards...</i></p>	<p><i>discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviour if applicable?</i></p> <p><i>Do staff/volunteers/others need protection?</i></p>	<p><i>negatively stereotype people of a particular sex go unchallenged, even if only to state you don't agree.</i></p>
Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts

Sexual Orientation	<p>Has the child expressed their sexual orientation (through words and/or behaviour)?</p> <p>Has the child expressed that they are unsure of or struggling with their sexual orientation (through words and/or behaviour)?</p> <p>Are they asking for support? Do they have support around this issue within their social and/or family group?</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination?</p>	<p>Are there LGBTQ+ family members?</p> <p>If yes, have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination? From within or outside the home?</p> <p>How does this impact on the child?</p> <p>Is the family able/willing to offer support to LGBTQ+ child?</p> <p>Is the LGBTQ+ child safe within the home?</p> <p>Is the voice of the family captured?</p> <p><i>Does the family hold homophobic or other</i></p>	<p>Are you in a relationship?</p> <p>Have you got a boyfriend or girlfriend?</p> <p>Tell me the things you like about your closest friend.</p> <p>Do you want to talk to me or anyone else about relationships?</p> <p>Do you need any advice about sex and relationships?</p> <p><i>You said/did... Tell me more about your attitude towards...</i></p>	<p>Find ways to ensure that every child knows that you are supportive of LGBTQ+</p> <p>Share details of relevant support and social groups.</p> <p>Incorporate chosen support-related activities in desistance plan (and timetable where appropriate).</p> <p>Amplify voices of children and families who have experienced discrimination.</p> <p><i>Does the plan address discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviour if applicable?</i></p> <p><i>Do staff/volunteers/others need protection?</i></p>	<p>Encourage a child to come out as LGBTQ+ before they are ready to do so.</p> <p>Expect a child to come out to everyone at the same time (if at all).</p> <p>Share info without consent.</p> <p><i>Don't let words/actions that negatively stereotype LGBTQ+ people go unchallenged, even if only to state you don't agree.</i></p>
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	<p>Is the voice of the child captured?</p> <p><i>Does the child hold homophobic or other discriminatory views in relation to LGBTQ+? How do these manifest?</i></p>	<p><i>discriminatory views in relation to LGBTQ+? How do these manifest?</i></p>			
Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Age	<p>Age of child?</p> <p>Does maturity reflect age?</p> <p>Does age present particular benefits or challenges? (eg too young to leave school or not ready for responsibilities of adulthood)</p> <p>What role and expectations are placed on the child within the home and how</p>	<p>Is there age-appropriate parenting?</p> <p>Are there significant age-gaps between members of the family?</p> <p>Have parents/family experienced discrimination because of their age?</p> <p>How does this impact on the child?</p>	<p>How would you describe someone of your age?</p> <p>What is it like for someone of your age on a day-to-day basis?</p> <p>What's the best and worst thing about being your age?</p> <p>Is there anything you feel you are prevented from doing because of your age?</p> <p>Does being your age limit the choices you have?</p>	<p>Are there any important transitions between services imminent – e.g. to Probations, CAMHs, Adult Social Care which we will need to address.</p> <p>Reflect on the impact of peer association and influence.</p> <p>May need to amend intervention content and delivery / language used</p>	<p>Don't use age as an indicator of level of understanding.</p> <p>Ask closed questions.</p> <p><i>Don't let words/actions that negatively stereotype people of a particular age go unchallenged, even if only to state you don't agree.</i></p>

	does this impact on them.		<p>What is one thing that you do for your parent/carer?</p> <p>What is one thing that you do for your brother or sister?</p> <p>What are you looking forward to most as you get older?</p> <p>Is there anything you are not looking forward to?</p> <p><i>You said/did... Tell me more about your attitude towards...</i></p>		
Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Disability	Consider learning support needs, mental health needs, physical health needs, sensory impairment, neuro-diversity, communication difficulties etc.	<p>Does the child support a family member?</p> <p>Does anybody in the household have a disability/health need?</p> <p>How does this impact on the child?</p>	<p>Would you describe yourself as having a disability?</p> <p>Have you ever been called any names or treated differently because of your disability?</p>	<p>Impact on nature of interventions – delivery and content.</p> <p>Reflect on the impact of a personal disability or living with someone with a disability.</p> <p>Need to ensure all appointments are accessible.</p>	<p>Forget that some disabilities are not visible.</p> <p>Assume that all disabilities that exist have been diagnosed.</p> <p>Assume that people want to identify as being disabled.</p>

	<p>How does this impact daily life?</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination?</p> <p>Is the voice of the child captured?</p> <p><i>Does the child hold discriminatory views in relation to people with disability? How do these manifest?</i></p>	<p>How does it impact on parenting?</p> <p>Have they experienced or are they experiencing discrimination?</p> <p><i>Does the family hold discriminatory views in relation to people with disability? How do these manifest?</i></p>	<p>Does your disability stop you from doing things that you want to?</p> <p>How does this affect you on a day-to-day basis?</p> <p>Do you live with anyone who has a disability?</p> <p>How does this affect them/are there things they can't do?</p> <p>Who does the things they can't do?</p> <p>Do you do things for them?</p> <p>How does this affect you on a day-to-day basis?</p> <p>Tell me about a time when you helped someone in need?</p> <p>Have they ever been called any names or treated differently because of their disability?</p>	<p>Ensure communication is compliant with any disability.</p> <p>Specialist referrals required</p> <p>Referral to support groups</p> <p><i>Does the plan address discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviour if applicable?</i></p> <p><i>Do staff/volunteers/others need protection?</i></p>	<p><i>Don't let words/actions that negatively stereotype disabled people go unchallenged, even if only to state you don't agree.</i></p>
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			<i>You said/did... Tell me more about your attitude towards...</i>		
Individual Characteristic	Child	Family/Home	Helpful questions	How does this inform our practice?	Some don'ts
Significant life event (trauma)	<p>Identify significant (traumatic) life events that impact on the child's identity, behaviour, thoughts.</p> <p>How does it /do they impact?</p> <p>Is the traumatic experience ongoing (eg continuing domestic abuse, sexual exploitation)?</p> <p>How fresh is the trauma? Is it still being processed?</p> <p>How does the trauma affect identity?</p>	<p>Have family members experienced trauma?</p> <p>If yes, how does that affect daily life/ parenting capacity? Is the traumatic experience ongoing (eg continuing domestic abuse)?</p> <p>How fresh is the trauma?</p> <p>Is it still being processed?</p> <p>How does the trauma affect the family story?</p>	<p>What is the best thing about your life at the moment?</p> <p>What's the worst thing in your life at the moment?</p> <p>Do you ever have trouble falling asleep?</p> <p>What's the last thing you think about before going to sleep?</p> <p>Do you ever dream? Are they usually good dreams? Tell me about them?</p> <p>What's the first thing you think about when you wake up?</p> <p>Can you remember a time in your life that made you feel unhappy or sad? How did that effect you</p>	<p>Is immediate action required to protect a child or vulnerable adult?</p> <p>Is external support required to move on from the trauma (for child and/or family)?</p> <p>Is that support available in the systems around the child and/or family or does it need to be found from outside sources?</p>	<p>Make clinical diagnoses.</p> <p>Provide clinical support or advice that you ae not qualified to do.</p> <p>Ignore the evidence and indicators.</p>

			<p>and how do you feel about it now?</p> <p>Who else knew about it? Who else was affected by it?</p> <p>Did you talk to someone about it?</p> <p>Did someone help you?</p>		
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