



International Journal of Social Pedagogy

Editorial

Relationships that Matter

Gabriel Eichsteller ¹, Pat Petrie ¹

How to cite: Eichsteller, G., Petrie, P. 'Relationships that Matter.' *International Journal of Social Pedagogy*, 2013, 2(1): 1, pp. 1–2. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ijsp.2013.v2.1.001>.

Published: 01 January 2013

Peer Review:

This article has been peer reviewed through the journal's standard Editorial review.

Copyright:

© 2013, The Author(s). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License (CC-BY-NC-SA) 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>, which permits re-use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided any modifications of this material in anyway is distributed under this same license, is not used for commercial purposes, and the original author and source are credited • DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ijsp.2013.v2.1.001>

Open Access:

International Journal of Social Pedagogy is a peer-reviewed open access journal.



Editorial: Relationships that Matter

Gabriel Eichsteller & Pat Petrie, editors

Dear Reader,

One of the main reasons why social pedagogy has attracted much interest in the United Kingdom over the last few years is due to its focus on authentic, positive, strong relationships. With the second issue of the *International Journal of Social Pedagogy* we aim to further demonstrate that relationships are fundamentally important for social pedagogy theory and practice, with the four articles in this issue offering a variety of perspectives on why relationships matter.

Based on research with social pedagogues from Denmark, Germany, Flanders and England, Claire Cameron's paper 'Cross-National Understandings of the Purpose of Child-Professional Relationships' analyses how social pedagogues conceptualise relationships. Their responses highlight four different purposes: supporting a child in developing skills and a sense of self; creating the conditions for an ethical encounter between the professional and the child, characterised by 'being there' for the child; providing opportunities for the child to be involved in decision-making and democratic processes; and gaining an understanding of the child's lifeworld and the challenges experienced by the child. It emerges that the question of what makes relationships meaningful within social pedagogy needs to be answered within the context in which it is asked – and this context is both affected by the social pedagogical setting in which it takes place and by the national understanding of social pedagogy.

In his article 'Social Pedagogy within Key Worker Practice: Community Situated Support for Marginalised Youth', Shaun Morgan draws on his research with support workers and young people leaving care, exploring what is important to both parties with regards to relationships. Based on their responses, he argues that social pedagogy provides a meaningful and useful conceptual framework for describing the relationships key workers build with young people in order to support them around the time they leave care. His paper thus provides an important contribution, exploring how social pedagogy could relate to existing practice, supporting professionals in expressing the value and purpose of what they do in ways that are theoretically sound and ethically grounded.

The two final articles are based on a slightly different premise: if we find relationships to be of such importance for care and educational practice, how can we systematically demonstrate their value within a socio-political climate where outcomes are expected to be measurable? 'Outcomes that Matter[®] for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care' outlines a way of recording developmental outcomes using the Circle of Courage developmental themes of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Leon Fulcher and Thom Garfat, the authors of Outcomes that Matter, show how the model can be used to record, systematically, 20 developmental areas that track young people's achievements. They also demonstrate how young people themselves can participate in the reflective process that is central to the recording. As the authors' intention is not to serve their own financial interest but to contribute to the discourse on exploring social pedagogical ways

To cite this article: Eichsteller, G. (2013). Editorial: Relationships that Matter. International Journal of Social Pedagogy, 2(1), 1-2, DOI: 10.14324/111.444.ijsp.2013.v2.1.001. Available online at <http://www.internationaljournalofsocialpedagogy.com>

© All rights reserved. The author(s) retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication with the work simultaneously licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgement of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal.

of measuring outcomes, they have provided sufficient detail about Outcomes that Matter to enable interested professionals to adapt this model to their own practice or to be inspired to find their own creative ways of recording what difference they make. Leon and Thom show that external pressures to provide evidence on practice and to record outcomes need not be a tick-box exercise but an opportunity for further relationship-building and for demonstrating why social pedagogical practice matters.

Chris Walter's paper 'Working Inclusively with Outcomes that Matter' offers an insight into how the framework has been used by Chris and his colleagues at the St Andrew's Project, Camphill School Aberdeen to support children and young people and their families who are experiencing difficulties or school breakdown. Outlining the case of Darren, a 12-year-old boy, he shows how using the Outcomes that Matter framework enabled professionals, Darren himself and his parents to reflect on the progress he was making during his time with St Andrew's, to overcome challenges that arose in the process and to build further on Darren's achievements.

We hope that these articles will contribute to the wider debate about professional relationships in working with children and young people, help make a strong case for why relationships must be at the heart of social pedagogical practice and support professionals in developing ways of capturing how relational practice benefits children. Although it has taken us some time to put together the second issue of the *International Journal of Social Pedagogy*, we hope you will find that the wait has been worth it. Enjoy the read!

Best wishes on behalf of the editorial team,

Gabriel & Pat