

2.3: Equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging

High quality outdoor learning can be achieved through respecting and promoting the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals within all our professional activities and recognising the value of every person. (IOL webpage).

Equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) play a central role in high quality practice. In turn, high quality practice has the potential to influence wider participation and employment opportunities.

“For participants, the sense of belonging they experience within the group or setting will reflect how successful EDIB strategies are.”

Equity

Equity focuses on the individual needs that people have. It differs from equality which allows for the same opportunities being available for all but does not allow for individual capability to access those opportunities.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the multitude of ways that people can differ from each other. It includes, amongst others, gender identity, race, religion, ability, sexual orientation and age.

Inclusion

Inclusion means addressing individual needs in striving towards equality.

Belonging

Belonging is the result when all other aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion are in place and felt by the participant. When these aspects are met, learning is likely to be most effective¹.

Assessing current practice

Understanding the context you are working in is crucial to understanding how to effect change, and how to forge new partnerships.



Where high quality outdoor learning is taking place

Practitioners and providers:

- » Choose language that includes rather than excludes.
- » Choose language that acknowledges, accepts and celebrates differences.
- » Choose language that is welcoming to everyone.
- » Consider how they can make their practice more equitable.



Questions to develop practice:

- » How do your own cultural and social beliefs and experiences influence your practice?
- » How might your participants' cultural and social beliefs and experiences influence your practice?
- » How can you develop your inclusive practice?
- » How do the images and stories you use in displays, reports and marketing reflect the communities you serve?
- » How is your practice equitable, i.e. how do you respond to individual needs?
- » Do you regularly review your practice in terms of personal knowledge, values and actions and in response to relevant feedback?
- » What is your level of knowledge around current terminology and issues related to EDIB?

Addressing diversity, inclusion and equity can be, for many, a journey that involves self-discovery as well as changes to practice. For participants, the sense of belonging they experience within the group or setting will reflect how successful EDIB strategies are. The BASICS model (Belonging, Aspiration, Safety, Identity, Challenge and Success) offers one way of gauging success from a participant perspective (Figure 1).

The BASICS model

As a participant, do I feel a sense of belonging, aspiration, safety, identity, challenge, and success?

Belonging

- » Do I feel listened to?
- » Do I feel respected as an individual?
- » Do I feel valued?
- » Am I asked for my opinion? And does that opinion matter?

Aspirations

- » Do I feel that the learning has a purpose?
- » That the activity makes sense?
- » Are there meaningful and realistic goals and targets?
- » Do I buy into those goals and targets?
- » Do I have an understanding of the 'big picture' about the session and not just what is going to happen next?

Safety

- » Do I feel safe? Emotionally, physically, psychologically?
- » Do I feel comfortable and safe within the group and the environment?

Identity

- » Am I helped to learn things about myself in a supportive and positive way?
- » Am I allowed to be me?
- » Is there an atmosphere that promotes and celebrates success?

Challenge

- » Am I bored? Am I terrified? Or am I experiencing an appropriate level of challenge?
- » Can I say no if I want to?

Success

- » Do I get to experience success as part of the session or sequence?
- » Do I receive meaningful praise when I succeed or guidance if I am struggling?
- » Do I recognise the success?

Figure 1. The BASICS model (based on Smith, 1996)²

Further reading

INclusivity in the OUTdoors: Insights and recommendations from the 2021 Raising Our Game Webinar Series.³

UK Sports Councils Moving to Inclusion Framework

See also

- 2.0 Understanding quality in outdoor learning
- 2.1 Underpinning structures
- 2.2 Safety management and safeguarding
- 2.4 Developing relationships
- 2.5 Outdoor learning the environment and sustainable practice
- 2.6 Theory of change
- 2.7 Continuity and progression

References

- 1 Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396.
- 2 Smith, A. (1998) *Accelerated Learning in Practice*. Stafford: Network Educational Press.
- 3 Anderson, N. et al, (2021) *INclusivity in the OUTdoors: Insights and recommendations from the 2021 Raising Our Game Webinar Series*. Available at: <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/standards/iol-professional-standards/equality-diversity-inclusion/inclusivity-in-the-outdoors.html>

