

THE YOUNG GLOBAL CITIZENS PASSPORT SCHEME

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Global Connections DEC, Wales (2005) *The Young Global Citizens Passport Scheme*, available at: www.globalconnections.org.uk.

‘The Young Global Citizens Passport Scheme’ is a global citizenship resource which seeks to introduce young people to development and justice issues locally and globally. Though aimed at youth workers in the nonformal education sector, it would also be of use to teachers and others engaging directly with young people. The resource is divided into five sections, each dealing with a different issue. The five themes covered in the resource are:

- The Environment
- Fair Trade
- Identity
- Children’s Rights
- Globalisation and Diversity

Each section contains background information, sources of further information, practical action ideas, a workshop overview and between nine and ten activity ideas. The pack uses the concept of a ‘global passport’ as a means of rewarding young people’s efforts and marking their progress as global citizens. Young people receive their own ‘global passport’, which is stamped on completion of a workshop or practical action. Youth workers are encouraged to take their group on an exciting excursion once all five stamps have been earned.

‘The Young Global Citizens Passport Scheme’ is well introduced, clearly laid out and easy to read. Although primarily text based, it has been broken up with images and cartoons. The background information is presented in accessible language and the breadth of topics covered means that it provides

a comprehensive introduction to global justice issues. Its emphasis on the importance of establishing ground rules with young people is consistent with good youth work practice.

The resource brings together a wealth of new and existing activities for exploring development and justice issues with young people. The short length of many of its activities is appropriate to a youth work context. A good mix of methodologies is provided including brainstorms, quizzes, art, freeze frames and games. ‘The Young Global Citizens Passport Scheme’ therefore responds well to young people’s different learning styles and respects the variety of settings in which youth work is practised. There is some lack of clarity as to whether users of the resource are intended to start at the first activity in each section and work systematically through it or choose a sample of activities. The instructions are also quite general about the age groups at which the resource is aimed. Greater guidance on the lower age range for individual activities would have been useful.

The expectation in the resource is that groups will cover all five sections. Some youth workers and youth groups, particularly those with less experience of issue-based youth work, may be more comfortable dipping in and out of the different sections. Suggestions on how the resource and ‘global passport’ tool could be more flexibly used by such groups would have been helpful. The language is relevant and accessible to youth work. However, in some cases, terms such as tutor and pupil which are more familiar in the formal sector appear. This may create the impression that the activities are intended for schools.

One of the strongest features of the resource is the ‘global passport’ tool itself. This validates young people’s learning, gives them a sense of achievement and provides them with something to show for their efforts. A lot of thought has gone into the design of the passport. A template for both the passport and stamps which can be photocopied by youth workers is provided at the back of the resource. It might also have been useful to suggest that groups could design their own passports using creative methods appropriate to their

particular group. ‘The Young Global Citizens Passport Scheme’ is underpinned by sound development education principles. Local action is linked to the worldwide context and a concern for global inequality is consistent throughout the resource. Some exploration of the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation on the developing world, for example in relation to deforestation or climate change, would have been welcome in the otherwise excellent section on the Environment. More guidance on how to avoid reinforcing stereotypes in the activity “Acceptable or Not?” would also be useful, as this activity deals with sensitive issues relating to nationality and race.

These are minor quibbles, however, and ‘The Young Global Citizens Passport Scheme’ represents a welcome addition to the resources available for global youth work.

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