



MORE THAN WORDS



Jigsaw's diversity, equity
and inclusion policy

JIGSAW
Young people's
health in mind

Document control record

Policy title: More than words' – Jigsaw's diversity, equity and inclusion policy

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“ We believe everyone should be treated with respect and dignity... ”



Introduction

Jigsaw's vision is of an Ireland where every young person's mental health is valued and supported.

In line with this vision, Jigsaw as an organisation is committed to promoting and supporting diversity, inclusion and respect for human rights, which can in turn positively impact on our mental health. We believe everyone should be treated with respect and dignity, and we are committed to creating a supportive and inclusive culture, where people feel a sense of belonging, regardless of their background or situation.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. They are 'more than words' for us. They are some of the principles that guide how we want to build our teams, cultivate leaders and create an organisation that is diverse, equitable and inclusive for every staff member and service user.

We want to actively promote diversity and inclusion and acknowledge the value that difference brings to our organisation. Characteristics such as gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age, ethnicity, religion and membership of the Traveller community (see appendices) open up alternative ways of perceiving, thinking and acting that enrich our understanding of mental health and each other.

This policy is for all of Jigsaw - staff, board members, volunteers, young people that use Jigsaw's services and those we engage with in our work in schools, communities and fundraising.

When it comes to talking about diversity, equity and inclusion, language and understanding is important. Language in particular carries weight in terms of emotion, respect and personal identity. Therefore, it is

understandable that some people may feel uncertain or confused about what language to use and what role they play. We are conscious that the language we use in Jigsaw and how we embark upon realising our ambition in relation to diversity, equity and inclusion will take time and will evolve. We will continue to support everyone to listen, learn and update their use of, and Jigsaw's use of language, as appropriate and expect everyone to demonstrate patience and respect to ensure that uncertainty over language and development of our policy does not become a barrier for having important conversations or taking necessary action.

Jigsaw's desire is to move forward with urgency and purpose with the creation, realisation and maintenance of a more equitable and inclusive organisation by facilitating the integration of greater representation, fairness, belonging and care into our policies, practices and work places. We have a history of commitment to participation and co-production with young people with lived experience, which is essential to advancing mental health equality. The evidence base tells us that there is a strong relationship between inequality and poorer mental health outcomes, so we are committed to being a youth mental health organisation which promotes fairness and equity.

The overall goal is to work closely across the organisation to ensure that support for diversity and inclusion is integrated into decision-making, planning and implementation throughout all structures, services, policies, procedures and practices in Jigsaw.



In Jigsaw, we believe...

Diversity embraces the different identities, experiences and circumstances of our staff, our volunteers and the people that use our services and supports. We are in agreement with Amnesty International's statement "Diversity recognises and celebrates difference as something which is positive and beneficial to us all".

Equity refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.

Inclusion is the action or state of including or being included within a group or structure. It involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging. An inclusive environment is one where everyone feels a sense of belonging, respect and value.

“ Here at Jigsaw, we pride ourselves on being a progressive and compassionate organisation with young people at the centre. ”



Why now?

Ireland is changing as a country. Jigsaw, in everything it does, strives to respect, support and ensure the inclusion of all voices and cultures that make up Ireland today, from all sections of society, from existing and new communities, people with disabilities and people from all social backgrounds, ethnicities and traditions. This policy is the foundation to support the achievement of the above and advance change that we want to embrace and achieve. Here at Jigsaw, we pride ourselves on being a progressive and compassionate organisation with young people at the centre. We know through our research, My World Survey 2 (Dooley et al, 2019) and international studies (Grollman, 2012; Mueller et al, 2015) that young people who report experiences of discrimination have poorer mental health. We want to work towards creating an environment which is more tolerant, accepting and supports mental health.



Jigsaw's commitment

Jigsaw is committed to actively challenging discrimination, promoting equality and protecting the human rights of staff and service users and those we engage with in schools, communities and fundraising. Jigsaw has a duty to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in our work and to account for progress on this in our annual report.

In working to challenge discrimination and promote equity of opportunity and treatment, we make the following commitments:

- We will assess, implement and report on progress towards promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in Jigsaw
- We will strive to work through a responsive practice lens through our daily work, by listening closely to young people who experience exclusion in their everyday lives and reflecting on how Jigsaw can best adapt and respond to meet their needs
- We will ensure that, in their interactions with Jigsaw, no staff or service users, or those we engage with in our work in schools, communities and fundraising are discriminated against or treated less fairly on the bases of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age, ethnicity, religion and membership of the Traveller community
- We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate people with disabilities or groups of people who may be disadvantaged in society and take positive measures to promote equality of opportunity

- We will seek to attract, support and develop a diverse and culturally competent work force
- We will endeavour, through our day-to-day work, to use evidence to inform decisions and best practice around diversity and inclusion
- We will seek to work in partnership with organisations to promote diversity, equity and inclusion

It is everyone's responsibility to actively contribute to bring this policy to life, to have open conversations and engage in actions that promote diversity, equity and inclusion in all that we do in Jigsaw.

Let us work together, strive to be ambitious, so this policy is indeed more than words.

References

Dooley, B., O'Connor, C., Fitzgerald, A. & O'Reilly, A. (2019) My World Survey 2. The National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland. UCD: Dublin.
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We are Jigsaw.

At Jigsaw, we understand and support young people's mental health.

We are a community of professionals, supporters, and volunteers with a shared belief in an Ireland where every young person's mental health is valued and supported.

Both online and in our services around the country, we give advice and support to help young people aged 12–25 years-old.

We give families, educators, and those who support young people's mental health ways to cope and the skills to be there for young people.

We share our knowledge and expertise, and together use our collective power to change attitudes and make sure that youth mental health is a local and national priority.

If you, or someone you know needs mental health support, we are here for you. Visit [jigsaw.ie](https://www.jigsaw.ie)

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