



SPPA
Social Pedagogy
Professional Association

Social Impact Statement 2018

Introduction

Social pedagogy is a relationship-based approach to caring for children and families and is sometimes referred to as 'education in the broadest sense'. It is based in an ethos that fosters equality and respect and values relationships, dialogue, joint activity and team work. The launch of SPPA in 2017 assessed the impact of social pedagogy in Children's Services to date and discussed its future.

Established by the Centre for Understanding Social Pedagogy at UCL Institute of Education, ThemPra and Jacaranda, SPPA is the professional home for social pedagogy in the UK.

Since the 1990s, there has been interest in, research, delivery of training and development courses on social pedagogy in the UK. By the end of 2016, well over 2,000 people in the UK have had training in social pedagogy, in part through The Fostering Network's Head, Heart, Hands Programme. Evaluations show that a social pedagogic framework for practice can transform care for young people. The legacy of this programme and the need to scale up social pedagogy in the UK led to the establishment of SPPA.

SPPA's vision is to build a world in which social pedagogy contributes to each person realising their potential. Its aims include developing excellence in and raising the profile of social pedagogy in the UK, building an active professional community for social pedagogy, and supporting the development of qualifications in social pedagogy – the Crossfields Levels 3 and 5 (in England) diplomas in social pedagogy.

How can 'social pedagogy' have an impact on society?

When people first hear about social pedagogy they often ask 'Isn't that just good practice?' This misses how social pedagogy underpins good practice throughout a service by providing common understandings, useful theories and models, and builds on personal strengths. Social pedagogy:

- Is based in an ethos that fosters equality and respect, whether for colleagues or the people who use a service.
- Values relationships, dialogue, joint activity and team work.



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- Maintains critical awareness of the workings of society and its organisations.
- Emphasises personal strengths and the potential for further development. It does not rely on a 'deficit model' of other people.
- Appreciates the different contributions people can make to improve social life through activity and dialogue.
- Treasures opportunities for creativity, fun and play.
- Holds that reflection, leading to appropriate action, is essential. It offers concepts and models as a framework for reflection and subsequent action, including in challenging circumstances.
- Allows staff to adapt their practice to different situations, as appropriate, rather than being overly tied to procedures and habits.
- Understands that all people are social and psychological beings. Both of these human characteristics inform how we view the world and our place in it.
- Supports individual human development and promotes social justice. It does so through activities which are mostly small scale and everyday, but in the light of the larger social picture as well as individual circumstances.

In social pedagogy the term 'social' refers to working with people on behalf of society, to help them achieve their goals and to support their integration into society through, for example, providing advice, advocacy, supporting self-expression, and broadening horizons. It is a broadly educational role but with a deep concern for those individuals and social groups who are usually materially, culturally or socially disadvantaged or marginalised. In some countries, this has sometimes extended to acting on behalf of disadvantaged groups in a representational sense and empowering people to take action for themselves.

Those working in social pedagogic roles are concerned with the formation and on-going development of the whole person, their physical, emotional, intellectual and social wellbeing. Their aim is to promote social agency and resilience so that the people they work with can fulfil their potential. They do this via the relationships they form with people, often in the course of everyday activities and by means of 'small steps'. Social pedagogues often use arts, creativity and outdoor life as a medium for developing relationships and mutual enjoyment of being together. Group work is a common feature of social pedagogic practice

SPPA aims to support, encourage and develop systems and qualifications, together with programmes of activity in areas such as art, which will directly impact on individuals.



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What we do

As a UK membership organisation, SPPA is the professional home and centre of excellence for social pedagogy, its theory and practice. We hold the Standards for Occupational Proficiency in Social Pedagogy and the Standards of Education and Training in Social Pedagogy.

As a community of practice we continue to learn from each other - developing a qualifications framework and introducing social pedagogy into the wider societal workforce. Our overall aim is to improve the support of children, young people and adults, many of whom live in disadvantaged circumstances or are vulnerable. In order to achieve this, SPPA:

- Promote best practice on the theory and practice of social pedagogy
- Are working towards professionalising social pedagogy and equipping workers with training to provide better care for disadvantaged people across the lifespan by developing and implementing Diplomas in Social Pedagogy at basic and more advanced levels
- Develop and provide continuous professional development opportunities for social pedagogues and anyone interested in social pedagogy, through events, learning days, webinars, an online community, and resources
- Enable social pedagogues, social pedagogy practitioners and those with a professional interest in social pedagogy to share knowledge and experience, connect with and support each other through various platforms including events, networking opportunities and an online forum
- Enable and support a range of projects and activities which directly engage with members of society in greatest need of care and support.

Measuring Impact

During 2017-2018, SPPA will establish appropriate methods to measure the impact of their activities on

- Individual Members
- Corporate Members
- Volunteers
- SIG Group Members
- Individuals involved in projects supported by SPPA
- The wider public, particularly those in need of social care and support



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This will include the use of questionnaires, on-line surveys, working groups, and other appropriate methods appropriate to the Members and participants. SPPA will include data on number of attendees involved in training and development, individualised outcomes, individual case studies, networking events held and so on, in order to demonstrate the impact of its work.