

Welcome to Equality Focus - the e-newsletter of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. We hope you find this informative and that you will pass it on to anyone you think would find it interesting. We welcome any suggestions or comments you may have.

Intercultural and Anti Racism Week



This is Intercultural and Anti Racism Week. It runs from the 7 - 13 April 2008. The theme of the week is 'Education', focusing on all aspects of both formal and non formal education.

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) have coordinated a range of events throughout the week. Intercultural and Anti Racism Week is part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

The Launch

Junior Ministers Jeffrey Donaldson MP MLA and Gerry Kelly MLA helped launch events at the Ormeau Baths Gallery where the first viewing of 'New Kid' took place, a DVD for schools by Replay Productions. The play, supported by the Commission, tells the story of a migrant family coming to live in Northern Ireland and exposes many of the difficulties they face. The play particularly focuses on racist bullying in the school environment and the impact this has on children and their families. [Click here](#) for press release.



Schools Against Racism Poetry & Short Story Competition

The Equality Commission and the NCCRI launched the 4th annual poetry and short story competition for schools. The competition, in association with Poetry Ireland, aims to combat racism and to celebrate the variety of cultures and people living in Ireland today. An awards presentation evening for prize winners will be held at the Linen Hall Library on Wednesday 9 April.

[Click here](#) for the full Calendar of Events during Intercultural and Anti Racism Week.

Equality Commission Awarded Charter Mark



Representatives from the Commission attended Parliament Buildings to celebrate the award of a prestigious Charter Mark. In striving to provide an efficient, professional and courteous service to all its customers, the Commission's Employment Development Division used the Charter Mark as a business tool to improve partnerships, develop services for the small business sector and review and revise the employer section of the Commission's website. They also evaluated how advice was

being provided to employers through a dedicated enquiry line. The Charter Mark was awarded in recognition of Excellence in Customer Service.

Guidance on 'The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006'

The Commission's draft Guidance "Eliminating Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Northern Ireland: A Guide on the Provision of Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises", is currently out for public consultation until Monday 23 June 2008. The aim of the document is to provide advice on how to prevent discrimination against individuals on grounds of sexual orientation in accessing services, public functions and/or premises. [View](#) draft guidance and the consultation questionnaire, or contact Gayle Wilkinson, Promotion and Education Division, on 028 90 500689.

If you have any comments on this newsletter or would like it in other formats please email: Mark Soult, Communications Officer at msoult@equalityni.org

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