

Centre for Shared Education



What can we learn from previous theory, research and practice on segregation and integration in Northern Ireland?

Tuesday 25 October

Contact Theory (Allport, 1954)

- Contact between members of different groups can, under certain conditions, reduce prejudice
 - Equal status
 - Pursuit of shared goals
 - Cooperation
 - Institutional support/authority sanction
- Key processes: friendship potential, reducing negative affect (e.g., intergroup anxiety), inducing positive affect (e.g., empathy and perspective taking)
- The contact hypothesis has been tested and verified (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006)

Intergenerational Contact

- A direct form of contact between members of differing age groups
- Research suggests that children experiencing regular, sustained contact with older adults express more positive attitudes towards older adults (e.g., Allan & Johnson, 2009; Caspi, 1984; Meshel & McGlynn, 2004)
 - The key is **quality** not quantity (e.g., Bousfield & Hutchison, 2010; Hutchison et al., 2010; Schwartz & Simmons, 2001)

Transgenerational Contact

- Builds upon *extended contact*, an indirect form of contact in which contact experienced by a close other effects the self
- Explores how the contact experienced by the child or young person influences the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of the parent/caregiver

References

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