

Abstract:

‘A Strategic Approach to Climate Justice Education with Adult Learners’

In this presentation, I will outline the steps taken by CDET B to develop and implement their Climate Justice Education strategy and discuss the challenges, successes and learning along the way.

Adult Education Services in Education and Training Boards around the country provide lifelong and lifewide educational opportunities to adults outside the formal education sector. We prioritise adults and communities experiencing social, economic and educational disadvantage. We are embedded in local communities, working closely with community partners, to respond to the educational needs of adult learners.

In 2019, 17,000 adult learners engaged in our literacy, community education and English language programmes. In the same year, CDET B Adult Education Service developed a Climate Justice Education Strategy where they committed to becoming a lead educator in developing public knowledge on the climate crisis and just transitions. Our approach is two-pronged – we want to deliver stand-alone workshops and courses on Climate Justice issues and we want to embed Climate Justice issues into existing courses and programmes.

Throughout 2019 and 2020, CDET B Adult Education Tutors engaged in professional development and training to build their capacity and confidence to teach about climate justice issues. Tutors were supported, through:

- An intensive three-day training course
- A Community of Practice online forum
- A Climate Justice Mentoring Programme

The Mentoring Programme supported tutors in identifying entry points for Climate Justice Education in their subject areas. Unaccredited courses in cookery and nutrition are popular offerings in our community education programme and provide a number of ways in which adult learners can develop their understanding of the climate crisis. Our cookery tutors delivered classes on a range of themes related to environmental sustainability such as food sovereignty, food miles, food waste and the globalized food industry.

These educational opportunities provide much-needed space for adults to discuss the climate crisis and to identify actions and solutions that work for them and for their local communities.

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