

Approaches to working with children, young people and families for Traveller, Irish Traveller, Gypsy, Roma and Show People Communities

Annotated Bibliography for the Children's Workforce Development Council

National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)

Approaches to working with children, young people and families for Traveller, Irish Traveller, Gypsy, Roma and Show People Communities

Report to:

Children's Workforce Development Council

Review Undertaken by:

National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)

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¹ See Appendix for list of those contributing to this Review

Bhopal, K. (2004). 'Gypsy Travellers and education: changing needs and changing perceptions', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, **52**, 1, 47–67.

The article explores Gypsy Traveller parents' changing views on their children's education. It highlights the positive ways in which some schools are encouraging greater involvement of Gypsy Traveller parents, and as such aims to identify transferable 'good practice' in schools. Through interviews with Gypsy Traveller families, the article attempts to give this underrepresented community a 'voice' and shows that traditional assumptions are ill-founded. It argues that current educational policy needs to be re-developed to better cater for interrupted and nomadic learning.

Cemlyn, S. (2000). 'From neglect to partnership? Challenges for social services in promoting the welfare of traveller children', *Child Abuse Review*, **9**, 5, 349–363.

From a Nuffield Foundation funded study, based on a national survey of English social services departments, the paper looks at current and future social services provision for Traveller children in an attempt to address the harassment, racism and oppression that create structural 'vulnerability' for children. The study showed low levels of engagement with Traveller issues nationally by social services, and explores three models of provision. These models comprise crisis response in relation to child protection and youth justice, family support provision, and specialist work. The paper focuses on the challenges in providing social services that promote and improve Traveller children's welfare.

The study found that social workers were often unfamiliar with Traveller culture and showed a lack of understanding of their minority ethnic and cultural status. As a result Travellers' lifestyle could be pathologised and perceived as an unsatisfactory lifestyle. These mutual suspicions mean that there is an increased risk of confrontation which impacts negatively on the work with Traveller children. The study recommends that training is needed on the issues Travellers face and their cultural strengths and beliefs, with the participation of Travellers and other agencies. Outreach work is essential and multi-agency working is noted as a way forward.

The Connexions Traveller Education Social Services Alliance (CONTESSA) (2005). *Travellers Making Connexions: a Good Practice Guide for Multi-Agency Work* [online]. Available: http://www.connexions-cd.org.uk/pdf/Travellers_making_Cxs.pdf [18 April, 2008].

The booklet is a good practice guide provided by the Cornwall and Devon Connexions Traveller Education Social Service Alliance and includes information, case studies and examples of good practice. The Alliance aims to provide Traveller children who have dropped out of school with appropriate support and to help prepare them for adult life. This booklet is a resource to support other practitioners to do the same. It promotes the effectiveness of good multi-agency working and cultural acceptance, and also provides a number of useful links to services and information providers.

Coxhead, J. (2004). *Anti-Racism Training Strategies for the Police Service and Criminal Justice Sector – Gypsies and Travellers* [online]. Available: http://www.travellersinleeds.co.uk/travellers/downloads/ARGT010804.doc [12 March, 2008].

The report is aimed at the Police Service and the Criminal Justice sector and details the need for the development of service provision for Gypsies and Travellers, in order to comply with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. It focuses mainly on training strategies and methods, materials and techniques for breaking down cultural misunderstandings. The training strategies include entry level facilitator training for working with specific groups, training for specific events, and specialist strategic training with an emphasis on partnership working. Through raising awareness of interpersonal and strategic issues the approach aims to contribute to improvements in relations between agencies such as the police service and Gypsies and Travellers. The paper draws on focus group research and questionnaire responses, details a number of projects currently running such as the Moving Forward Project (concerned with police and community liaison), and highlights anti-racism training strategies and implementation.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008). *The Inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People: Strategies for Building Confidence in Voluntary Self-Declared Ethnicity Ascription* (DCSF 00063) [online]. Available: http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications [18 April, 2008].

This report gives guidance and seeks to offer practical solutions to local authorities and schools for the inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people. It notes that an understanding of the history, culture and language of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities is the key to achieving this. DCSF experience to date shows that inclusion in the curriculum and provision of resources for all pupils can break down barriers. It has been found that effective practice involves enabling a pupil to see their identity recognised. The children and young people feel included, empowered and motivated, and attendance and achievement are raised.

In particular the report mentions the long-term problems of racism and discrimination, myths, and stereotyping, and the need for more positive links between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents and their children's schools. Evidence is provided that access is steadily improving according to more recent research, although there is still a long way to go, especially for the secondary age group. Attention is now focusing strongly on what can be done, once children are enrolled in school, to sustain their attendance and to continue to raise achievement.

The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) is committed to raising the attendance and achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. This document is one of a suite of guidance documents, aimed at all local authority and staff in educational settings, including school governors. It offers guidance and a range of actions which contribute to ensuring that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children are healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve and make a positive contribution to school life as set out in the Every Child Matters agenda and The Children's Plan, December 2007.

Derrington, C. (2005). Raising the Attainment of Gypsy Traveller Pupils in Schools: a Survey of Current Practice in ITE PEDAGOGY and the Identification of Needs [online]. Available:

http://www.multiverse.ac.uk/ViewArticle2.aspx?anchorld=171&selectedId=182&conte ntId=11620 [18 April, 2008].

Following a number of reports highlighting the low levels of attendance and educational under achievement of Gypsy Traveller children, this report presents the findings from a national audit of the existing ITE pedagogy practice and identifies the needs of ITE providers. 140 questionnaires were sent to Heads of Initial Teacher Education in 81 HE institutions and programme managers in 59 school-centred Initial Teacher Training Institutions. The study found that the majority of students and trainees received no specific guidance or awareness raising at all. Those that did experienced only a brief reference during a lecture on inclusive education or equality. 2 out of 5 providers said that their trainees had no access to specialist teaching resources or materials in the area of Traveller education. Case studies provided anecdotal evidence that training initiated by a particular member of staff with a special interest and good links with specialists could lead to them developing their interest further. These findings were used to develop appropriate support and resources to address the key issues which include training, cultural awareness, and communication between and within services.

Derrington, C. (2007). 'Fight, flight and playing white: an examination of coping strategies adopted by Gypsy Traveller adolescents in English secondary schools', *International Journal of Educational Research*, **46**, 6, 357–367.

The paper details the findings from a longitudinal study of Gypsy Traveller students attending English Secondary schools. Over a five year period 400 interviews were completed with 44 Gypsy Traveller students, their parents and teachers. The analysis of these interviews identified several 'push and pull' factors that impact on secondary school engagement and retention. Of these factors social exclusion and conflicting expectations between home and school are most prominent, and in trying to deal with the resulting stress a large number of students dropped out of school early. The ways in which the students dealt with the issues they faced in school are classified in the report as fight (physical or verbal retaliation and non-compliance), flight (self imposed exclusion), and playing white (concealing or denying their heritage). The study finds that the students retained in school displayed more adaptive strategies such as cognitive reframing, developing social support networks and adopting a bicultural identity.

Derrington, C. and Kendall, S. (2004). *Gypsy Traveller Students in Secondary Schools: Culture, Identity and Achievement*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

The book presents and discusses the findings from the first national study of Gypsy Traveller students in English secondary schools. The study took place between 2000 and 2003 and was sponsored by the Nuffield Foundation. It detailed the educational experiences, attitudes, values expectations and aspirations of 44 Gypsy Travellers and their families over the time period. The research intended to look at the issues surrounding secondary school attendance for Traveller children, and as a result the authors identified typologies and associations that can support and encourage engagement in schooling. The phenomenological study shows that positive developments are being made in terms of increasing numbers of Traveller students transferring and being retained in secondary schools. Despite this, travellers are still underachieving, are more likely to be excluded, and are liable to encounter racism within the school context. The study makes recommendations for further work in the area, and identifies ways of improving services.

Diacon, D., Kriteman, H., Vine, J. and Yafai, S. (2007). *Out in the Open. Providing Accommodation, Promoting Understanding and Recognising Rights of Gypsies and Travellers.* Coalville: Building and Social Housing Foundation.

The report details the findings from a three day consultation organised by the Building and Social Housing Foundation at St George's House, Windsor Castle. This aimed to identify practical ways in which housing organisations and other public bodies can work together with Gypsies and Travellers and the local communities to provide appropriate accommodation, support the Gypsy Traveller way of life, and promote respect and understanding between the Gypsies and Travellers and the local community. The report highlights contexts within which issues for Gypsies and Travellers around accommodation arise, and also recommends some practices which local government and housing professional should adopt.

The recommendations in the report address the following key areas for action identified at the consultation:

- Providing authorised sites to meet urgent accommodation needs.
- Addressing the lack of political will across all levels of the political spectrum to tackle the existing widespread discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers.
- Integrating Gypsy and Traveller rights and needs into existing policies and mainstream services (improving the education and health outcomes of travelling communities).
- Obtaining accurate and wide-ranging information, and sharing of good practice.
- Recognising the opportunities provided by working in partnership with Gypsy and Traveller communities, as well as social housing providers and landowners, to improve the availability and choice of accommodation.

Donnelly, D. (2003). 'Let's face it - travellers need drug services', *Druglink*, **18**, 4, 10–11.

The short article describes an outreach work project aimed at engaging the Traveller community with drug services. Initial liaison between the community and one drug worker led to awareness sessions and the expansion of drug service provision on site. It highlights the 'rules of engagement' for successfully engaging with the Gypsy Traveller community, such as providing the services on site and cultural awareness of roles and traditions in the Gypsy community. Winning trust of family members (women) and showing flexibility to meet them on their own terms allowed the drug worker to make progress with young drug users.

Essex County Council (2004). Final Scrutiny Report on Access to Education for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities Children. Chelmsford: Essex County Council.

The General Scrutiny Committee presents a review of access to education for Gypsy Traveller children in Essex with the aim of improving services and promoting greater social inclusion for all. The review provides a snap shot of the services provided and is offered as a building block for others to re-evaluate their understanding of this group of children and their provision for them. The review highlights the importance of: ethnic monitoring and awareness, communication with Gypsy Traveller families, social inclusion, and promotion of good practice. The review does not give one set of recommendations but sets out a range of options and opportunities and shows what social inclusion means in practice, as well as delineating activity that is taking place

in Essex to promote equality and diversity, and to challenge processes, attitudes and behaviour.

Hatley-Broad, B. (2004). 'Problems in good practice in post-compulsory educational provision for travellers: the Wakefield Kushti Project', *Intercultural Education*, **15**, 3, 267–281.

The paper looks at the Wakefield Local Education Authorities Kushti Project which focussed on the Traveller population in England, specifically the post-16 Traveller population in Wakefield, West Yorkshire. The paper covers the recruitment, retention, achievement and progression of this group and highlights the difficulties faced by educators attempting to improve educational provision for the Traveller community, such as the difficulty in providing learning support to Roadside families, the perceived lack of value in formal accreditation and the difficulty in recruiting post 16 learners. It details the practice of the project and shows how making education relevant can help increase engagement.

It notes the importance of effective communication and engagement – staff need training in engaging learners post 16. They need an increased awareness of Traveller traditions and culture, so that they can provide suitable learning programmes that will encourage Traveller learners to participate especially when they perceive little value in external accreditation.

Hester, R. (2004). Services Provided to Gypsy Traveller Children. Birmingham: NECF.

The document is a literature review that focuses on the education, health and social exclusion of children from Gypsy Traveller families. The detailed study of a wideranging database of literature finds that educational research tends to be out-dated and descriptive, while health research tends to be focused on the adult population and includes limited qualitative analysis. The report highlights a history of educational provision characterised by debates around on-site provision and school provision. Historically conditions on sites and difficulties of evictions contribute to poor health. The review is in line with the aims of the Children's Fund in targeting 5-13 year olds and examining the evidence-base on issues arising from child poverty and social exclusion.

Kiddle, C. (2000). 'Partnerships depend on power-sharing: an exploration of the relationships between fairground and Gypsy Traveller parents and their children's teachers in England', *International Journal of Educational Research*, **33**, 3, 265–274.

The author, a coordinator of a TESS service attempts to answer the question of the possibility of developing long-standing Traveller parent – teacher relationships. It examines the conditions under which positive partnerships can develop and how this can support the local authority TESS outreach projects. The document includes a literature review and a case study, and includes lessons learned from forming relationships with a Fairground Traveller group over the winter period when they were settled in one location for up to five months. Devon Consortium TESS trained parents and teachers in joint sessions, while supporting them in preparing packs of materials for the children to take with them when travelling starts. This project therefore involves informal opportunities for cultural exchange and learning, rather than formal delivery of sessions by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Awareness of and engaging with relationships of power is a key factor underpinning the success of joint initiatives between professional and community members.

MacNeil, M., Stradling, R., Clark, A. and Minty, S. (2005). *Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities in Highland: an Evaluation of the Initiative*. Inverness: NHS Highland, UHI Millennium Institute, The Highland Council.

This report consists of an evaluation of the Highland Council and NHS Highland 3 year initiative – *Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in Highland,* with the overall aim of learning from the teams experiences gained in relation to service provision. The evaluation was structured around five main areas with the Scottish Executive Innovation Fund for Children's Services, including:

- Perspectives of staff and their awareness of Travellers, discrimination and training.
- How service providers responded to the initiative.
- Their experiences and ideas around Travellers needs.
- The responses of Travellers to the initiative and their experiences of accessing services.

The report is exploratory, retrospective and qualitative, drawing on a range of methods including: documentary analysis, interviews with initiative team, interviews with service providers, visits with Gypsy/Travellers families, and case details of children provided by families. The report makes recommendations for future practice with examples from the initiative. Project work on a community development model needs to consider scope for transferring responsibilities to the mainstream – enhancing continuity and sustainability.

There is also a need for greater integration with service structures and across agencies. This could provide the first basis for developing appropriate multi-agency training.

Mason, P. and Broughton, K. (2007). 'Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities children and families: the potential of working with networks', *Social Policy and Society*, **6**, 2, 243–254.

The article describes a service aiming to support the development of play and leisure opportunities for Gypsy Traveller children. It shows that there is a high demand for such a service, but that there is limited capacity for expanding provision or to address issues beyond the immediate demand for the play and leisure activities. It provides a focus on networks between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and providers, and on the bridges that can be built between the two. It shows how this work could reduce the social exclusion experienced by the Gypsy Traveller population, and demonstrates the potential for the development of close working relationships with Gypsy Traveller families, with sustainable funding.

Three Development Officers (DOs) were employed to each work across two Children's Fund Partnership areas. Local project plans adopted an approach with four elements:

- a focus on mainstream service providers providing training and advocacy
- a focus on Gypsy Traveller parents to build awareness, confidence, knowledge and opportunities

- direct support for Gypsy Traveller children and young people to enable them to access play and leisure schemes
- a focus on the settled community to counter prejudice.

The report suggests that a comprehensive programme of direct skills provision to adults could have equal benefits to working with children. The project succeeded in engaging some mothers to participate, accompanying the DOs to sessions, with a view to their subsequent training; and to participation and consultation events. Some mothers also joined a local parenting support skills class.

Mason, P., Plumbridge, G., Barnes, M., Beirens, H. and Broughton, K. (2006). *Preventative Services for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities Children*. London: DfES.

The report details the development of a Regional Consortium of Children's Fund Partnerships who aim to work with Gypsy Traveller children and families to remove barriers and promote access to services in the Region. It aims to provide supported leisure services for children and signposting to other services, to raise awareness of the services and to raise awareness within the services. The consortium started out with six Children's Fund partnerships, but after a year this reduced to three. They employed development officers to raise awareness among service providers and to develop capacity; support Gypsy Traveller children, young people and families to access leisure facilities; raise awareness among parents of local services, and change perceptions within the community. The report goes on to detail the impacts of their work and examines the implications which can be drawn from the project. In particular, capacity building is important as long-term sustainability of projects such as this is in doubt. Training needs to facilitate among professionals the ability to support sustainable development of community capacity.

Morran, D. (2001). 'A forgotten minority: workers' perceptions of Scottish Travelling People', *Probation Journal*, **48**, 1, 26–33.

The article consists of a literature review and a small scale study of criminal justice social workers' views of, and their cultural awareness of Travellers on their caseloads. It discusses how workers inform themselves about the issues relevant to the cases and how the workers engage with and relate to the Traveller community. The report mainly focuses on interactions with 'settled' travellers, as any contact with mobile travellers was rare. It shows that most workers had not had any specific training on the issues and felt that practices related to Travellers needed to be urgently addressed.

Morran, D. (2002). 'Negotiating marginalized identities – social workers and settled Travelling People in Scotland', *International Social Work*, **45**, 3, 337–357.

The study looks at the ways in which statutory social workers interacted with and perceived the problems experienced by settled travellers (travellers in permanent housing). Interviews were conducted with 12 social workers from different settings. Discussions focussed on workers' knowledge and perceptions of the traveller population, and sought to address long-standing issues of mistrust and avoidance of social workers by looking at how the workers engaged with service users and the work carried out with travellers. It puts forward a number of good practice findings and notes the problem of social inclusion versus social exclusion for the travellers.

Nacif, A. (2005). 'Best practice living in harmony', *Local Government Chronicle*, 29 May, 18–19.

The paper gives an overview of Oxfordshire County Council's Gypsy Traveller services and they way they interact with the local Traveller population. The article refers specifically to Romany Gypsy and Irish Travellers. The council aimed to promote social inclusion and raise awareness of the travellers' 'way of life' by setting up a multi-agency 'one stop shop' for any one wanting advice on any issue relating to travellers. The approach has helped to reduce social tensions in the area, and travellers have been given secure fixed sites with tenancy rights which are contributing to increased social inclusion.

Padfield, P. (2006). Learning at a Distance Supported by ICT for Gypsies and Travellers: Young People's Views. Final Report. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive Education Department.

The report details research with the Gypsy Traveller and Show Traveller children in relation to their experiences of interactive communications technology (ICT) and its ability to support learning. It presents the potential for supporting learning through the Travellers being able to access a school curriculum and learning materials while travelling or attending an out of school education provision centre. The study involved interviews with 21 Traveller children from a variety of settings aged 8-14, and 24 adults including Traveller parents, teaching staff, and site managers. The research aims to help better understand the issues surrounding Gypsy Travellers' education needs, to ensure their needs inform policy decisions in ICT based learning, and to ensure the delivery of a progressive and relevant curriculum for this group.

Parry, G., Van Cleemput, P., Peters, J., Moor, J., Walters, S., Thomas, K. and Cooper, C. (2004). *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England: Report of Department of Health Inequalities in Health Research Initiative Project 121/7500.* Sheffield: University of Sheffield.

The research intends to explore the health inequalities of Gypsy Travellers in comparison to non-Gypsy Travellers and use this to look at health policy objectives. Traditionally this group has significantly poorer health status than any other UK resident English speaking ethnic minority, and economically disadvantaged white UK residents. The research also details the experiences, beliefs and attitudes of Gypsy Travellers, and any perceived barriers to access. This is a large scale epidemiological study using standard health measures supplemented by in-depth interviews. A partnership model of working was developed in the form of a pilot primary health care project in Ireland. Traveller women were given training to develop their skills in providing community based health services to their own community in partnership with public health nurse coordinators. The report highlights areas for future good practice and provision to improve access to services, such as partnership working with Gypsy Traveller communities and commissioning specialist health workers.

Papadopoulos, I. and Lay, M. (2007). 'The health promotion needs and preferences of Gypsy Travellers in Wales', *Diversity in Health and Social Care*, **4**, 3, 167–176.

The study of Gypsy Travellers' health promotion experiences, needs and preferences was undertaken with a sample of 18 Gypsy Travellers living on authorised caravan sites in Wales. The study consisted of a number of focus group discussions that showed a primary need for improvements in the socio-economic conditions of Gypsy Traveller people. The women were found to be receptive to health promotion activities and some were willing to be involved in the design and delivery of those services. In general the participants preferred to be able to access locally provided services and it was also noted that culturally aware, well trained practitioners who were flexible and open to the traveller community were key to successful delivery. Changes in government and social policy are fundamental in order to support practitioners working to improve socio-economic conditions and to reduce health inequalities. These findings are intended for the Welsh commissioning body's policy and programme development and to help determine culturally appropriate solutions to alleviating health promotion barriers within the Gypsy Traveller population.

Riches, R. (2007). Early Years Outreach Practice. London: Save the Children.

The document aims to share and reflect work of outreach practitioners working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. It draws on experiences of practitioners from within Traveller Education Support Services and in Sure Start Children's Centres. Different views of the purpose of outreach are highlighted, and skills required for effective outreach work are described. The document highlights the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for the delivery of outreach and details key elements of EYFS Statutory framework and Practice Guidance.

Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) (2003). *Inclusive Educational Approaches for Gypsies and Travellers Within the Context of Interrupted Learning. Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools.* Glasgow: Learning and Teaching in Scotland [online]. Available: http://www.scottishtravellered.net/resources/STEP-NationalGuidance.pdf [18 April, 2008].

The report is intended to be guidance for local authorities and schools to help them deal with the challenges in providing education for Traveller children. The paper raises three questions:

- What is meant by interrupted learning? (the learning context)
- Why is there a need for action? (barriers to learning)
- How can practice be improved? (advice, guidance, and good practice). The guidance is prepared within the social inclusion agenda for Scotland.

The report states that levels and patterns of mobility differ between different groups of Gypsies and Travellers, and therefore educational continuity and take up differs. For Gypsies and Travellers there is a link between the availably of suitable stopping places and levels of uptake of school places. The paper also highlights research which found that Gypsies and Travellers report incidences of stereotyping, racism and bullying as common occurrences and discriminatory treatment from school staff. This can be a catalyst for withdrawal from school as Gypsy/Traveller parents often do not make formal complaints due to lack of knowledge of formal channels and having little expectation of support. Given the high levels of racism experienced by Gypsies and Travellers the report shows how it is important that authorities ensure staff carry out duties under the Race Relations Act. Information on the specific situation of Gypsies and Travellers and anti racist approaches should be included in training on equality issues.

The report finds that the best way to achieve inclusion for this group is through effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families, having a dedicated member of staff to represent Gypsy/Traveller pupils, provision of appropriate training by authorities to support staff, multi-agency working, effective sharing of information, and good practice and support for periods of transition.

Treise, C. and Shepherd, G. (2006). 'Developing mental health services for Gypsy Travellers: an exploratory study', *Clinical Psychology Forum*, **163**, 16–19.

A relatively small study was carried out with 9 women from Roma Gypsy communities aged between 20 and 50 years old. It assesses their opinions of mental health problems within the on-site community, causes of these problems, and possible ways of helping. The report recommends that the most effective strategy would work towards improved access to services combined with attempts to build on the ability of the community to deal with its own problems.

Warrington, C. and Peck, S. (2005). *Gypsy and Traveller Communities: Accommodation, Education, Health, Skills, and Employment. A East of England Perspective.* Ipswich: The Ormiston Children and Families Trust.

The report presents a literature review of research relating to Gypsy and Traveller communities in the East of England in relation to health, accommodation, education employment, skills and general service provision. The authors subsequently used focus groups and a questionnaire to establish a picture of existing services provided to those communities, and to make recommendations for improvements in service provision and identify areas for future research. The report raises the following questions:

- What is meant by interrupted learning?
- · Why is there a need for action?
- How can practice be improved?

The report presents a summary of findings in particular concerning the importance of outreach work currently led by TESS professionals and their efforts to provide training to other professionals, and makes key recommendations for future practice, notably that meaningful consultation with Gypsies and Travellers should form the basis for all developments. The report highlights that Gypsies and Travellers remain invisible in many departmental policies and strategies. There is a need for more consistency and sustainability in service delivery.

<u>Appendix</u>

NFER Project Team

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