

Identify the short and long term benefits for young people through their involvement in youth work.

In this assignment one will discuss the short term and long-term benefits for young people through their involvement in youth work, Furthermore, useful life skills that a young person will achieve from engaging in youth work. To summarise, how these outcomes can be linked to contemporary policy and theory. Firstly, one will explore the history of youth work and how it led to have an impact on contemporary youth work, secondly one will discuss the short term and long-term benefits, and how youth workers deliver different types of services in which young people can achieve those skills, delivered in non-formal and informal settings, as well as explaining how these outcomes are linked to contemporary policies and theories.

Infed Org (2020) suggested that youth work can be seen in many ways such as; youth clubs, schools, detached work, project work, mentoring a young person, as well as other organisations. Even though there are various types of youth work the main focus is supporting young people to reach their potential and live fulfilled lives (Infed.org,2020).

A turning point in youth work was the development of youth institutes and clubs in Britain during 1850's. Reverend Arthur Sweatman's involvement with youth work is said to have been crucial for the development towards youth institutes, in 1863

Reverend Arthur Sweatman originated the first youth specific provisions with clubs and institutes (Infed.org,2020).

There are some key events in youth work, for example; in 1870 local authorities now had a duty of care to provide education for 5 to 12-year olds which prompted ragged schools, Between 1880 – 1890 the age of school leavers was raised to 12 and again

to 14 years old, another key event was in 1893 the girls brigade was formed which created more opportunities for female adolescences (Bright, 2015). Between 1964-1970 it could be seen as an extremely important time to the Youth Service in Wales and the UK, following the publication of the Albemarle Report. There will always be a continuous change for youth culture, as young people become affected or directed by societal change and development. The societal change also led to the decline of the Youth Service as it struggled to catch up with contemporary society (House of Commons, 2011)

Caley (2019) suggests that there is only a small number of good youth workers, and that the element of youth work was dissatisfactory, whilst it was delivered by local authorities. In addition to this Caley (2019) also states even though there are many negative views on the quality of youth work that is being provided to young people, there is also many positive views.

'youth work changes life's, it helps young people to develop the personal skills they need to make success of their lives. It also allows them to influence and shape their life's and the services available to them.'

Caley (2019).

In current society youth work has developed significantly, being delivered through third sector and local authority in various settings, using numerous participatory methods to deliver it (education workforce council, 2018). The delivery of youth work can be offered by educational services, advice and guidance services or support services (Sapin, 2013). An example of these services is YMCA Swansea, this third sector charity organisation provides youth work through: a drop in service, volunteering and mentoring services, residential trips and provide training and education to those not in

education, employment or training (NEET), (YMCA,2020). Funding for this service is provided by the European social fund through Welsh Government, local authority funding, Big Lottery Fund and Children In Need (YMCA,2020). Alternatively to third sector youth work who rely on grants and donations to run, Another sector of youth work delivery is the public sector youth work which is a statutory service required by legislation, furthermore there is the private sector of youth work who may charge a fee to users making it a profitable organization (Sapin,2013).

It can be seen that youth work can be delivered through various context, setting and sectors but all organisations working with young people have a common aim, which was highlighted by the (National Occupational Standards For Youth Work (NOS) 2018):

‘Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential’

This statement suggests young people need to be treated as individuals, recognising their strengths and weaknesses to fulfil their potential.

Public Health Wales (2017) found in a survey measures to help build resilience in young people to try and prevent the development of mental health issues, that adverse childhood experiences (ACES) can cause. By developing resilience through access to services and activities within the community, this can significantly reduce the risks of experiencing mental health problems even in young people that have experienced a number of ACES (NHS Wales, 2018). This is further highlighted in policies such as: The Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015), which supports impacting ACES through integrated working of public services to promote well-being of young people.

Youth work is based on a non-formal and informal approach, it is also solely voluntary basis which is age range specific 11-25 years old (Youth Work In Wales Principles and Purpose (YWWPP) 2018). There are five pillars of youth work in Wales which establish inclusion and equal opportunities, these five pillars are as follows; Educative, expressive, participative, inclusive and empowering. Above all a youth worker should include these five pillars within a youth work setting in order to provide the safety and well being of a young person (CWVYS,2018).

British Youth Council (2016) is an organization that provides a LifeSkills programme for young people to achieve key skills that are transferable to their future employment. young people can access a range of resources through LifeSkills which can influence their learning and improve skills that is a necessity for the workplace, for example some skills that young people can attain from their involvement in a youth setting can be; learning to write a CV, communication skills, interview preparations, managing problems and learning how to emotionally deal with difficult situations also learning how to live independently (British Youth Council, 2016). LifeSkills organization can be seen to link with the outcomes for young people stated by National Youth Service Strategy For Wales (WAG, 2007). There are various outcomes from active participation such as; recognising achievements, gaining knowledge and understanding, developing long term skills to use in the future, maintaining relationships and gaining a good understanding on the services and policies which has had a positive effect on their lives (WAG, 2007).

According to (Fitzsimons, Hope and Russell, 2011) youth workers use different methods towards young people's learning, instead of telling them what to do and how to do things, youth workers take more of a non-formal/informal approach , aiming for a young person's participation which include: developing skills to think for themselves

and know how to behave in any situations. In today's society it is important that youth workers have the ability to reflect upon ones practice, only then ones desire to become empowering practitioners may develop, Equally a young person's engagement towards reflection and critical thinking is key for successfully attaining life skills to be able to make their own decisions and the ability to take control of their own lives (Fitzsimons, Hope and Russell, 2011).

Smith, M. K (2013) suggests that support towards working with young people is unlikely to get back to what it once was, with society evolving it is certain that the need for youth work remains considerably important for the wellbeing of young people. There are different sectors that are involved with youth work such as education, schools and pupil referral units are more likely to rely on qualified youth workers to engage with young people to support early intervention, it can be seen to develop into three categories: residential care, advice around difficult concerns and working with individuals and families.

As said by Ingram and Harris (2001) prior to theories a youth worker should understand the needs of an individual, this could be achieved by following the NAOMIE framework:

N *Identifies the Needs*

A *Set the aims*

O *Set the objective*

M *Decide what Method you will use*

I *Decide what Indicators you will use to show you are on course, then Implement it.*

E *Decide how you will Evaluate the outcomes, review the process*

(Ingram and Harris, 2001).

This implies by following this framework, a youth worker was able to identify any issues and have alternative methods ready for everyone's needs.

Another example of a skill is working in groups/ group work this is learnt from participating in youth work, there are many life skills that can be learnt from group work such as, decision making, tackling barriers and working out disagreements. Whilst delivering a group work task a youth worker can then decide when to get involved or when to take a step back which allows the young people to put to practice the skills that they are developing through engagement within the youth sector Sapin (2013).

Sapin (2013) also suggests Tuckman's (1965) stages in groups theory, There are five stages which are, Forming – where a group is formed, Storming – where the group may disagree which may cause conflict, Norming – this is when the group grows and develops, Performing – where the group is fully developed and deliver productively, Mourning/Adjourning – this is when the group starts to dissolve and individuals get ready for new beginnings, Sapin (2013) states that if groups did not complete the stages then the outcome for the group would be limited. These skills can be used in the future as well as now. This theory can be linked to (National Occupation Standards For Youth Work (NOS) 2012).

With regards to participation of young people, youth workers thrive on encouraging young people to have the ability to be 'Equal partners in their learning process and decision making' NYSSW (2007). This will help young people to understand their rights and to have the knowledge to engage with personal, social and political issues that could influence their lives, allowing young people to decide what they want to be involved with and exploring the benefits of their involvement. A key part of participation

is letting a young person get involved with management, planning, delivery and evaluation of youth services (youthworkessentials.org,2020).

To conclude this assignment one has briefly discussed the history of youth work and the importance how certain dates had helped develop youth work alongside how youth work has changed in contemporary society, Caley (2019) described negative views in which the way youth work was delivered, however Caley (2019) also describes the positive views which stated that youth work can change the lives of young people through empowering them by informal and non-formal education which young people can attain life skills. There are many life skills that a young person can achieve from their involvement with different youth settings which may include: personal, social and emotional development alongside group work, managing conflict and employment training (Fitzsimons, Hope and Russell, 2011). In addition, one examined policies and theories and provided knowledge on how these linked to youth work in contemporary society whilst giving examples from different documents such as NOS, National Youth Work Strategy for Wales. Whilst gathering information about contemporary society in youth work the evidence suggest that youth work is currently still developing and will continue to do so, it follows that the priority remains the same a young person interest and wellbeing will continuously be the main priority for a youth worker Sapin (2013). For a youth worker to be able to deliver successfully they need to be in accordance with the five pillars of youth work which provides young people with opportunities for learning. 'Youth work seeks to implement these processes whilst ensuring the health, well-being and safety of young people' (Youth Work Wales: Principles and Practice, 2018).

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