

Why do we need youth work? Well we need to look at what society would look like without it. A society where everyone thinks and feels the same. Where young people are only learning from one institution. A society where we churn out millions of the same person. Youth work will benefit us primarily by providing young people with the tools they require to reach their full potential and break this mold.

Youth work is more important now than it has ever been. The term formal education refers to the structured educational system provided by the state for young people. Youth Work refers to education which takes place outside of the formally organized school. Among the first questions that a young University graduate is asked during a job interview is if you have experience. For those who focused only on the study, the answer is "Nope". But there are alternative ways of gaining experience, mainly provided through youth work.

Today, many young people focus on their education because they think that if they have a Diploma, they have many opportunities. But, no matter what teachers say- Its just not true. After their graduation, they are looking for a job and don't find anything in the field they studied.

Basic education is very important, I admit. But Youth Work is different from formal education, from the issues of content and forms of realization.

Youth work activities are crucial in the process of lifelong learning. Besides developing skills which are specific to certain areas of activity students develop their functional skills: organizational capabilities, time management, critical thinking and decision-making. Young people are able to create and develop a competitive spirit based on their real skills and abilities.

But it is so much deeper than that. It promotes young people to be intercultural. To develop an understanding of the world outside of their little town, helping them see the bigger picture.

It provides the lifelong learning opportunities that will make the transition into successful adulthood so much easier.

It works at an individual young persons' level. And No one gets left behind.

It is probably the first voluntary and equal relationship a young person has with an adult. And that's why youth work is so special.

The problem is how do we show tangible proof that we are making a difference? Youth work becomes increasingly difficult in a society so obsessed with putting people in boxes, statistics and outcomes.

Personal development plays a crucial role in human life. State education doesn't put great emphasis on personal development. People's thirst for personal growth pushes them to give up traditional education. It certainly did with me. If you find your purpose in life, building your big dreams with traditional education then that's brilliant- but not many do.

Traditional education teaches you how to be an employee. I am convinced that there isn't an ideal job to satisfy your inner desires. Therefore, I am looking for other ways to live my dreams, not through traditional education. I find my path and it works like a charm and the best part is it does not require any effort. It is effortless. Its great!

I've experienced first-hand the impact a youth work can have on young people. Sarah was a 17 year old mother. She had never left her 1 year old. The first time we meet she was so shy she would barely speak two words to me. After working closely with her for 2 years I watched as she stood up in front of a room full of adults and delivers a presentation on her experiences of being a teen mum. I was so proud to see her come out of her shell so much, something that can only be achieve through building the relationships youth work lends its self to.

And personally I would never be where I am today without the work of my youth worker. I quickly came to realise there was so much more I needed in life than just what school could deliver. We often forget that youth work is about every young person, helping them to reach their dreams and aspirations and not just about working with the most disadvantaged even though this is still very important.

I always wanted to go down the route of helping young people. And after all these experiences I quickly came to realise that youth work is how I want to do it.

I challenge you to look at every young person as an individual from today. and Not put them into boxes. Helping them to realise every aspiration and dream they have to make this society the best in the world. Because the only way we will provide young people with the tools to come up with radical, creative and unique ideas required to sort out our problems is making sure young people have that special, unique and individual experience that we can provide.

Youth work provides young people with the tools to deal with tomorrow. Preparing them for a future a lot of us won't see. When you think of all the developments in technology over the past 20 years that shows no signs of slowing down. The best we can hope for is that we equip young people with the tools that they need to adapt, change, innovate, challenge, criticise, critique, develop, think abstractly, research and how to deal with all these changes. If we can do this; I'm sure you'll agree with me we can show the world just how great Britain is!

Thank you.