

Mapping youth work practices in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and USA: The similarities and differences around the world

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Jennifer Brooker

RMIT University

Jennifer.brooker@rmit.edu.au

Methodology

1. Historical documentation regarding youth work training in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States
2. ABS data search and other current world and Australian data regarding youth issues.
3. Comparative Case studies
 - Australia
 - Canada
 - New Zealand
 - United Kingdom
 - (United States).
4. A series of interviews with
 - Key youth work education informants
 - Training providers
 - Recent graduates
 - Youth work organisations.

International snapshot

Country	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	United Kingdom	USA
Origins	Faith-based	Faith based	Faith based	Faith based	Faith based
Then	Sport and Rec	Residential settings/Justice	Sport and Rec	Education	Residential settings/Justice
Formal Training Began	1943	1957	1974	1945	1880s
Framework Focus Today	Positive Youth Development	Therapeutic care	Positive youth development	Positive youth development	Therapeutic Care
Gov. Depts. Involved	Various including education.	Various	Ministry for Youth Development	Cabinet Office (E) D of E (NI) DELL(S) DCELLS (W)	Various
National Youth Policy	National Strategy for Young Australians (2010)	Each state and territory has its own, as do many capital cities.	Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA)	E: P4Y S: Moving Forward NI: Priorities for Yth W NYSSW	None
Client Age Range	10/12-25	4-18/30	12-25	13-19	4-18

International snapshot cont.

Country	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	United Kingdom	USA
Title	Youth Worker	Child & Youth Care Worker/ Practitioner	Youth Worker <i>Rangatahi</i> Development worker Support worker	Youth and Community Worker	CYC Practitioner CYC Worker
Ed/Training	VET & HE	Community College & HE	Vocational & HE	Further Ed & HE	Community College & HE
Providers	ACU RMIT Uni. Tabor College	Humber Coll. George Brown Coll Victoria Uni Concordia Uni.	Praxis WelTec	Coventry Uni Edinburgh Uni Glyndwr Uni. Ulster Uni WAYC	(Kent State Uni.)
Qualifications Available	Cert IV In YW Dip YW UG degree Masters	Diploma Bachelor deg. Masters Doctoral studs.	National Cert 3 National Cert 4 National Diploma Bachelor of Youth Development	Level 2 Level 3 BA (Hons) PG Cert/PG Dip Masters	
Competency Or Capability	Competency OR Capability	Competency & Capability at all levels	Competency with Capability at all levels	Competency & Capability at all levels	Competency & Capability at all levels
Regulated by	VET – ASQA HE - not	CYCCB	NZQA	E: NYA W:ETS Wales NI: North –South ETS	CYCCB

Historical changes to youth work training

- The original courses included subjects that covered administration and management skills, behavioural models and group work to provide an equally balanced course between theory and the practice necessary for successfully completing the tasks required of a youth worker.
- 1970s saw the replacement of practical subjects (various sports and craft and social activities) with a stronger emphasis on the sociological and psychological aspects of youth work.

- Today transformed to a targeted approach built around two predominant frameworks in operation globally: (i) positive youth development and (ii) therapeutic care. A predominantly theoretical curriculum with some practical elements or the contrasting vocationally focused courses which add theory to the relevant practice.
- The only consistency to be found in training is its primary focus – training workers to work with young people which includes sociology and psychology subjects, research skills and practicum in the field. However this last aspect is not consistent in each country, let alone around the world, with the number of hours to be completed ranging from 100 to 1200 hours.

- Targeted work such as, and including education, crime prevention, health/sex education, drug & alcohol prevention work, mental illness and general well-being, accommodation including homelessness, work in hostels, working with those in and leaving care, school based youth work, including work with school exclusions, career advice and early intervention work is patchy in its emphasis within each course included in the research.
- More often presented as a theoretical exercise when included, with little apparent connection to what is currently occurring in the sector, HE graduates often remarked that they had to learn these aspects of their work on the job and would have appreciated a greater emphasis on what was termed 'the real work' while in the classroom and lecture hall.

- The occupational horizons for the scope of youth work education have been substantially narrowed over the past 30 years with the removal of administration/managerial skills and recreation/hobbies from the subject offerings to match the funding focus of at-risk youth and shift if jobs offered.

Key issues for young people in Australia today are:

- Family formation and the vulnerability of children and young people
- Education, training and career aspirations of Australia's youth
- Employment and income support
- Careers and career education
- Health: physical and mental well-being
- Sexuality and gender
- Young people and the criminal justice system
- Cultural and sporting activities
- Young people and the 'new' technologies.

Global youth issues

- Largest youth cohort in history
 - 2014: 1.8 billion were aged between 10 – 24 years and those under 10 years provided another quarter of the world's population (Goldin et al. 2014:2, Das Gupta et al 2014).
 - 3.5 billion by the end of the century,
- The highest numbers of those aged 10 – 24 years currently live in India, China, Indonesia, the United States, Pakistan, Nigeria, Brazil and Bangladesh (Das Gupta et al 2014:5,6).

The barriers and opportunities young people globally believe are impacting on their ability to have healthy lives and allow them to participate and contribute to their communities are a wide range of inter-connected issues including

- (i) civic/citizen participation
- (ii) economic/employment opportunity
- (iii) education
- (iv) health
- (v) information and communications technology (ICT)
- (vi) political participation
- (vii) safety and security.

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Good youth work can be seen as having some of the same contradictory qualities as great jazz. It is well prepared and highly disciplined, yet improvised. And, while responding sensitively to the signals and prompts of others, it continues to express the worker's own intentions, insights, ideas, feelings - and flair”



(Davies 2010).

References

- Das Gupta, M., Engleman, R., Levy, J., Luchsinger, G., Merrick, T., & Rosen, J. 2014 *The Power of 1.8 Billion Adolescents, youth and the Transformation of the Future*. UNFPA
- Goldin, N., Patel, P., & Perry, K., 2014 *The Global Youth Wellbeing Index*. Centre for Strategic and International Studies and International Youth Foundation, Washington.

Jennifer Brooker

- Youth Work Coordinator
- RMIT University
- Melbourne
- Australia

- jennifer.brooker@rmit.edu.au