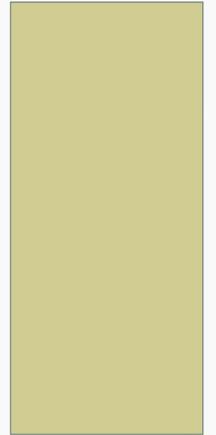


ETHICAL PRACTICE AND YOUTHWORK

YOUTH WORKER PRACTICE NETWORK FORUM



ETHICS

- * Ethics is generally regarded as being about the norms of behaviour people follow regarding what is good or bad, right or wrong.
- * Usually ethical issues are about matters of personal wellbeing or welfare
- * Ethics in the context of professional practice is about developing the ability to see the ethical dimensions of a problem, to reflect on the issues, to take difficult decisions and to be able to justify these decisions.

ETHICS

*Ethical Practice is about acting with integrity according to one's responsibilities and duties, and behaving in accordance with professional principles, guidelines and/or agencies rules/policies and procedures

*The behaviour of everyone involved in youth work and youth services must be of a standard that makes it the basis of the effective delivery of services

ETHICS

*Youth workers should treat the young people they work with in a manner that demonstrates respect for their rights to make choices, without discrimination

* Youth workers should also be working towards a just society within practice principles that involve professional responsibility and accountability.

ACT YOUTH WORKER CODE OF ETHICS

Primary client
Ecology
Equity
Empowerment
Duty of Care
Corruption
Transparency
Confidentiality
Cooperation
Knowledge
Self-awareness
Boundaries
Self-care
Integrity

BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are not a matter of distance but of clarity. Within our personal and professional boundaries we enact certain roles. A role is nothing other than a set of expected behaviours; when we act outside of that set, we are outside of the role and most probably have crossed a boundary, e.g., a Youth worker seeking to be the young person's friend. There is a difference between being friendly and being a friend. The first is an attitude; the second is a role. How do you know you are crossing a boundary?

ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN YOUTH WORK

Ethical dilemmas: arise when the youth worker faces a decision-making situation involving a difficult choice between two equally unwelcome alternatives

Ethical problems: arise when the worker faces a difficult situation where a decision has to be made.

Ethical issues: brings principles into conflict. Ethical issues are more subjective and open to opinions and interpretation

SCENARIO

Youth workers, Police and the local school were worried about the large number of young people hanging at the skate park at night and agreed to work together in attempting to ensure young peoples safety. The young people generally behaved well, except one night, close to the skate park three cars had their windows smashed. There was a surveillance camera which captured images of some people. The police and the local school leaders have requested that local youth workers meet with them to identify the people as they think the Yth Workers will know them.

SCENARIO

Ethical dilemma – break trust with the young people or lose credibility with the police and school

Ethical problem – Say no and be prepared to deal with the consequences. Work with the young people without the school and police cooperation

Ethical Issues – stereotyping of young people by certain authority groups.