

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH WORK

THE AIM OF YOUTH WORK IS FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON TO ATTAIN THEIR PLACE AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND AS A MEMBER OF SOCIETY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR OWN RESOURCES AND VIEWS, AND TO FIND LIFE MEANINGFUL

Youth work promotes the well-being of young people.

Youth work supports and enables the independent activities of young people, and provides meaningful communal options in young people's growth and living environments. Youth work offers activities where you can genuinely be yourself, without fear of embarrassment or rejection. In youth work, young people are viewed as individuals and as members of the group.

Youth workers support young people's confidence in the future through their professional skills and actions. Youth workers view young people as lifelong learners. They guide young people to make use of formal and non-formal learning environments, and to identify and describe their own skills and strengths.

YOUTH WORK IS ABOUT ENCOUNTERS, SUPPORTIVE EDUCATION, AND WORKING TOGETHER

Youth workers are trained for their field, easily approachable, reliable, and safe adults in youth work. They are to take into account their roles as role models and objects of identification for young people. Youth workers find time when a young person needs it. They understand that youth work is built upon the voluntary participation of the young person. Youth workers intervene in activities that endanger the growth, development, or health of a young person, and act equally, fairly, and with respect for diversity.

Youth workers recognize the different needs of young people. They care, are present, and encourage each young person. Youth workers give the young person time to grow and to learn from their mistakes. Young people are guided to resolve conflicts in a positive manner and to break down biases and prejudices. Youth work is about working and growing together.

YOUTH WORK STRENGTHENS YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND SOCIETY

Youth workers promote the living conditions and well-being of young people through their present and functional work. Youth workers build and develop safe operating environments together with the young, also taking digitalization into account. Youth workers take into consideration those young people who do not take part in communal activities. Youth work keeps up with the phenomena of the times and develops in step with young people's needs and youth cultures, appreciating cultural diversity. Youth work creates conditions for young people's participation, independent agency, overcoming of fears, and fulfilment of dreams.

YOUTH WORK IS ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

Youth work implements the principles of sustainable development, and in their activities, youth workers choose alternatives and working methods that are ecological and respect nature. Youth workers encourage young people to reflect on their own choices and their significance for the environment.

YOUTH WORKERS OPERATE CONSTRUCTIVELY AND OPENLY WITHIN THEIR WORK COMMUNITIES AND CO-OPERATION NETWORKS

Youth workers are developers of their own professional field and skills. Youth workers strengthen the role of youth work in cross-sectoral co-operation by recognizing their own expertise and identifying their own professional identity. Youth workers promote dialogue between different actors, respect the young person and their close network, and handle information they receive responsibly. Youth work is a source of support for growth and education.

YOUTH WORKERS ARE INTERPRETERS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVING CONDITIONS

Youth work influences the structures of society. Youth workers monitor the debate on youth policy and the preparation of decisions, and bring forward the perspective of young people. Youth workers produce knowledge in their own field for the improvement of young people's growth and living conditions.

Youth workers have the ability to question and highlight social ills in a constructive manner. They encourage young people to influence, and together with young people they develop opportunities to influence.

Youth workers are aware of the fundamental values of their work and the premises of their organizations. They also examine partnerships, collaborations, and external funding from these perspectives.

YOUTH WORKERS TAKE CARE OF THEIR WELL-BEING AT WORK

Youth workers recognize and acknowledge their own energy reserves and their own skills, and are able to utilize the existing service network in support of their work. Youth workers are able to keep work and leisure time separate, as well as to set boundaries in relation to the young person. They maintain their competence by developing their professional skills and familiarizing themselves with new information about young people and youth work. Youth workers also understand the importance of the work community, networks, and peer support for well-being at work.

WHAT ARE THE PROFESSIONAL ETHICS GUIDELINES AND FOR WHOM ARE THEY INTENDED?

The professional ethics guidelines for youth work express approach, responsibility, and attitude towards work. Their task is to describe the purpose and modes of operation of youth work, and to provide a basis for reflection on right and wrong. The guidelines are intended for youth-work professionals who have training in the field and who work for municipalities, parishes, organizations, or the private sector.

In the guidelines, the title 'youth worker' is used to describe a professional in the field. An employee can make use of the ethics guidelines when pondering the contents and methods of the work. The ethics guidelines serve as a tool for both day-to-day youth work and its development. In the work community, the guidelines can be used in training, onboarding, and problem situations. The professional ethics guidelines also inform stakeholders about the principles of youth work.