

School youth work

Name of the organisation

Lahden kaupungin nuorisopalvelut

Website of the organisation

www.lahti.fi/nuorisopalvelut

Location of the organisation

Kirkkokatu 21 E, 15140 Lahti, Finland

E-mail address of the organisation

nuorisopalvelut@lahti.fi

Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Array

Good practice category

Good practice aim & purpose

School youth work is proactive work that focuses on promoting the sense of community in schools. School youth work helps increase comfort at school in many ways. The school youth worker will work together with teachers to identify and intervene in challenging situations that occur during classes and breaks. The school youth worker will participate in the development and testing of new work methods.

Good practice description

Please describe your good practice based on the above given information (Explain your practice as such, in 'technical' terms and as clear and simple as possible.)

Youth work helps improve pupils' group working capabilities and increase responsible interactions between young people. The objective is a safe school community that helps young people feel comfortable, learn and get along well with each other. The school youth worker meets pupils informally, without an appointment. The pupils can talk with the school youth worker on the school yard during breaktimes or in the corridors, for example. If necessary, the school youth worker will help pupils find hobbies or contact other professionals or services. The school youth worker will provide young people with positive experiences of inclusion and influencing, for example in cooperation with teachers managing the student committee and prefect operations. The school youth worker will inspire students to arrange inclusive break time activities.

The operations promote activity as well as interactions and shared activities, and their goal is to strengthen the school's community spirit. There have been good experiences with teamwork between the school youth worker and the school welfare officer or the school youth worker and a schoolteacher with small groups and in implementation of multidisciplinary study units in a camp setting.

In addition to aspects such as group working, cooperation during transitional stages and classroom

work, as well as break time, student committee, camp, excursion and small group activities, youth work supports teaching by promoting the social capabilities of young people and through thematic events that support day-to-day skills. The themes of these events can be e.g. parity, media education, money spending, sexual health and sustainable development. The units can be customised based on the needs of each class and group. The themes can also be linked to a parents' evening, in which the students also participate. These active parents' evenings are an excellent way of increasing cooperation between school and home.

Youth services work with schools to promote communal operational culture. The cooperation between basic education and youth services is based on a plan compiled together, which will be updated school-specifically every year. The role of youth work in a school's operational culture is to promote interaction and peer activities between young people as well as the inclusion and influencing opportunities of children and young people.

The focal points are the work methods offered to different class levels, which increase the group's safety and the pupils' inclusion and also support teaching. In these methods, learning experiences occur through interactions and communication with others. This way, youth services work together with others as an implementer of multidisciplinary learning units. The youth houses and camp centres, methods and operational practices of youth services will be utilised as learning environments. The students' awareness of other youth services, operators and safe ways to spend their leisure time available in their area will be supported by learning about the activities arranged in the area (City of Lahti's basic education curriculum).

Please describe eventual challenges and problems related to the creation, implementation, and/or running of your good practice? (Explain the eventual difficulties that you have come across, so that others know what to think about if they want to implement your practice.)

When school youth work was started seven years ago the youth workers had challenges in co-operating with different professionals (professional differences). Now the situation is much better and youth work in school is important part of school community.

Please give the names, roles and tasks of eventual partners involved in the creation, implementation and/or running of your good practice.

Lahti City Basic education, Municipal Youth work network in Finland Finnish Youth Research Society/
Finnish Youth Research Network

Please give an overview of the resources needed in order to establish and run your good practice. (Please describe the human, financial and other resources that are needed. Please also explain if you have got external financing from sources available for others, and if so, from what funding scheme(s).)

One school youth worker in every secondary school (basic education grades 7.-9.). Lahti City Youth Services pays the payment for school youth workers.

Good practice result & concrete effects

For young people:

The greatest benefits of youth work at school are connected to strengthening the relationships between generation, supporting group dynamics and promoting participation.

For youth workers:

Youth workers meet the whole age group between 13 – 16 years.

For your organisation as such:

Better partnership and co-operation with basic education. The methods of youth work became familiar at schools and to teachers.

For youth work in general:

Strengthens youth work as a profession. The relation between formal education and youth work (non formal education) has found new methods to co-operate.

For society/your community in general:

Synergy between different professional skills and co-operation

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work