Ethics for youth workers

Name of the organisation
KC Kunskapscentrum för fritidsledarskap

Website of the organisation
www.fritidsledarskap.se

Location of the organisation
KC c/o Skarpnäcks folkhögskola, Fraktflygargatan 16, 1283o Skarpnäck, Sweden

E-mail address of the organisation
info@fritidsledarskap.se

Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work
- Array

Good practice category

Good practice aim & purpose
WHY A CODE of ETHIC? KC has for several years been working to create consensus on the professional identity of youth workers, such as human perception, attitude, role and language. This resulted in the need to formulate an ethic code for the work with young people's leisure. IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF WORK, one sees the value of an ethical code, with ethical reflections and guidelines. Such a code aims at establishing an insight into the professions ethical norms and to increase the attention to ethical issues. It is an important professional competence to be able to conduct ethical reasoning and make sound assessments in different situations. An ethical code is a guideline to obtain such positions. The code has both a symbolic and indicative role and contributes to strengthening the professional identity. The ethical code also has a value for the organization in which one work. It gives greater clarity about the assignment and can lead to increased ethical awareness within the organization. An ethical code can highlight important themes that are not always included in mission descriptions. It may, for example,be about what kind of response you should give and which basic attitude you should have towards the target groups that youth workers meet. It is also important that the citizens know how those, active in the field, work professionally, how they view their mission and what they can expect from their work. Our intention is to create a collective ethical foundation for work, in order to stimulate ethical conversations among youth worker active in open youth work and in the organization where they work

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.)

The ethical code is presented in a leaflet. In connection with that we have produced a deck of 52 cards with different ethical dilemmas or problematical situations (experienced by our youth workers). The idea is that for ex a working group pick a card and'

1. start with that each individual think about how to act in that situation
2. Then each person tells how they would act – without comments from others.
3. First now it is time for a general discussion.
4. Then the group goes back to the ethical code to find out what principles is applicable.

We have also educated some ambassadors of ethics (a couple from each municipality) that got some extra education on ethical matters and human rights. Their task is to keep the discussion going and also be ethical extra aware if something occurs in daily work. The aim is also to use the code in general discussions on how to do (or to prepare for) the work well. AND of course, to relate to when you have disussions on situations that have occured or is to come.

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.)

In general, the method has worked very well. The only problem is to keep the discussion alive even after the first period of excitement. That is a question for the managers and the ambassadors of ethics. They have the responsibility to make a plan for that. We also found that it is important to educate the managers to raise their awareness and engagement for the ethics.

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

The code was created of a group of about 25 youth workers and some managers from all our member municipalities. We had education and workshops together with a professor of Ethics: Erik Blennberger. We wrote and re-wrote and discussed for more than one year. We also got inputs for other persons and organisations in our sector. Since it is a product of the youth workers themselves, we find it very well anchored in the field.

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).)

The costs we had was for salary for the professor and for renting a proper place for our workshops. Besides that, we also had some costs for producing and printing the leaflet and the deck of cards. None of this was very expensive and we had no external financing.

Good practice result & concrete effects
For young people:

We hope that they get even better treatment.

For youth workers:

Increase the awarenes on ethical matters and the ability to reflect and discuss ethial questions. It has both symbolic and guiding role reminds the YW that one represent a profession

For your organisation as such:

It helps to create a clear task about the mission and can help to creat ethical awareness within the whole organisation.

For youth work in general:

We hope that it can inspire others to think ethical :)

For society/your community in general:

It help us to show that we are a proffesion with ethical awareness and how the Yoth Workers view their mission and what the society can expect from their work.

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work