

Finnish Workshops Boost the Confidence of Marginalized Groups

The youth workshops in Finland operate to improve young people's skills for studies and work, and to strengthen their social skills and self-confidence. For a limited period of time, the young people work under supervision in a profession they are interested in. During this time, they receive a salary or other compensation.

The main task of the youth workshops is to give young people under 29 years a boost. It may be young people who have not graduated elementary school, who dropped out of secondary education (high school or vocational training) or young people who are unemployed or have particular difficulties in finding a place to study or enter the labour market. The youth workshops are primarily working with socially marginalized groups.

The workshops prioritize practices that lead to positive experiences such as coaching and supportive supervision. The young people themselves are involved in decisions and planning that affect them. The youth workshops' activities are based on a holistic perspective of the participants, and some of the goals for the participants may be regaining a normal circadian rhythm, or to start planning for their future.

Successful, But How Successful?

In the report "Arbetsverkstäder som metod inom ungdomsarbete", the writer points to previous research suggesting that the workshop activities improve young peoples' basic skills. Despite these and other positive results, only about half of the youths have found a job or enrolled for studies within a year after the workshop period. Dunne, A., et al. (2014), however, have a more positive spin on the results. The report "Working with Young People: The Value of Youth Work in the European Union - Case Studies", states that 75% percent of the participants from 2006 onwards either worked or studied afterwards.