



Building resilience in young people through meaningful participation

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Abstract

Building resilience in young people is an important goal if we are to strengthen capacity and promote skills that help to reduce mental health problems. One way to foster resilience in young people is through meaningful youth participation; that is, decision-making by young people that involves meaning, control, and connectedness. Whilst youth participation may occur in recognition of young people's rights to be involved in all decisions that affect them, meaningful participation can itself enhance a young person's sense of connectedness, belonging and valued participation, and thereby impact on mental health and well being. Based on its extensive experience working collaboratively with young people, the Inspire Foundation, in partnership with young people, has developed a flexible and diverse approach to youth participation. This paper outlines the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the model, and discusses the operationalisation of program goals, atmosphere and activities that seek to build resilience through meaningful youth participation.

Keywords

resilience, young people, youth participation, youth development, mental health

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