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South African Youth Workers Association

Profile

The South African Youth Worker's Association (SAYWA), is an inclusive body of youth workers, educators, trainers and development practitioners, that seeks to further the interests of the youth sector. It pursues continuing education and training of its members, but exclusively, to promote and facilitate the development of the sector and the attainment of a common identity for youth practitioners.

The Association is committed to the development through non-racist, non-sexist, democratic practices. It takes cognisance of the imbalances of the past and is committed to the conscious efforts at their redressing.

The Association is committed to the upliftment of the human rights enshrined in the constitution of South Africa and obedience to the laws of the land to the extent to which they enhance the respect, observance and attainment of full human rights.

Purpose

The South African Youth Worker's Association is one of the few associations in the SADC region that has continued to lobby for the professionalization of youth work.

SAYWA is continuing to provide clarity in defining what the concept youth work entails as outlined in the progressive "Code of Ethics for Youth Work" developed by SAYWA.

SAYWA defines youth work as the development of a relationships between a youth worker and a young person through: connecting with young people; where: young people are empowered, including the choice to engage for as long as agreed; and that: supports their holistic.

SAYWA Objectives are to:

- Support youth work activities and processes that contribute towards the development of a democratic civil society;
- Promote education, training, and development in youth work to attain recognition for the sector and its practitioners;
- Facilitate regional, provincial, national and international networks of youth work programmes and professional collaborations for the maximisation of resources and benefits;

- Promote the growth of strong professional associations at regional and provincial level, and to enhance the capacity of provincial structures in their active participation in the development of local strategies that address the needs of youth and practitioners;
- Participate in the following areas of youth work training, education and development:

I. Policy formulation for youth and youth worker training and continuing education;

II. Facilitation of youth education and training and the facilitation of youth development;

III. Promotion of youth work education and supporting learners who aspire to practice youth work;

IV. Continual appraisal and improvement of the quality and standard of youth work education and training and campaigning for the maintenance of training facilities of high standard;

V. Recognition of youth workers as professionals and the maintenance of practice and culture of professionalism in the sector

Services

- Advocacy and networking
- Register youth workers into the profession
- Offer youth workers certification course
- Provide placement services
- Provide infomediary service on youth development

Nature of membership of the association

The professional association prioritizes its membership through advocacy, capacity building, framing competency standards, establishing Codes of Ethics.

The membership is comprised of the following:

- Non-Governmental Organisations specializing in youth work
- Youth work students (previous and current)
- Academics and researchers
- Youth Workers employed by Government Departments and
- Individuals who have passion for youth development work.

While everything we all may be doing in our associations is important and worth sharing for this exercise we request you zero in on one key thematic, framework or process that you feel can be showcased as a best practice for youth work associations at large. something we can all learn from and apply where possible. A case study for this purpose will be best if it can draw out principles or learnings for youth work associations.