

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Youth of Today

Alison Hine from the School of Psychology has been investigating the extent to which youth mentoring programs have been successfully integrated with youth and community services. Working with her on this project is Associate Professor Diana Whitton from the School of Education. This research has been funded by the Youth Mentoring Network a partnership of not-for-profit organisations and the Australian government.

'Mentoring can be a highly effective way to support people's learning and provide experienced guidance and encouragement at all levels, from early schooling to tertiary education and the workplace' says Ms Hine. 'There are clear benefits to young people involved in mentoring programs, including improved behaviour, academic achievement and increased social participation. We need to examine the benefits of using mentoring programs in youth and community services and identify any barriers to establishing programs. This study has also considered the advantages of developing and sustaining community partnerships in mentoring and has been investigating the effective creation of mentor-mentee relationships and their characteristics.'

Relationships between youth mentoring programs and other youth services using an online questionnaire and focus group meetings have been explored. Members of the Youth Mentoring Partnership and mentors have been consulted and a literature review determined the rationale for linking mentoring to specific youth services. The research team analysed the data from these sources to identify the benefits, problems and characteristics of these linkages.



The results of this research will contribute to our understanding of how beneficial youth mentoring programs are and indicate what improvements can be made to such programs. These improvements will help to make the future brighter for young people of Australia and lead to improved social cohesion in the wider community.

The Youth Mentoring Partnership establishes, promotes and supports youth mentoring programs across Australia see:
<http://www.youthmentoring.org.au>

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