The Impact of Youth Work for Young People

A Systematic Review for the Health Council of New Zealand and the Ministry of Youth Development

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Conflict of Interest statement:

Kim Elliott teaches in the Diploma in Youth Studies and the Bachelor of Human Services (Youth Work) at The University of Auckland and Dr Stuart Mundy-McPherson teaches at various tertiary institutions in social work and youth studies programmes. The other authors had no conflict of interest in relation to conducting this review.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Internationally there is an increasing commitment and investment to support the provision of youth work services as it is believed that effective youth work has the potential to increase benefits (both tangible and intangible) in the life of the young person, their significant others and their communities. The main objective of this research was to systematically review the available research evidence on the impact and outcomes of youth work for young people as relevant to the Aotearoa/New Zealand context. This review was based upon primary research studies reporting on interventions defined by the authors of the publications as 'youth work' which had young people as participants or focus of the intervention. This review aimed to answer the review question "What is the impact of 'youth work' for young people?" and employed a systematic search for all studies meeting the specified inclusion criteria.

The search strategy included social sciences and general reference databases; theses databases; youth work related websites; professional networks and reference lists of identified primary studies. In consultation with the funder, the search strategy did not include hand-searching of journals, since prior experience indicated that it was highly unlikely that any rigorous experimental study would be missed through the other search methods. These various search methods yielded 260 references after duplications were excluded. A complete record of the search strategy and results of eligible studies screened for inclusion, are included in this report.

All the reviewers screened references for relevance and two independently assessed references against the review eligibility criteria. From all the eligible studies screened, no studies have met the criteria for inclusion in the systematic review. Evidence of the impact and outcome of youth work appears to be limited and disjointed, with a lack of research incorporating cultural considerations – especially as it pertains to Maori, Pacific and Asian youth in the New Zealand context. Many of the studies reported in the literature were more qualitative than quantitative – some with a subjective narrative on the value of youth work. Even among the quantitative studies, the evidence is not clear and consistent as to whether youth work has any effect on young people. This is compounded by the fact that it is logistically challenging to monitor the indicators of effective youth work over an extended period and difficult to define the outcome measures of a construct currently lacking rigorous definition. More research of higher methodological quality is needed. The conclusions of this review are thus limited by the lack of

data. However, it is important to note that this lack of evidence is not an indication of the lack of effect. Some of the studies, although not eligible for inclusion, contain useful information with implications for possible future research. Themes derived from the discussions in these studies will be highlighted in the report, including: challenges in the conceptualisation of youth work; variation in the context of youth work; the importance of relationships; the value of youth participation; gender-based evidence and ethnically-sensitive evidence. Challenges in generating evidence will be outlined and implications for policy and practice, training and education and future research will be considered.

Christa Fouché (PhD)
February 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

Internationally there is an increasing commitment and investment to support the provision of youth work services and ongoing debate on youth worker effectiveness as an as yet undefined, unregistered profession. As a developing field of practice, there is currently no agreement nationally on the definition of youth work in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Barwick, 2006; National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa, 2008b; Martin, 2006). The lack of consensus on the definition and nature of 'youth work' and the fact that involvement in the lives of young people is indeed core to many disciplines, complicates research in this field. National data is available that profiles youth workers in Aotearoa/New Zealand and captures the views of youth workers on the effectiveness of youth work (Martin, 2006), but does not include findings on the effectiveness of youth work.

Emerging evidence does suggest that youth work as part of the wider youth development sector has the potential to impact on the lives of young people (Young, 2005; Merton, et al., 2004) and that effective youth work has the potential to increase benefits (both tangible and intangible) in the life of the young person, their families and their communities. Based on consideration of a number of international and local pieces of research and local case studies the Ministry of Social Development (2008) considers youth work to be effective. However, evidence of the impact and outcome of youth work is currently limited and disjointed, compounded by the fact that it is difficult to define the outcome measures and challenging to monitor these indicators over an extended period. This systematic review aimed to identify and analyse the research evidence available on the impact of youth work for young people. In the context as outlined above, conducting this systematic review was inherently challenging.

As with all research, defining the research question is a core element to a robust study. The review question for this particular systematic review posed difficulties from the start in terms of the undefined nature of the core construct 'youth work'. Furthermore, there is no clear agreement on what evidence is to be taken as indicating effectiveness, which further complicates the search for evidence. As Nutley et al. (2002) warn, it is important to develop agreement on what counts as evidence in enhancing evidence-based practice and this is particularly relevant in the context of the youth sector. Whilst advocating pluralism Nutley et al. (2002) recognise difficulties of 'gold standard' evidence, particularly in areas other than medicine where knowledge of what works is largely provisional and highly context dependent.

This was particularly true in the youth work context with a range of studies reporting practice knowledge on a range of related issues, yet not meeting the inclusion criteria for best evidence on the impact of youth work. These and other challenges impacting on evidencing the impact of youth work on young people will be considered in this report.

Despite a comprehensive and rigorous search this review came up empty. There are many examples of systematic reviews with insufficient evidence to draw conclusions for practice while still identifying a need for, and informing further research. The benefits of publishing such 'empty' reviews are well outlined by Lang, Edwards and Fleiszer (2007). According to Lang et al. (2007), empty reviews are important, amongst other reasons, to highlight major research gaps and indicate the state of research evidence at a particular point in time. These empty reviews play a key role in highlighting areas requiring further research to inform researchers, policy makers, and the commissioners of research. They also inform practitioners and in this instance, young people, their families and communities when there is lack of robust evidence in favor of (or against) a particular intervention. Given that a typical search strategy likely yields a much broader set of studies than those meeting the eligibility criteria for a systematic review – as has been the case in this instance, new knowledge and insights can be gained from this body of 'excluded' work. This is indeed the case with this systematic review. Some of the studies, although not eligible for inclusion, will be used in discussing implications for possible future research.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The main objective of this research was to systematically review the available research evidence on the impact of youth work for young people as relevant to the Aotearoa/New Zealand context. In particular, this review aimed to answer the review question "What is the impact of 'youth work' for young people?"

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies in the review

Types of studies: Intervention studies and descriptive studies were included in the review. Intervention (controlled) studies included randomised controlled trials (RCT) and prospective

non randomised controlled trials. Descriptive studies included cohort studies, case-control studies and nested case control studies. All qualitative studies were included in the review.

Types of participants: Studies with young people as participants or focus of the intervention were considered for inclusion in the systematic review. This included young people with any demographic profile (gender, race, ethnicity, family composition or geographical location) aged between 12 and 24 (the age group defined as 'youth' in New Zealand by The Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). Relevant variations of this definition of 'youth' as applied in the selected research studies were also accepted.

Types of interventions: All the studies reporting on interventions defined by the authors of the publications as 'youth work' were included in the review.

Types of outcome measures: Only effectiveness studies (aimed at identifying and reporting on the effectiveness of an intervention as outlined above) were included. Both primary outcomes, secondary outcomes and adverse outcomes were considered as long as the study reported this as an impact of youth work. Outcomes for family and community were excluded from the outcome measures as only studies that reported on the impact for young people as participants or as the focus for intervention, were included.

3.2   Search strategy for identification of relevant studies

Many publications containing guidelines and resources for conducting a systematic review suggest that it is highly desirable to involve a suitably experienced librarian or information officer in the search process and at the earliest stages of review planning. An experienced librarian, with a wide knowledge of information sources and trained to search efficiently assisted with the search strategy. The librarian was also instrumental in helping with document acquisition following the search as well as with document and record management issues. Due to the paucity of data, an analysis of reporting biases, heterogeneity and sensitivity was considered inappropriate. Restrictions on the language of publication imply that some studies may have been missed. Additionally, the nature of youth work is such that information may be gathered 'on the street' and not be disseminated in a written format. Strategies implemented to manage this, will be discussed below.

Social Sciences and General Reference Databases

During October 2009, relevant studies were identified through electronic searches of a range of bibliographic databases, government policy databanks and internet search engines including:

Proquest Social Science Journals

FAMILY : Australian Family and Society Abstracts

Social Sciences Citations

Social Care Online

Index New Zealand

Social Services Abstracts

NewzText Plus

Sociological Abstracts

Sociological Collection

GenderWatch

PsycINFO

Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

Cochrane Library

Campbell Library

Search terms (modified as necessary for databases) were as follows: (youth work*) AND (impact* OR effect* OR evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*). This search resulted in 222 references, many of which were duplicates. After deletion of the duplicates, 199 references remained in an Endnote library. The references identified through the theses database search were then incorporated into this library (see discussion below) and 21 references in total were selected and entered into RevMan. Four (4) of these were theses.

Theses databases

Relevant theses were identified through electronic searches of the databases listed below during November 2009. A total of 33 theses were identified, although some of these were duplicates. On elimination of the duplicates, 22 remained. These references were incorporated in the Endnote library along with the references from the general reference databases, resulting in a total of 221 references. Eventually 4 of the theses were entered into RevMan.

University of Auckland Catalogue (all theses held by the University of Auckland) – No references identified

Te Puna (maintained by the National library of New Zealand, this catalogue lists theses from NZ universities and a selection of overseas theses) – No references identified

Proquest Dissertations and Theses (an index of nearly 2,500,000 theses and dissertations, mostly from North American universities) – Twenty-two (22) references identified

Australasian Digital Theses (digitised theses produced at Australian and New Zealand Universities) – One (1) reference identified

EThOS (The British Library's Electronic Theses Online Service) – Three (3) references identified

Kiwi Research Information Services (access to research documents produced at research institutions in New Zealand) – No references in any searches

University of the South Pacific Theses (collection of theses about the Pacific islands) - No references in any searches

Index to Theses (database that searches for theses from British and Irish universities) – Seven (7) references identified

Search terms (modified as necessary for databases) were as follows:

#1 TI = "youth work AND TI= (impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*) AND thesis

#2 SUBJECT HEADING = "youth work" AND SUBJECT HEADING= (impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*) AND thesis

#3 TI = "youth work" AND SUBJECT HEADING= (impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*) AND thesis

#4 DOCUMENT TITLE = "youth work" AND DOCUMENT TI=(impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*)

#5 ABSTRACT = "youth work" AND ABSTRACT= (impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*)

#6 DOCUMENT TITLE = "youth work: AND ABSTRACT= (impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*)

#7 ABSTRACT = "youth work" AND DOCUMENT TITLE= (impact* OR effect* or evaluat* OR eviden* OR success*)

Youth work-related websites

Grey and unpublished literature was obtained through professional contact with experts in the field of youth work in Aotearoa/New Zealand as will be outlined below. In addition, publications

were sourced from youth work-related websites in New Zealand. Primary websites searched during November and December 2009 included:

1)   Ministry of Youth Development: http://www.myd.govt.nz/

2)   Youthline: http://youthline.co.nz/

3)   National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa: http://www.youthworkers.net.nz/index.html

All links and directories from these websites were then searched – see appendix 1 for a selection of websites accessed.   All websites related to careers/employment, accommodation/flatting, driving, legal services/rights, finances/money/scholarships, commercial youth magazines/music, voting, study support/NCEA, self-defense, internet safety, DHB's/MOH/other government websites (Internal affairs youth worker training scheme) etc. were excluded. We undertook a limited search focusing on professional support services for young people– suicide, gambling, addictions, bereavement, disability support, ADHD, rape, eating disorders, sexual abuse and violence, but stopped the search where it became apparent that the service was providing a discipline-specific intervention other than youth work.

Due to the limited scope and timeframe for the review, the international search was restricted to published studies cited in electronic databases and reported in English post 1990.   In consultation with the funder, the search strategy did not include hand-searching of journals, since prior experience indicated that it was highly unlikely that any rigorous experimental study would be missed through the other search methods. This search of websites resulted in the identification of 28 publications (e-reports). Of these, 16 were assessed as potentially relevant and entered into RevMan.

Professional contacts

Professional contacts with youth work providers in New Zealand were made between October and December 2009 to identify grey literature, unpublished reports and ongoing studies. A request for research information from the wider youth sector and a follow up request as the data gathering period drew to a close was also placed on the New Zealand Aotearoa Adolescent Health and Development (NZAAHD) website http://www.nzaahd.org.nz/. Professional contacts were additionally requested to forward the search for relevant literature to their own networks. These professional youth sector contacts included the following agencies and individuals:

Sue Bagshaw – 198 Youth Centre

Rod Baxter – Wellington Boys and Girls Institute

Stephen Bell – Youthline

Terryann Clark – Centre for Youth Health

Terry Fleming – Centre for Youth Health

David Hanna – Wesley Community Action

John Harrington – National Youth Workers Network

Sarah Helm – NZAAHD

Victoria Hood – Foundation for Youth Development

Jayne Lowry - Youthline

Teorongonui Keelan – Auckland University of Technology

Elizabeth Kerekere – Out There

Trina King – NZAAHD

Duane Major – 24-7 Youthwork

Lloyd Martin – Praxis

Andy Pilbrow – YMCA

Kirsty Pillay-Hansen – Foundation for Youth Development

Alison Searle – Manukau City Council

Sonia Thursby – PHAB (Physically handicapped and able-bodied) Association Inc

Amanda Torr – The Social Services Industry Training Organisation (ITO)

A very positive response from the youth sector resulted in 254 items received. However, these included a range of discussion papers, policy documents, newsletters and other practice material that were ineligible for the review. Only 11 of these items were eventually regarded as potentially relevant.

Cross-referencing of bibliographies

The references listed in reviews and primary studies identified from the search were scanned to identify new leads. This resulted in the identification of relevant studies, but all of these were already included in the RevMan library.

3.3 Methods utilised for the review

The selection of studies

References identified by means of the above search strategy were included in an Endnote library and independently assessed by two reviewers to identify those potentially relevant to the review. A total of 537 (222 general references, 33 theses, 254 items via youth work sector contacts, and 28 e-reports) titles and abstracts were identified in the search. Some of these were duplicate references. All the duplications were eliminated, resulting in a total of 260

references from all sources (199 general references, 22 theses, 11 items via youth work sector contacts, and 28 e-reports).

In the case of any discrepancies between the reviewers on the relevance of references, those references were automatically included. Eventually 21 references from the general databases and theses searches collectively were assessed as relevant for eligibility screening, 16 electronic reports were included from the website searches and 11 references submitted by the youth work sector, were also included. This left a total of 48 references regarded as potentially relevant. These 48 references were all imported into RevMan and full text copies obtained. Two reviewers independently studied the full-text reports and determined which studies met the inclusion criteria as described above (i.e. types of participants, interventions and outcomes) with the use of the study eligibility screening form (attached as appendix 2). Selection decisions were reviewed and any disagreements were resolved by the review team. Specific reasons for exclusion were documented for each study that did not meet inclusion criteria (see Appendix 3 for Table of Excluded Studies).

3.4 Data management

Data extraction and assessment of study relevance and quality

Intervention (controlled) studies and descriptive studies were considered for inclusion in the review and the intervention studies were to be pooled into a meta-analysis. As no eligible intervention studies were identified, no meta-analysis was undertaken.

Information on study design and implementation, sample characteristics, intervention characteristics, and outcomes were to be extracted from the selected intervention and descriptive studies and coded on a data extraction form. Since no studies met all the systematic review inclusion criteria and as no studies have as such been included in the review, data extraction was not feasible.

Timeframe

The review was completed within the following timeframe:

Sept – Dec 2009:   Implemented the search strategy

October 2009:   Pilot testing of inclusion criteria

September – December 2009:   Relevance assessments conducted and material obtained

September - December 2009:   Reviewed relevant material from references

January - February 2010:   Preparation of report

4. RESULTS

4.1 Description of studies not eligible for review

A great many of the references identified by means of the comprehensive search strategy related to the experiences, perceptions and training of youth workers (in the broadest sense of the word as this often included reference to social work or human services training) without any indication of the implication of this for young people as was intended in this review. These studies were therefore outside the scope of the systematic review question. Similarly, a number of references referred to the services delivered to young people (often including relatively young children) integral to but distinctly separate from 'youth work'. These services ranged from formal educational services and teaching, to social work, nursing and counseling, and the range of governmental and other services available as supports to young people including those related to careers, accommodation, driving, legal rights, finances, music, voting, study support, self-defense, internet safety, etc. Furthermore, a range of other publications referred to 'youth work' as the work (i.e. employment or occupational and vocational activities) that youth (i.e. young people) engage in and thereby creating a very different interpretation of the construct 'youth work'. These topics accounted for a great many references discounted for inclusion in this review. The studies that fell outside the above categories and considered ineligible for the review, can be described as studies related to youth work-related activities rather than youth work as a unique and distinct activity so described by the author of the study.

Furthermore, in consultation with the Ministry of Youth Development and in attempts to focus the search strategy, it was decided to exclude from this systematic review any studies with interventions primarily aimed at reducing youth offending, substance abuse or addressing health-related behavior such as smoking, other drug use, obesity or sexually transmitted infections, as these typically fall within the scope of government services tasked with criminal justice, corrections or health rather than youth development. This obviously led to the exclusion of studies that may potentially have valuable lessons for the youth work sector, but also highlights the complex and interwoven nature of the construct youth work as will be discussed later in this report.

4.2   Description of eligible studies

As alluded to earlier, 48 studies regarded as eligible for the review were independently assessed by two reviewers against the inclusion criteria. No studies met all the inclusion criteria and hence no studies have been included in the review.

With the assistance of the librarian, the review team considered the influence of publication bias and missing information. The search strategy was carried out systematically to minimise bias and searcher oversight. A variety of sources have been searched and many individuals were consulted as part of this comprehensive search strategy, as evidenced earlier in this report.

5. DISCUSSION

Although the studies identified through the comprehensive search strategy for this review did not result in any evidence on the impact of youth work for young people, it is important to note that the lack of evidence is not an indication of the lack of effect. There is no conclusive evidence that the impact of youth work for young people is positive, negative or indifferent. Only limited conclusions can be drawn from limited data. It is important to note that emerging evidence suggests that youth work as part of the wider youth development sector has the potential to impact on the lives of young people (eg. Young, 2005; Merton, et al., 2004), but as evidenced by this review, no studies were sufficiently rigorous to be included in a systematic review, nor did the studies we identified meet the eligibility criteria to support claims on the impact of youth work for young people. However, some of the studies, although not eligible for inclusion, contain useful information with implications for possible future research. Themes derived from the discussions in these studies will be highlighted below.

The study with the most comprehensive evaluation of a particular youth work intervention with a specific group of young people was Astbury and Knight (2003) who studied Fairbridge – a network of sites delivering a particular youth service in the United Kingdom to determine the effects of youth work service delivery. The Astbury and Knight (2003) review entailed examining short and long term outcomes for young people. Young people assessed as having multiple difficulties were studied through self and observed assessments before and after receiving a week-long intervention. A sample were re-examined with additional interviews ten weeks later and a sample of that sample a year later. Other data sources were staff members and interviewers of young people. The range of data was cross referenced and statistically

verified to determine the legitimacy of the findings (Astbury & Knight, 2003). The report summarises the findings regarding the effectiveness of the week-long intervention where the aspects of social and personal outcomes for young people were concerned.

Some of the characteristics of three other studies (Furlong, et al., 1997; Merton, et al., 2004 and Turner & Martin, 2004) can be used for comparative purposes with respect to Astbury and Knight (2003) which was outstanding in its statistical rigor and use of various data sources. The findings from these studies are also concerned with personal and social outcomes. A similar representative data source and methodology is reported by Furlong, et al. (1997), Merton, et al. (2004) and Turner and Martin (2004) namely *young people as participants* having completed *a survey regarding their views*. This is indicative of methodologies used in a range of other studies identified during the course of this review to determine factors regarding the effectiveness of youth work. Additional examples include Crimmens et al. (2004) and Golden, et al. (2005). Both these studies utilized a questionnaire or survey with young people as participants for the purpose of identifying the impact that youth work have according to young people. However, all of the above-mentioned studies, (Furlong, et al., 1997; Merton, et al., 2004; Turner & Martin, 2004; Crimmens et al., 2004; and Golden, et al., 2005) used a combination of techniques to collect data, including capturing views of a range of stakeholders, leading to conclusions about what is effective in youth work. The five studies' results overall were based on multiple data sources, not simply on the data from a survey with young people.

5.1   Challenges in the conceptualisation of youth work

The variations in youth work both conceptually (in terms of types of youth work) and professionally (with respect to distinctions between youth workers and people who work with young people) tend to become a core issue in the evidencing of the impact of youth work. Martin (2006), in exploring the nature of youth work in New Zealand noted that youth work can be defined conceptually as a series of social, educational, recreational, employment, identity and culturally related support services assisting young people in their transition to adulthood. Pro social relationships for supporting young people to successfully achieve the transition to adulthood are an important part of the work (Ministry of Social Development, 2008). However, it should be added that a number of professionals work with young people and those professionals would not define themselves as youth workers. This discourse is longstanding and ongoing internationally as well as nationally, as noted by a number of researchers and commentators (Martin, 2006; National Youth Workers Network, 2008; Barwick, 2006). However,

the absence of a clear universally accepted and widely used definition of youth work and youth workers has stood out in conducting this review.

A number of studies were identified where young people were the focus of an intervention, but the intervention involved was not conceptualised as youth work (e.g. McGachie & Smith, 2003; Dickens & Woodfield, 2004; Qiao & McNaught, 2007) and therefore was not included under systematic review criteria. Similarly, studies involving interventions targeted at young people conducted in the fields of education, welfare, health and justice, were excluded as these were not regarded as youth work (e.g. Lievore, Mayhew & Lee, 2007; Makwana, 2007), even when 'youth work' appeared in the text several times (Sampson & Themelis, 2009). Schulman and Davies (2007) observe that some of the best evaluated studies are concerned with sexual health, school achievement and mentoring. A significant example of this was Hahn, Leavitt and Aaron (1994) in evaluating the cost and benefits of the Quantum Opportunities programme. Hahn et al. (1994) document a striking example of a programme that delivers services to young people; utilises a rigorous evaluation of a youth service; captures the social and personal impacts of service delivery to young people; and describes an approach that for all intents and purposes is youth work, however, it is not referred to as such. Hahn et al. (1994) have been cited in other recent research (Fletcher, et al., 2008; Schulman & Davies, 2007) referring to youth work interventions, yet in the terms of systematic review and in Hahn et al's references to the programme concerned, the term youth work was not used.

The tension with the conceptualisation of youth work is likely to remain an issue in the evidencing of the impact of youth work in future research studies and reviews if there is no agreement on the consistent use and identification of the construct 'youth work' in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

5.2   Variation in the context of youth work

Similar to the discussion above, Crimmens et al. (2004) made a distinction between two different types of youth work, defined by the context in which the work took place. One type – 'outreach work' was initiated through engaging young people who were not accessing so-called 'building based' youth services and may target particular groups or individuals, for instance offenders, substance users or young people not using services. The other type of youth work was 'detached work'. This is regarded as a social educational form of work, open-ended and broad in scope, taking place in a number of sites from the street to a range of facilities. It

extends from service to young people and youth networks to related services and networks involving adults, local authorities and political structures so as to benefit young people. However, as Crimmens et al. (2004) pointed out, youth work often involves a mixture of both outreach and detached forms, such that few examples meet the ideal of each type. Crimmens et al. (2004) highlights the challenges in evaluating these various types of youth work.

Youth work evaluation often entails working with and collecting information on groups of young people. Developmental outcomes are often hard to identify in short periods, as such outcomes can take numerous years to eventuate. Additionally, youth work is very much situated in a social context, such that distinguishing the impact of the youth work engagement specifically can be very difficult to ascertain. Engaging young people initially can be a lengthy process of building rapport, such that eliciting information about a young person at the point of first contact can be so intrusive that if pursued, would likely put a young person off wishing to engage with a youth worker (Crimmens et al., 2004). The wide range of contexts in which youth works takes place in Aotearoa/New Zealand is clearly acknowledged by the National Youth Workers Network (2008a). Whilst in Aotearoa/New Zealand the distinction between 'outreach work', 'building based', 'detached work' and 'street based' youth work is not often used, the literature suggests that the context in which youth work takes place is a significant factor both for practice and research. Evaluating the effectiveness of these varied youth work interventions will partly rely on attention to, development and use of context relevant tools for capturing evidence.

5.3 The importance of relationships

Connections and relationships are core to youth work. As Martin (2006) notes, it is the place of relationships that distinguishes youth work from other professions who also work with young people. While other professions build a relationship in order to provide a service, "youth workers provide a service in order to build a relationship" (National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa, 2008a, p. xv). Astbury and Knight (2003) reported on both the short term impacts on young people and impacts as recorded a year later from an evaluation of a course offered by a youth service. The positive impacts on young people were attributed to the quality relationships with staff, the 'ethos' of the service entailing both enjoyable and regulated experiences, and the activities provided by the service. Staff relationships were deemed to be the most effective influence on the young people (Astbury & Knight, 2003) due to mutual trust and respect present in relationships with staff who valued the young people. This was combined with better peer group relationships.

Whilst these results need to be treated with caution due to methodological considerations, some of the other studies identified in this review (Furlong, et al., 1997; Merton, et al., 2004; Turner & Martin, 2004) also reported that youth participation led to young people's belief that they were more confident in relationships and related personal and social skills. The following studies also reiterated the importance of relationships in one way or another: Dickens and Woodfield (2004) evaluated the 'Safe in the City' programme concerned with avoiding young people's homelessness. This study noted that keyworker relationships were of great importance in reducing youth homelessness based on the fact that keyworkers give young people someone to go to for support, someone who knows them individually and who is part of a team of staff supporting the young person. Schneider-Munoz (1999) presented six case studies of young people in residential care over a five year period. The findings indicate that although the young people with life histories of abuse often did not bond with a particular youth worker, the most effective approach in achieving this, was when a group of youth workers shared the caregiving of a young person. Shared caregiving provided a model of appropriate social behaviour and shifted the young person's fear of developing intimacy with individuals to a chance to try and test new opportunities in a series of relationships. Torr (2008) interviewed a number of young people and service staff in the Tamaiti Whangai Rugby League Academy Programme, specifically intended to develop rugby league skills in young people. The results indicate improvements in outcomes for 83% of young people both in terms of their sporting accomplishments and in their educational outcomes, but Torr (2008) determined that relationships were influential in a number of the crucial factors contributing to the successful outcome.

Young (2005) reported that the English Neighbourhood Support Fund and National Youth Agency evaluations drawing on data sources ranging from documentation held centrally and locally, through surveying and interviewing staff, managers and young people determined that relationships were one of three significant factors leading to an impact for young people and their communities. A number of aspects of practice and learning environments were influential, but where relationships between youth workers and young people were concerned, similar aspects of other research noted in this report emerged as influential. Youth workers who offered sustained support, role modeling of a positive nature, ensured voluntarism, and fostered honest, trusting and respectful relationships with young people were found to have a positive effect.

With respect to the relationships young people had with key workers and lead professionals, Palmer and Kendall (2009) noted that 80% of young people reported on their relationships with professionals. Seventy two per cent (n=32) of young people reported that relationships with youth work staff were the reason they felt positive about their support, whereas young people who had negative or mixed views about support, attributed the view to their having a change in a worker due to the individual young people's increased needs, their own motivation, or ambition. Palmer and Kendall (2009) studied cases of support provided to young people determining that in nearly half of cases they studied (n=20) lead professionals were effective through developing positive relationships with the young people concerned, as well as with their families. Those lead professionals made sure that there was sustained ongoing support provided.

Schulman and Davies (2007) pointed out that research into young people's positive development does distinctly indicate the advantages of young people having good relationships with adults and peers as a result of youth work. Receiving services alone is not what facilitates development; what are advantageous to young people are the connections established and maintained with peers and mentoring adults in different settings (Schulman & Davies, 2007).

5.4   The value of youth participation

Partnership is foundational to the relationships between young people and youth workers and extends to collegial partnerships and partnering between youth work services and coordinating agencies (Comfort, et al., 2006). Moreover, partnering is also an essential component in capturing evidence of the impact of youth work for young people. Participation is a concept often utilised in the literature on youth. Yet, Barry (2005, citing Williamson, 1997) notes that although participation is a core principle in youth work, it is unlikely to eventuate unless young people are involved in flexible, empowering and autonomous programmes. This naturally has an effect on the availability of evidence on the impact of youth work for young people. There seems to be a paucity of robust material (other than inconsistently captured, narrative self-reports or perceptions) on young people's experience of the impact of youth work and this may be related to the lack of real participation of young people in evaluative practices. We need more research *by* young people and *for* young people rather than *on* young people.

Barnados notes that in the UK, governments have established a number of processes for increasing youth participation, such as creating the position of a Minister for Children, instituting

a Children's and Youth Board, and a Children's Commissioner in Northern Island, Scotland England and Wales (Barnados, 2005). McGachie and Smith (2003) utilised different data sources to explore youth participation practices and policies in six organisations. The organisational culture of youth work services was found to be a significant factor in enhancing young people's participation. Organisations that have a culture where young people are supported by adults who advocate, share power, respect, support families and whanau, train and support, institute participation through organisational planning and arrangements and remove constraints on young people's participation were found to be instrumental in improving youth participation. Young people's participation also enhances the inclusiveness of organisations by being open to young people's viewpoints and their inspirational and novel answers to challenging issues.

Advocacy is a crucial part of youth participation. According to Charmaraman (2006), in contemporary western societies the media is very influential and frequently depicts young people along with other disempowered groups (such as indigenous ethnic groups, sexual minorities, people with disabilities and the aged), negatively. One way to counter such negative images where young people are concerned is to promote positive depictions of young people (Charmaraman, 2006). Young people can be supported in exploring and interrogating images of young people in the media, for instance through constructing audio/audiovisual stories where stories, images and scripting can challenge stereotypes of youth (Charmaraman, 2006). In using a mixed methods approach to explore the impact of an after school youth programme involving audiovisual media production, Charmaraman (2006) assisted young people to construct such videos, reporting a range of learning outcomes from the experience. In addition to the technical skills gained, students also reported enjoying portraying real life representations of young people, and gaining new social and cognitive skills as a result of the experience.

Youth work in Aotearoa/New Zealand has recently seen a shift to supporting and encouraging a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach. "A positive youth development approach forms the platform for consistent youth policies and programmes" (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002, p. 15) and is intended to create fertile soil for young people to grow and develop. What is not yet known is the proportion of youth workers and youth work programmes that intentionally and consistently underpin PYD into youth work practice.

5.5   Gender-based evidence

In studying street-based youth work in England and Wales, Crimmens et al. (2004) found that service staff overwhelmingly came into contact with young men - noting that of the 564 projects studied, the 62 per cent of the young people were male and 38 per cent female. Furthermore, of 3,500 young people studied by the U.K. Department of Education, young men featured significantly as youth work service recipients (Bradford, 1999). Crimmens et al (2004) suggest that this may be due to the street being regarded as a male dominated place and that this may be part of a bias towards service provision to young men, who are seen as more likely to be in and cause trouble or offend criminally (Crimmens, et al. 2004). Barwick (2004) believes that both as a result of essential characteristics, but also social associations of ways of demonstrating, acting, choosing and the features of being male, we need specific approaches of working with young men: "[T]he challenges boys face as they move towards adulthood are different and need different responses" (Barwick, 2004, p. 7).

Yet, Barwick notes that youth work currently focuses on a gender-neutral way of practicing and there is a paucity of male focused approaches in youth work. Although there are limited studies on gender-specific approaches, Barwick (2004) mentions an evaluation undertaken on youth work with young men in Northern Island. In supporting young men, structured risk taking activities and reflection were the methods used by the youth workers as an approach to successfully challenge stereotypical masculine ideas in young men (Barwick, 2004, cited Harland & Morgan, 2003). Addressing issues of masculinity have increasingly had an impact on the effectiveness of youth work with young men in Northern Island where workers have reported often experiencing helplessness and demoralisation through not being supported in their youth work practice. One of the changes in practice from taking such experiences into consideration was in Youth Action Northern Ireland where youth workers were trained about innovations and creativity for developing their practice in working with young men through critical thinking and trying out techniques through role playing (Harland & Morgan, 2003). These macrological factors pose significant challenges to youth work practice as well as evaluation of youth work interventions where masculinity is concerned.

In evaluating the Fairbridge youth service, Astbury and Knight (2003) found that young women benefited more than young men, evident in young women's self reports and in staff ratings. Young women were assessed as being less 'at risk' than young men and benefitted more fully from the services while young men at high risk did not have positive outcomes as a result of

attending Fairbridge (Astbury & Knight, 2003). It seems to be appropriate to consider gender-based evidence in the design of practice-based research initiatives.

5.6   Ethnically-sensitive evidence

Systematic reviews increasingly focus not just on effectiveness, but also on the side effects or adverse events associated with interventions and a consideration of those effects not recorded at all. Authors may not always describe adverse events in abstracts, and indexing may not always record adverse events even if studies contain them. In considering these factors for this review, it was noted that no adverse effects were reported, but more importantly that there is a notable lack of research incorporating considerations of ethnicity – especially pertaining to Maori, Pacific and Asian youth in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context. This is an important factor to consider in the design, implementation and dissemination of future research initiatives.

McVey and McIntyre (2007) considered the case in Scotland regarding youth work and young people who are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds experiencing mental health concerns. Youth work services can be an alien phenomenon for people from diverse ethnicities and cultures. Youth work can be seen by young people from non-dominant ethnicities and cultures as embodying the sorts of discriminations present in broader society. In addition to considering relevant literature and policies McVey and McIntyre (2007) visited and presented case studies regarding four projects providing services to Black and Minority Ethnic Group young people, some of who are refugees and asylum seekers. Projects offer a range of artistic, recreational and educational services concerning expression of and dealing with experiences and feelings of loss and discrimination. Parents of Black and Minority Ethnic Group young people can be skeptical of the benefits of youth work when it is seen as entailing recreational activities and having exclusive relevance where gender is concerned. McVey and McIntyre (2007) suggested that in a situation where education is often highly valued in diverse cultures, presenting youth work as informal education may raise its acceptability. According to McVey and McIntyre (2007), the challenge to youth work where intergenerational differences between young people and their parents are concerned is compounded by sensitivities that affect some cultural communities. Concluding where mental health is concerned McVey and McIntyre (2007) recommend that youth work for Black and Minority Ethnic Group young people needs to be varied, entailing intercultural and faith orientations, recognising indigenous or thematic emphases in communities, and meeting specific needs of particular young people through specialist services.

Springer et al. (2004) considered culturally specific youth programmes where the prevention of substance abuse was concerned, examining 48 programmes specifically designed for a number of diverse cultural groups and delivered to 10, 500 young people in the United States. Through pre and post measurement of 6,031 young people receiving culturally specific programme services and 4,579 young people receiving non-culturally specific programme services, satisfaction levels with regard culturally specific services were notable. Where high risk young people were concerned, the culturally specific services were more effective in reducing the use of substances. The programmes with the strongest evidence of effectiveness were those placing a heavy emphasis on the role of cultural content, identified through young people's reports on completing programmes regarding the high satisfaction levels and the greater importance young people believed the programme had for their lives.

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, Teorongonui Josie Keelan and Associates (2002) promote the goal of the participation of Maori young people in Maori development noting that young Maori people need to be involved in activities self defined as important, integrating contemporary issues in relevant projects and incorporating ancestral tikanga in a nurturing way. Research indicates that the recognition, embracing and inclusion of culture in programmes relevant to specific ethnic and cultural groups of young people is a challenge, but can be an effective factor with regard to positive outcomes for young people.

5.7   Challenges in generating evidence

There is not at this point conclusive evidence that young people who have received youth work services do any better than young people receiving other services, or young people who do not receive any services. Often evaluations that are peer reviewed look at and measure negative aspects of young people's lives, such as problematic behaviours and risk factors. Schulman and Davies (2007) claim that there have not been systematically compared studies into programmes that claim to lead to positive development in young people. As such, it is not possible to clearly claim which aspects of programmes lead to which particular outcomes for young people receiving youth services. Nor is it currently possible to determine the connections that exist between populations of young people, developmental results and aspects of programmes. Crucially, it is not clear what connections exist between short and long term outcomes for young people (Schulman & Davies, 2007).

Brent (2004) notes that youth work has been under pressure from managerial influences to demonstrate targeted outcomes as products of service delivery. The difficulty in conducting effectiveness or impact studies amidst managerial pressures, are often compounded by the fact that it is difficult to define the outcome measures and challenging to monitor these indicators over an extended period (Crimmens, et al., 2004). Instability of funding is an additional barrier to achieving and evidencing outcomes. Merton et al. (2004) pointed out that some projects are funded for limited periods. In such situations the ability of youth workers to deliver services is challenged, as the funding stream is likely to be exhausted before the service is able to deliver the projected outcomes. Length of programme delivery is an important issue in effective youth work. Whilst Schulman and Davies (2007) note that identifying an effective minimum for the length of programme is not a simple matter. Programmes of very short length or of a single occasion cannot be seen as effective for positive youth development, as it takes time for a positive relationship to develop between young people and practitioners and for developmental markers to emerge.

Various authors offer suggestions for creating evidence on the impact of youth work amidst the range of challenges. The way forward for youth workers is not so much in aiming to reach managerial targets, but demonstrating outcomes through documenting the results of what works (Brent, 2004). Beckett raise the possibility of establishing model youth programmes for monitoring and development. Such pilots could be closely scrutinised for effectiveness, before being implemented widely, adding that large scale and quality evaluations are required to assess the true success of programmes (Beckett, 2008). Crimmens et al. (2004) suggest the best way to progress our understanding of youth work effectiveness is when young people, youth workers and services devise measures collaboratively using participatory research and evaluation processes. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the case has been made to support practitioners in the social services to engage in practice-based research by allowing them to own the process whereby evidence is created and supporting them to design, implement and disseminate a project through a partnership model (Lunt, Fouche & Yates, 2008; Fouche & Lunt, 2009).

Through the National Youth Agency, Comfort et al. (2006) offer a range of tools and processes for recognising and recording the impact of youth work. Whilst inceptive assessments are often frowned upon in youth work, observational informal assessments are usually a part of youth work practice and according to Comfort et al. (2006), inviting young people to consider

themselves retrospectively to the time before they engaged with the service and forward to the present can produce valuable data. Additionally to such qualitative recording, youth workers can quantify effectiveness using numeric scales (Comfort et al., 2006). There are standardised measurement tools that are being developed that could be utilised for measuring positive youth development (Schulman & Davies, 2007). Schulman and Davies (2007) believe that funders must assist in developing both indicators of positive development and fund evaluations that are quasi-experimental in nature. And whilst quantitative measurements have traditionally been prioritised to indicate present case outcomes, future planning will require that qualitative data be sourced by recruiting young people and their families as researchers of their social context to determine future developmental focus areas.

The Ministry of Youth Development (2009) has acknowledged that it needs to have a comprehensive structure for managing the performance, overseeing and evaluating youth work, suggesting that a programme should have particular components such as a base theory for the programme, incorporating a theory of change, the reason for the activities involved and opportunities the activities will provide for young people.

6. REVIEWERS' CONCLUSIONS

The parameters of the systematic review mean that it cannot and should not be expected to provide all necessary information related to the impact of youth work for young people in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The objective of this research was to systematically review the available research evidence on the impact and outcomes of youth work for young people as relevant to the Aotearoa/New Zealand context and to explore the review question: "What is the impact of 'youth work' for young people?". The answer to this question is limited by the lack of relevant data. The results from this empty systematic review indicate that there is a lack of research evidence on the impact of youth work for young people and when relevance to the Aotearoa/New Zealand context is considered, we were unable to locate any research evidence on the impact of youth work incorporating ethnic considerations – especially as it pertains to Maori, Pacific and Asian youth in the New Zealand context. As noted earlier the current lack of evidence is not an indication of lack of effect, and there is clearly a need for more research of higher methodological quality. We are of the opinion that youth workers need to be supported to create practice-based evidence on the impact of youth work for young people.

6.1   Implications for Policy and Practice

In order to inform policy initiatives that will have the potential to increase benefits in the life of the young person, a commitment to the generation of a body of sound research evidence will be required by funding bodies and the broader youth sector. Youth workers do good work, but at the 'grassroots' level, effectiveness of youth work is currently largely assessed by positive community feedback and the participation of young people in youth work services (Martin, 2006). This supports Bradford's view that a good indicator of effectiveness in youth work is that a number of young people choose to access services when they are not compelled to do so. Such participation in itself, along with young people's views of the importance and effectiveness of youth work and the views of professionals regarding what works, are often regarded as more significant indicators of effectiveness than quantified outcomes (Bradford, 1999). Paradoxically, it may be that the very element that makes youth workers good practitioners, namely an intensive time focus on inclusiveness and relationship building, may be hampering the conceptual cohesion and professional clarity that is needed for youth work to further flourish. Youth workers need to be supported to be involved in quality research that identifies and disseminates clear information on effective youth work practice.   Quality research and dissemination can assist in defining youth works' effectiveness for young people, and contribute to evolving generational practice knowledge.

Furthermore, young people, their families and communities, as well as funders, need to know what 'youth work' is. They need to know what they can and cannot expect youth workers and youth work services to provide, and how youth workers may add value both within and separate from discipline specific services. Where the conceptualisation of youth work is concerned, the Ministry of Youth Development (2009) when reviewing and commenting on its development of funding of structured youth work programmes, noted its intention of creating a generally understood and used set of " . . . terms, concepts, ideas and knowledge about youth development and 'what works' that can be used, together with people's own knowledge . . ." (Ministry of Youth Development, 2009, p. 16).

6.2   Implications for Training and Education

Barwick (2006) noted that whilst practice is robust and displays commitment on the part of youth workers there are many volunteer and part-time workers with only a few years of practice experience and few qualifications available in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The qualifications that are recognised by the sector range from short courses and staff training by youth organisations

to degree courses at Universities. Of every twelve youth workers in New Zealand, only one holds a qualification (Barwick, 2006). Given the strong practice orientation it is likely that youth workers' first priority for training will be practice skills. Combined with limitations on training funding, acquiring the skills needed to engage in robust research and disseminating the results is likely to be fairly low priority in such a workforce. Barry highlights the way in which the curriculum in youth work has increasingly focused on 'how' to do youth work as opposed to what is meant to be the outcomes of working with young people (Barry, 2005, p. 21 cited Ord, 2004). Furthermore, in-service supervision can often be focused on the circumstantial practicalities and technicalities of being stuck in practice – the immediate and service-specific needs of what was done and how it was done, rather than broader sector exploration on 'what worked'. Training and education for youth workers is related to the current debate in the youth work sector regarding professionalization of youth work, and this too is an issue that requires resolution.

6.3   Implications for Research

'Hard' evidence of effectiveness, Bradford (1999) believes, is counter to the holistic and person centred orientation of youth work practice, but is something that has increasingly been imposed on practice due to managerial requirements to demonstrate tangible outcomes in both statutory and voluntary sectors. However, we consider research evidence, alongside youth participation statistics and 360 degree feedback from various stakeholders as the most holistic measure of effectiveness. We suggest that in partnership with service managers, youth workers and young people, government agencies design and implement a range of research methods to trial and develop context-appropriate ways to determine the effectiveness of youth work.   Whilst qualitative methods should continue to be utilised, quantitative measuring tools need to be available for capturing data on a young person's situation as soon as possible after the initial contact with youth work services, during the process of receiving services and after exiting services. Control groups of young people not receiving service will also need to be recruited into such data collection procedures.   In short, experimental, mixed methods, longitudinal research needs to be developed.

The Ministry of Youth Development has indicated its intention for youth work services it funds to demonstrate they are efficient and accountable, so that whilst accepting the diversity of services and young people's needs, it will have standardised tools to determine effectiveness in youth work (Ministry of Youth Development, 2009). The findings from this review clearly support this direction. Considering the paucity of experimental data available globally, putting rigorous

assessment methods in place could allow this gap to be filled if researchers and practitioners work together.

7. PLANS FOR UPDATING THE REVIEW

Currently there are no plans by the research team to update the review. This is influenced by the context of the lack of consensus on the definition and nature of 'youth work' in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the fact that involvement in the lives of young people is indeed core to many disciplines. Future systematic reviews on a similar topic need to take these factors into account.

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Appendix 1: Websites accessed in search strategy

Primary websites accessed:
1) Ministry of Youth Development: http://www.myd.govt.nz/
2) Youthline: http://youthline.co.nz/
3) National Youth Workers Network: http://www.youthworkers.net.nz/index.html

All links and directories from these websites were searched as were the relevant links from subsequent websites until saturation occurred.

1)   Weblinks from MINISTRY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT website

http://www.attitude.org.nz/home/

http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation.aspx

http://www.headspace.org.nz/

www.rainbowyouth.org.nz;

www.projectk.org.nz

http://www.fyd.org.nz/

http://www.kiwican.org.nz/

http://www.healthaction.org.nz/

http://oiyp.oxfam.org/oiyp/index.html

http://www.justfocus.org.nz/

http://www.outthere.org.nz/home/index.htm

http://www.skylight.org.nz/

http://www.spinz.org.nz/page/5-Home

http://www.unyanz.co.nz/

http://www.upperhuttcity.com/page/106/UpperHuttYouth.boss

2)   Weblinks from YOUTHLINE website and directory

http://www.barnardos.org.nz/home/index.asp

http://www.familyworks.org.nz/

http://www.impactauranga.org/

http://www.pars.org.nz/

http://www.nash.org.nz/

http://www.relate.org.nz/

http://www.carenz.co.nz/

http://www.inyaface.co.nz/

http://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/Support/Publications/tabid/1005/Default.aspx

http://www.police.govt.nz/resources/index.html

http://www.police.govt.nz/service/yes/nobully/

http://www.cyf.govt.nz/

http://www.areyouok.org.nz/

http://www.evolveyouth.org.nz/

http://www.nzaahd.org.nz/index.php/information-centre

http://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/

http://www.nzaf.org.nz/

http://www.ymcagreaterwellington.org.nz/masterton.html

http://www.sadd.org.nz/

http://www.psc.org.nz/site/central/

http://www.dare.org.nz/

http://www.cfuh.org.nz/launch/home.php

http://www.2shine.org.nz/index.php?section=1

http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/default.php

http://www.youngnz.org.nz/

http://www.kidpower.org.nz/

http://www.wsdn.org.nz/

http://www.discoveryforteens.co.nz/

http://www.younglife.org.nz/

http://www.youthtown.org.nz/

http://www.lifeline.org.nz/

http://www.homeandfamily.org.nz/

http://www.globalyouth.co.nz/

http://www.netsafe.org.nz/

http://www.whatsup.co.nz/

http://www.outlinenz.com/

http://www.northpoint.org.nz/

http://www.tuiora.co.nz/

3)   Links from YOUTH WORKERS NETWORK website

http://www.cywc.org.nz/index.html

http://www.ahi.co.nz/

http://www.occ.org.nz/

http://www.cst.org.nz/

http://www.globaled.org.nz/

http://www.communityresearch.org.nz/

http://www.collaborative.org.nz/

http://www.virtuesproject.org.nz/default.aspx

International websites accessed for study search (additional sites were accessed for obtaining references):

http://au.reachout.com/

http://www.thesource.gov.au/

http://nti.aed.org/

http://www.nya.org.uk/

http://www.infed.org.uk/

http://www.yanq.org.au/

http://www.youthspecialties.com/

http://www.youthlinkscotland.org/Index.asp?MainID=7263

http://www.cypnow.co.uk/News/ByDiscipline/Youth-Work/

http://www.keyfund.org.uk/

Appendix 2: Study screening eligibility form

SCREENING QUESTION	ELIGIBILITY DECISION
Is this study about 'youth work'?	▪ Yes ▪ No ▪ Can't tell
Does the study have young people as participants or as the focus for intervention?	▪ Yes ▪ No ▪ Can't tell
Does this study report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions	▪ Yes ▪ No ▪ Can't tell
Does this study report on the effectiveness of an intervention	▪ Yes ▪ No ▪ Can't tell
What type of study is this?	▪ Intervention (controlled) study ▪ Descriptive study ▪ Observational study

Appendix 3: Table of excluded studies

STUDY	REASON FOR EXCLUSION
Arches, 2007	Does not have young people as participants or as the focus for intervention. Concerned with participants who are adults reflecting on their participation in a 'social action' youth group
Astbury, 2003	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with the evaluation of a network of youth services in the United Kingdom
Brent, 2004	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention Concerned with two case studies demonstrating the outcomes of youth work
Case, 2004	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth crime prevention
Charmaraman, 2006	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with an after-school digital media construction programme for young people and cognitive and social outcomes for participants
Comfort, 2006	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with identifying and recommending tools that youth workers can used for evaluating the effectiveness of practice
Crimmens, 2004	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention Concerned with reporting on findings of youth work delivery effectiveness in England and Wales
Department for Education and Skills, 2005	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth services to young people and how policy and practice can be reformed to better plan for and deliver services to young people
Dickens, 2004	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with qualitative data sourced from young people concerning family, personal development and education and employability cross tabulated with quantitative data held by authorities as part of an intervention designed to reduce young people's homelessness
Furlong, 1997	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with youth workers' and young people's experiences of delivering and receiving youth work services
Golden, 2004	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention Concerned with evaluating programmes in England seeking to re-engage young people with education or training or employment
Hahn, 1994	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with a rigorous evaluation (control group, before-after assessments) of an out-of-school-time programme delivered to young people in the US

STUDY	REASON FOR EXCLUSION
Hilton, 2005	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with interviews with a small sample of youth club members and the effectiveness in terms of social outcomes for attendee members
Kelly, 2004	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention Concerned with longitudinal data demonstrating statistically significant outcomes from schools integrating youth work services
Lievore, 2007	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth drug education
Lobley, 2007	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with youth offending
Makwana, 2007	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth drug prevention
Makwana, 2007a	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with young people's drug use
Martin, 2006	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with youth worker participants' experience of doing youth work
McGachie, 2003	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with six case studies of youth participation in organisations in Aotearoa/-New Zealand
McVey, 2007	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with literature, policy and legislation, practices and recommendations concerning youth work for black and ethnic minority young people in Scotland
Merton, 2004	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with reporting reviewing and accounting of services, case studies, and surveys of young people's experiences of receiving youth work services
Ministry of Youth Development, 2007	Does not have young people as participants or as the focus for intervention. Concerned with evaluation of the extent of youth worker training and recommendations for the future of training
Ministry of Social Development, 2008	Does not have young people as participants or as the focus for intervention Concerned with defining, noting the history, and noting international studies on effectiveness in youth work
Ministry of Youth Development, 2009	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions Concerned with two structured youth development programmes as an illustration
Mortimer, 1994	Does not have young people as participants or as the focus for interventions. Concerned with youth employment

STUDY	REASON FOR EXCLUSION
National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, 2001	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth offending reduction
Ngai, 2008	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention Concerned with focus group and survey data concerning the importance of adults in young people's lives
Palmer, 2009	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions Concerned with 'youth support', evaluating different models of delivery and the impact of models on youth work practice
Qiao, 2007	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with evaluating social and educational outcomes of young people participating in a youth mentoring project
Sampson, 2009	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with reducing youth offending
Save, 2001	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with a toolkit of resources, issues, information and practices to improve youth work delivery
Schneider-Munoz, 1999	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with residential care of young people
Schulman, 2007	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with a literature review of the 'youth development model', examining programmes, effectiveness and policy
Springer, 2004	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth drug prevention.
Stockport, 2004	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with youth employment
Styron, 2006	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with mental health service delivery outcomes for young people
Teorongonui, 2002	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with principles and practices to engage young Maori people in culturally appropriate ways
Thomas, 2008	Does not have young people as participants or as the focus for interventions. Concerned with a systematic review of risk and protective factors affecting young people
Torr, 2008	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with reporting on the academic and sporting outcomes and critical success factors for young people attending a sports academy

STUDY	REASON FOR EXCLUSION
Turner, 2004	Does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with reporting the effectiveness of youth work managed by the National Youth Agency and delivered by Neighbourhood Support Funded youth work services in England
VeLure, 2004	This study does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with young people's participation in civic engagement initiatives
Walker, 2005	This study does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with youth workers and young people's experiences of practicing and receiving youth work services
Young, 2005	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with an evaluation of youth service delivery
Youthline, 2006	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with young people's perspectives on 'youth services' the delivery of services by 'youth development workers' and what young people ideally thought services should be like
Youthline, 2008	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with literature, key informants' and young people's views about what would be the best health service for young people engaged in alternative education
Youthline, 2009	Does not report on interventions defined by authors as 'youth work' interventions. Concerned with a 'youth development' approach to gauge the experiences of young people who are sex workers to ascertain policies and practices to support young people's well-being
Youthline, 2008	This study does not report on the effectiveness of an intervention. Concerned with a review of literature indicating measures and other indicators of youth work service delivery