

Youth Guarantee House – A Finnish Innovation in Youth Work

The SocNet98 International University Week 2021

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HUMAK[®]

Who are you listening to?

Eeva Sinisalo-Juha

- Youth Worker since 1984
- MSocSc Youth Work & Youth Research
- Working for Research, Development and Innovation Activities on the Field of Youth Work in Humak since 2008
- 2019-2020 Research Manager at Finnish NGO Valo-Valmennusyhdistys developing a service model for "Youth Guarantee House"
- Back in Humak 2021,
 - 50 % *Researcher* at Kentauri – National Youth Work Center of Expertise (Focus on the outcome of young peoples' free-time hobbies and NGO activities on the growth and social inclusion of young people and the social impact of the activities)
 - 50 % *Senior Specialist* on Youth Work and Adventure Education
- I am writing my dissertation on the subject:
"Human Rights Education in Youth Work"



On the Agenda Today

- ❖ *Identity development in late modernity*
- ❖ *The most vulnerable young people today*
- ❖ *As a solution, the Youth Guarantee House*

Identity Development

“Youth work supports and encourages young people **to explore new experiences and opportunities**; it also enables them to recognise and manage the many risks they face now and are likely to encounter in the future. In turn, this **produces a more integrated and positive attachment to their own identity...**”

(Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work, p.21)



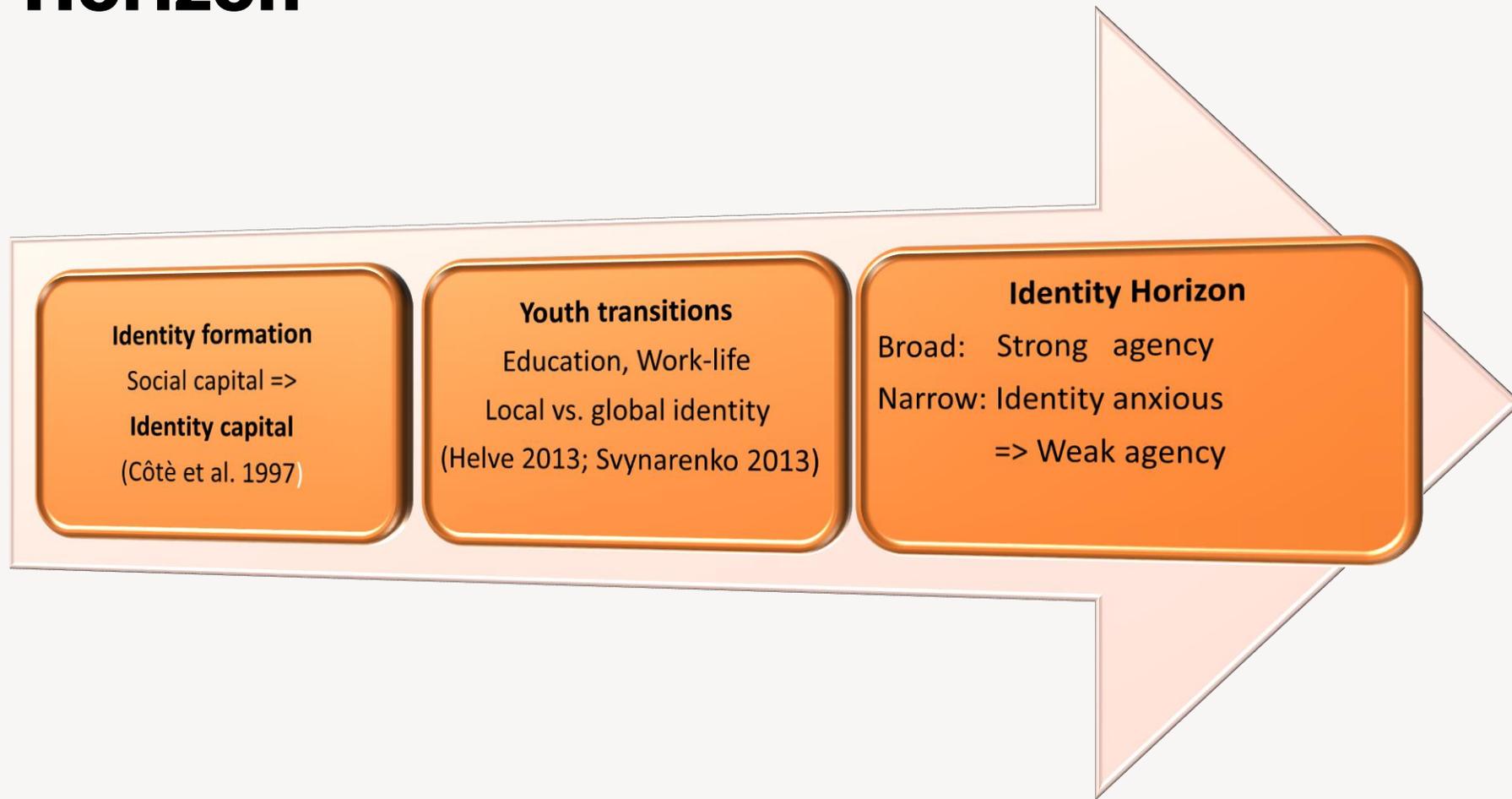
James Marcia

Article in Journal of Personality and Social Psychology · June 1966

The Identity Statusmodel in Late Modernity Identity as a product of current environment, "The MAMA-cycles" (moratorium – achievement – moratorium – achievement – ...) 2002

| The Identity Statusmodel | | Exploration | |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | | Low | High |
| Commitment | Low | Identity Diffusion | Moratorium |
| | High | Foreclosure | Identity Achievement |

Identity Development, Transitions and Identity Horizon



Helve, H. , Côté, J., Svyrenko, A., Sinisalo-Juha, E., Mizokami, S., Roberts, S. E., Nakama, R. (2017)
Identity Horizons among Finnish Post-Secondary Students: A Comparative Analysis.
International Journal of Identity, 17:3, 191–206.

Daily lives of the most vulnerable young people in Finland

These are excerpts from Finnish youth research, mainly the Youth Research Society, <https://www.youthresearch.fi/>



Some observations from Finnish youth research

- There are a plenty of services. BUT there is a fragmentation of services for young people, each specialist is only interested in issues related to his or her own area of expertise. The young one is treated only as a problem or diagnosis, NOT as a whole person or NOT as potential of her/his own life
- The more power an expert has over a young person's livelihood, the shorter is the time for the meeting.
- Some of the young ones have an endless loneliness, in the background traumatic bullying at school and as well among other young people including social media
- Not all of the young ones can be matched to the same schedule of transitions

Eventually the young one is staying alone, outside of society, education and work... invisible and mute (This is the solutions: NOT any more as an object of bullying)

(Actually, I don't want to use the term NEET)

Youth Guarantee House

Giving time, belonging and participation

Our mission

*At the Youth Guarantee House, young people gain confidence in themselves,
to other people and society -
they finds their own paths to adult agency.*



Youth Guarantee House

The name is a bit misleading. The activity is not directly related to the Youth Guarantee

To provide ***holistic support*** at ***right time*** to the most vulnerable ones

Today in Finland there are four Youth Guarantee Houses; Helsinki, Rauma, Tampere, and Turku

Inspired by Swedish Fryshuset- concept and Danish Projekt Udenfør.

Funding comes from a variety of sources (e.g ESF, Erasmus+, Ministries, The Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations, Municipalities)



Basic principles

Low threshold in communication, location, free of charge, anonymous, digitality, doesn't require sobriety

Activities are based on inclusion and communality
Decisions on the activities are made together

Filling existing gaps in the services in the society.
Working in between the other services.

The continuous development is based on documenting all planning, methods and implementation regarding youth work and coaching, re-directing the activities and improving them based on the results, cooperation and following the effectivity



Youth Guarantee House

- For young adults in the age of 22 – 26 years
- They represent all genders
- Loneliness and isolation
- Several years outside of school and/or work
- Multiple unfinished studies
- Many have physical disabilities / mental disorders/autism spectrum/ ...
- Some have background with criminal behaviour
- Some have substance abuse
- They are often hungry



Youth Guarantee House

Meeting place – a safe place to stay:
Practicing peer interaction and
communication skills

Psychosocial support, support in everyday
life (solving economical problems,
questions of housing, health, meals,
outdoor activities, exercise, hobbies,...)

Basic skills - coaching

Support towards education and work

Informal and nonformal learning and its
recognition

Work skills coaching



A young one's "ordinary story"

1) The young person is doing badly, frustration with the "service spiral", loneliness, insignificance of life

2) Some one from the network of professionals have guided the young one to the Youth Guarantee House, where a warm welcoming reception, unhurriedness, holistic interest, encouragement to become an independent participant, the experience of being heard

OR

Somewhere heard about this "easy coming place"

3) Once the young one enters through the door of the Youth Guarantee House, 90% of them will be committed to the activity



A young one's "ordinary story"

4) The courage to trust increases, getting ready to try again, gets enough support, the view of own identity horizon widens (How much time is needed for this is individual)

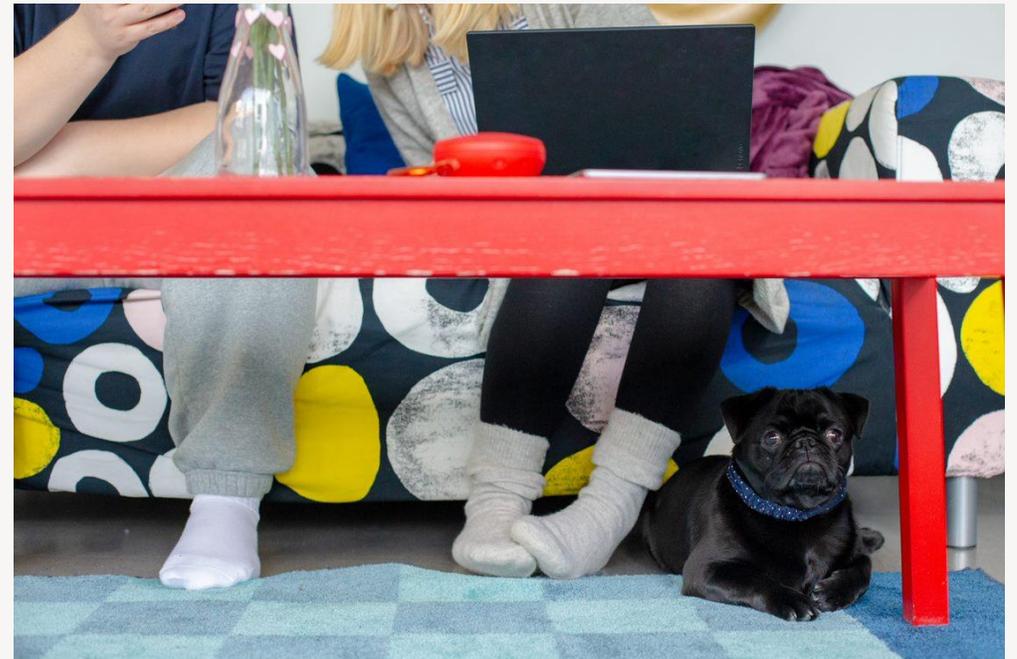
5) This means: It is possible to apply for, get a place to study, start there and progress in education

OR

Start at work

6) Support from the Youth Guarantee House is still needed

=> A place to share experiences, wonder about strange things that have come up, get support to continue on the self chosen path



Youth at the Youth Guarantee House

Same experiences are repeated in the transformative evaluation

"I may have had a little prejudice, when so many places says "we have a low threshold" but you still feel like they are demanding or expecting something there. Here I don't get that kind of feeling, but the feeling: I can really be myself."

"It feels like no one is listening, they start writing notes right away but not listening what you're talking about. Here I really dare to talk and you listen to me. "



"I have been going for five years with different services and they always say that we can't help you. I have received so much help from Youth Guarantee House, I have not been told we can't help you. Everyone should be like you."

The reasons for these new, different experiences that young adults are sharing?

Enough time - individual differences

The focus is on the young adult and her/his own potential

Building confidence with the young adult to her/him self, other people and society

Building a sense of security

Strengthening the young person's own agency

Learning peer interaction

Opening the opportunities for her/his own future

Strong guidance towards one's own potential

Support also after starting in training or work, to have a place to come and ask for advice



Giving time and participation
Using methods and ethos
of
Youth Work

Thank you!



<https://www.nuorisotakuutalo.fi/in-english/>
<https://valo-valmennus.fi/en/main-page-2/>
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