

Unit 6:

Support young people to
move towards independence
and manage their lives

1.1 Explain the reasons why some young people may find it difficult to move to independence

Young people may find their transition from adolescence to adulthood delayed because of many factors related to their upbringing, their culture, their peers, their ability levels, medical conditions and disabilities. For the majority one of the main reasons is the lack of experiences gained of learning life skills and tools to assist, help and support their progression to independence. On the other hand we find that some young people suffer from severe physical difficulties which restricts their process to independence, where some require basic assistance and help then those needing full support throughout their lives.

You find also that young people that suffer from mental issues, have a long medical history, a dependence family structure, family break up and divorce, young people being placed in different foster homes, general peer pressure, or the mere fact that many young people are avoiding responsibilities and having commitments to life are some of the reasons that young people get delayed in the process to becoming independent.

These are some of the factors to consider however other factors could be related to child protection issues, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect, physical abuse and psychological and emotional abuse.

1.2 Explain the concept that independence is relative to each individual young person's stage of development and level of understanding and ability

There are young people that have low social interaction in society which can be from contributing factors like fear, being bullied at school or reside in an area which they have less interaction with peers of their own age. Having over protected parents can have either of the two factors of learning the tools of independence or being dependant to a very late stage in life but those parents that make all the decisions can delay the life's challenges of their children.

However there are other young people that just can't become independent due to their disability levels and mental health issues and therefore are totally reliant on others to make decisions for them until they are able to do so. You also find others that just don't want to find out, are not bothered about life, do not wish to explore and experiment or lack the energy to experience life because they have low motivation, lack the ability to explore and be creative and there may be many more contributing factors causing this.

Speech, communication and confidence levels are also contributing factors that are relative to a young person's development of understanding and this will allow them to grow to maturity and gaining their independence as a much slower pace than expected.

1.3 Explain the reason why independence is not always permanent and that some young people may go through transition and move between dependence and independence at various times.

People are always relying on each other for things to happen, to be done and therefore are not fully independent though they like to think so. Even in adulthood people are working in teams, relying on others to get things done, though many claim to be independent of others even in the hierarchy of the workplace. Rather it is a healthy sign to say that we are interdependent on each other, where roles are shared and where everyone relies on each other to get things done.

Young people are mostly dependent on their parents, carers to provide clothes, food shelter and the basic needs of survival, to signing documents, giving consent and accompanying to places needing adult supervision. However young people on the other hand think that once they are out of that protected care environment called home they become independent of needing to be supervised and feel that they can do what they want, get up to no good, commit crime, engage in petty theft, be a nuisance to others, cause distress and damage property. To going to university and moving out with their partners to start a living relationship. This is where young people start to make life choices that can be of a positive or negative one. This influence may come from their peers, from their homes, from images on the media or their experience on other people's lives and role models.

Although young people want their full independence to some extent they still find themselves depending on the basic needs and this will continue until they find a place for themselves away from the care environment.

2.5 Explain why practical support and advice for independence is a long term project

Everyone needs a bit of help sometimes, whether it is to raise a family, get a job, find a home, seek help to passing your driving test and finding that perfect car, to getting a solution to your plumbing and electrical issues to even asking others if the clothes you are buying suits you or not.

As youth workers we need to set the trend for young people to ask, request, enquire and to give unbiased and non-judgemental help, support and assistance in order for young people to be equipped with knowledge and experience that will help them through their journey of life.

Youth workers also need to understand the safety and risk elements as well as the challenges that surround young people. Those that are choosing to move out to independent living, to address issues on being vulnerable to risks, exploitation without the support of adults and this is where advice and support is needed. Young women also may be at a greater risk than their male counterparts and we need to inform them of useful numbers, services and organisations that can support them in the time of need.

These bits of information need to be imbedded in the minds of young people, through organising workshops, seminars, having continuous informal discussions, carrying out one to one sessions, displaying posters with useful contact numbers to handing out small leaflets/pamphlets, pocket size cards to reminder young people on what is available to them in terms of the different services that cater different needs.

As a youth service provider it is our responsibility to offer young people even when they have reached adulthood to offer continuous support as some young people may still need to come and seek advice and see you for support as you may be the first point of contact for them knowing not where to go for help and advice.

3.3 Explain how to support young people who may feel worried and ambivalent about becoming independent

We are currently living in a more challenging time and environment than ever before, with house prices at its highest levels, uncertainty in employment, banks not lending to new businesses and existing businesses not getting the funds to expand, the introduction of higher student fees, unemployment increasing, especially amongst those leaving university and the cost of living rising all these factors are causing young people today to be more ambivalent to becoming independent.

Even with all these external factors playing a major factor in a young person's life to progression, youth workers still need to continue to help and assist young people, to boost their confidence levels, allow young people to take risks in life, learn from mistakes made, understand the help given to them, give regular advice and provide support mechanism enabling them to use the various services and to be consistent in the search to better themselves in life by making positive decisions.

Youth workers can organise targeted services like the careers service, provide soft skills workshops to boost confidence levels, run drugs and alcohol workshops to raise awareness, provide sexual health sessions to understand risk and unhealthy relationships, organise budget courses and maybe attach a mentor to guide and assist young people through their transition to adulthood. Most importantly for youth workers is that they need to enable young people to be creative in the design of the youth work programme to assist them in their own personal development.

3.5 Explain the importance of having somewhere that is 'home'

Home is a place where people feel at ease, free from worry, or to be in a state of comfort, a place of rest away from society, a place offering security, safety and happiness and a place that is valued. It can also be a place where all your friends and people who you grew up with are within close proximity. A place where your contacts are near and you can network and socialise easily. Whilst others prefer the peace and quiet and don't want to be anywhere near people they know, feeling a sense of being in my own space without any intrusions and knocks on my door.

As young people reach the age of adulthood they tend to look for their independence from their family, by searching for an alternative place to live, stay and be free to do what they like whenever they like and make choices for themselves.

We see that many young people live in overcrowded conditions most of their lives and the importance of having a home of their own where that factor can be taken out can be considered a healthier option to their development.

We find in other cultures that most of the first generation of migrant population would not consider Britain as their home and remind their children where they came from originally and that is the real home but they do not see themselves returning to their motherlands.

However you look at it, a house is not always a home, but a home is a place that one can come to, feel safe, secure, be at ease and where your thoughts are.