

## Chapter 10

# Regulating Practice

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### 10.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to outline the measures in place to regulate youth work practice through assuring practitioner competencies and ethical conduct. It looks at how far youth work is regulated through competency/occupational standards, State/national ethical standards, State/national guidelines, and occupational health and safety standards. Additionally, it considers the existence of youth safeguarding guidelines, criminal history vetting and identification/licensing of youth workers.

These regulatory practices are vital for maintaining the quality of youth work, and are a foundational investment that society makes to ensure the accountability of youth work to young people.

### 10.2 Regulatory processes in youth work

Youth work, like any service impacting on the young and/or vulnerable, requires competency and ethical underpinning that at best is embedded in national policy and human rights. This section discusses areas relevant to regulation because they represent the foundational investment that society makes in youth workers; they are entrusted with the welfare of other people's children. Arguably, the extent to which society ensures safe and effective youth work is equal to the degree to which it has accepted youth work as an indelible element of social care, welfare, youth development and learning, but also the means by which young people might become wholly part of their communities and net contributors to their nations and the wider global culture.

This section looks at the specific criteria below:

1. **Occupational standards for youth work:** Identified and endorsed competencies for youth work practice that are applied practically in framing youth worker education and training and in youth worker competency assessment. Standards generally refer to what is expected of practice.
2. **Competency frameworks:** Refers more specifically to the practitioner's competencies, and therefore focuses more on the practitioner, as opposed to occupational standards, which refer to what is expected of practice.
3. **State/national ethical standards for youth work:** A set of values that drive youth work practice. In the baseline, we have tried to assess the existence of either State ethical standards, or widely endorsed ethical standards (nationally/regionally) where State standards do not exist.

4. **State guidelines for youth work:** Written and endorsed procedural guidelines for the implementation of youth work – these often come in generic form or in the form of guidelines for implementing youth clubs, national youth councils, youth federations, etc. Youth work guidelines, however, need to clearly indicate youth engagement processes and not be limited to programmatic guidelines.
5. **Youth safeguarding guidelines:** A policy that guides youth workers on the protection, safety and security of young people in youth work spaces. This is sometimes included in ethical standards, and is sometimes a standalone document.
6. **Occupational health and safety standards:** A policy that ensures the health and safety of youth workers while on duty.
7. **Criminal history vetting:** Official recruitment guidelines and their implementation for youth workers or those working closely with children and young people that require criminal vetting particularly for child abuse, sexual abuse, etc.
8. **Identification and licensing:** Identification/endorsement that officially ascribes youth worker status to practitioners.

Broad findings indicate that regulatory mechanisms for youth work are still emerging, other than in countries such as the Malta, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and so on where they were relatively well established, understood and implemented. In other contexts, mechanisms were in place, but there were still questions around the broader awareness of them, and lack of mechanisms for training and implementation.

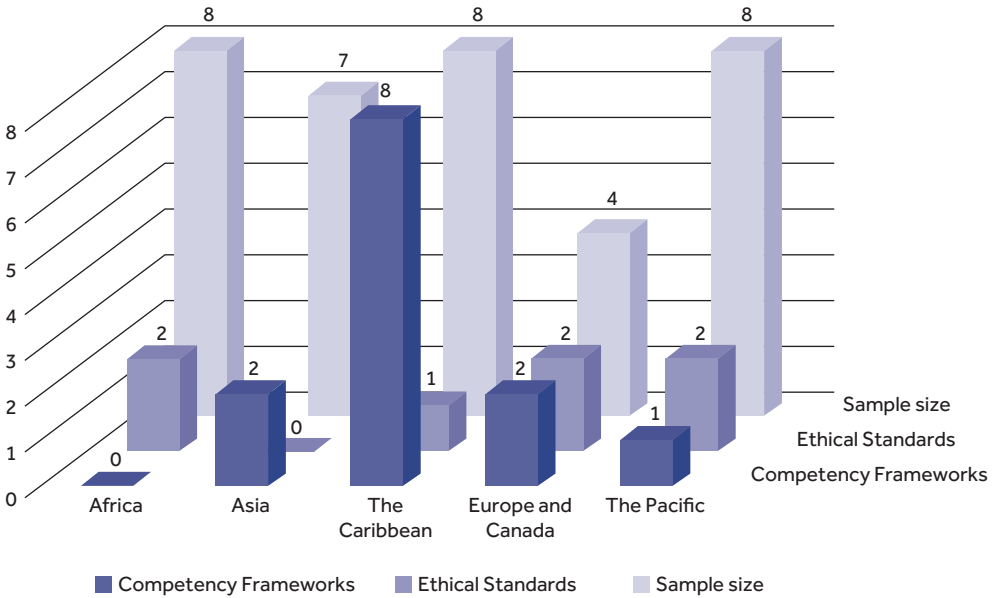
While the baseline has not been able to obtain detailed information on who has participated in developing these regulatory/ethical frameworks, it is nevertheless important in the process of developing these standards that they are owned by youth work practitioners, young people, and State and non-governmental bodies equally.

The Commonwealth's *Draft Code of Ethical Practice for Youth Workers* has been endorsed by the Commonwealth Alliance of Youth Work Associations, which is a potential indication of further commitments to rights-based ethical codes of practice across the Commonwealth.

### 10.3 Regional trends in regulating practice and practitioner safety

Figure 10.1 illustrates the existence in sampled countries of two key youth work regulatory frameworks – ethical standards and competency frameworks. It is notable that competency standards have been broadly accepted in the Caribbean due to the Commonwealth Caribbean competency standards that are already informing the design of the youth work degree at the University of the West Indies. Ethical standards have emerged where youth workers' associations are in existence, or where regulatory bodies exist for youth work. Overall, much needs to be done to advance regulatory practices around youth work.

**Figure 10.1 Regional trends – No. of countries with ethical standards and competency frameworks**



**10.3.1 Africa**

Evidence available did not demonstrate the broad application of any of the above regulatory supports for youth work in the eight sampled countries, except Codes of Ethics for youth work in South Africa and Zambia.

In South Africa, SAYWA has included the code of ethics in the constitution for their association. To what extent they have been endorsed by the State youth work delivery agencies or youth work practitioners, including the membership, was not clear at the time of writing this report.

**Table 10.1 Regulatory frameworks – Africa**

Country	Competency/ occupational standards for youth work exists	National guidelines on youth work	Ethical standards for youth work	National occupational health and safety standards for youth work
<b>Uganda</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Ghana</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Kenya</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Malawi</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Nigeria</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>South Africa</b>	None	None	Yes	None
<b>Tanzania</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Zambia</b>	None	None	Yes	None

In Zambia, a code of ethics formulated by the Zambia Youth Workers' Association (ZYWA) exists. However, as the Association points out, it is not mandatory for practitioners to sign on to the Code, and disclosure and enforcement mechanisms are yet to be developed.

### 10.3.2 Asia

No specific ethical standards exist in Bangladesh. There is as yet no provision to license youth workers. The laws and rules guiding youth organisations apply to the individual youth workers, most of whom belong to youth organisations.

In India, while there is no nationally prevalent competency frameworks, a potentially influential competency framework titled 'Challenger Deep – An Outcomes Framework Tool', has been developed for youth workers to self-assess their competency levels and obtain 360-degree feedback from their community of young people and other stakeholders with the help of an assisted coach. This competency framework involves assessment of a youth worker's capacity to instil capabilities in young people under the rubrics of self, society and social change.

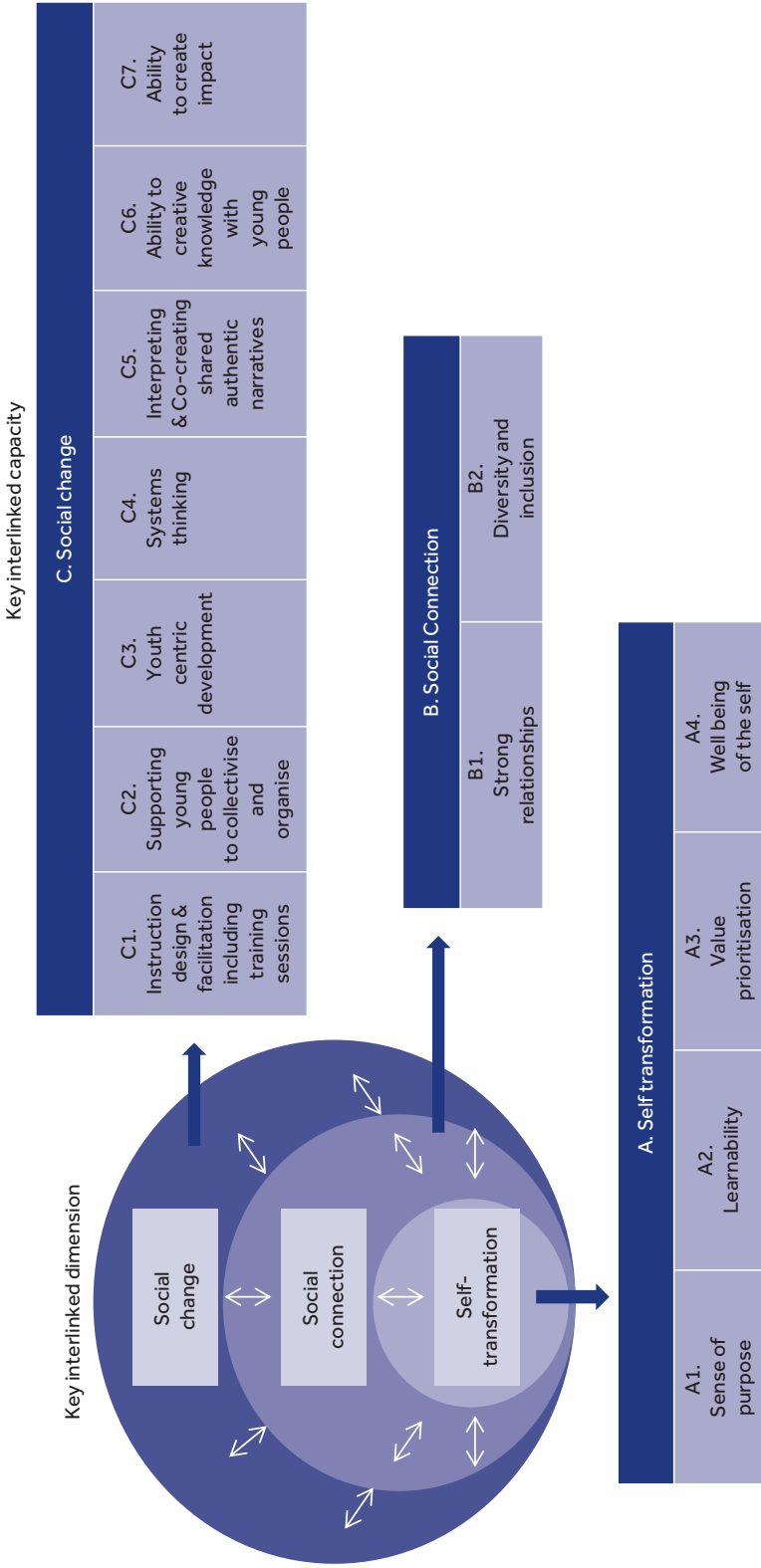
The development of this tool was led by ComMutiny – the Youth Collective in collaboration with the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Pravaah, Restless Development India, and the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is an example of a professional collective spearheading competency frameworks in partnership with a State body. It is a novel approach at competency assessment in youth engagement that tries to capture the nuanced and complex attributes required for youth engagement that supports young people's self-empowerment. Inductions to the tool were being undertaken for members of the Collective at the time of writing.

For Malaysia, all these regulatory frameworks will be formulated as part of the overall framework for youth work that is currently work in progress.

**Table 10.2 Regulatory frameworks – Asia**

Country	Competency/ occupational standards for youth work exists	National guidelines on youth work	Ethical standards for youth work	Occupational health and safety standards for youth work in State sector
<b>Bangladesh</b>	No	No	No <sup>1</sup>	No
<b>India</b>	No	No	No	No
<b>Malaysia</b>	In process	In process	In process	No
<b>Maldives</b>	No	None	No	No
<b>Pakistan</b>	No	None	No	No
<b>Singapore</b>	Only for working with youth at risk <sup>2</sup>	Yes, for youth at risk social work	No	No
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Yes	None	None	None

**Figure 10.2 ComMutiny the Youth Collective – The Challenger Deep Youth Worker Competency Framework**



In Singapore, in order to help youth workers improve their capabilities and provide more effective interventions, the Ministry of Social and Family Development has planned the development of a National Youth Work Competency Framework (NYWCF) by the end of 2017 as a joint initiative between the Central Youth Guidance Officer (CYGO) and the National Council of Social Service. It will set out the specialised competencies required by youth work professionals. The NYWCF seeks to define the specialised and contextualised competencies required by youth work practitioners and clearly chart career pathways and progressions for youth workers – trained and untrained in youth work, social work, or other disciplines. It hopes to give a clearer understanding to youth workers on their job roles and career development.<sup>3</sup>

In Singapore, the category of youth workers includes social workers who work with at-risk youth. This segment of youth work is currently handled by the Singapore's Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). The National Social Work Competency Framework (NSWCF) (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social and Family Development and National Council of Social Service, 2015) was launched in November 2015 through a joint initiative between the MSF and the Ministry of Health to guide social workers across different settings, including those who work with youth. Though it focuses on social work competencies and career pathways for social work professions as well as the knowledge and skills required for various social work roles, there are still some competencies relevant to youth work. The NSWCF references the knowledge and application of ethics and values, and a knowledge of the socio-economic, political and multicultural contexts, all of which are competencies required by both youth and social work. The framework intends to support social workers involved in both direct and indirect specialised practice and includes those who work with key groups, including youth.

The Development framework for Youth Workers (DYW) was also developed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development's as a guiding framework for youth-serving organisations to adequately equip their youth work practitioners with the skills they need to offer services to at-risk youth. The DYW was developed in consultation with youth work practitioners, members of youth work organisations and voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs), the Social Service Training Institute (SSTI) and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA). The DYW is designed around seven domains.

In Sri Lanka, PYWA has a draft competency framework which includes assessment of competencies for engaging with youth. Even though this process is in line with youth policy commitments to youth work in Sri Lanka, the framework is still to be finalised and adopted by the State youth work sector. The 'Ocean in a Drop' short course developed by the Association for youth workers in Sri Lanka was partially based on the competency framework.

### 10.3.3 Caribbean

While the picture for the Caribbean is mixed, there are distinctively positive aspects and clear practice that can be shared and built on. In the instances where there is a code of conduct that governs the work of youth workers, it tends to be more specific

**Table 10.3 Regulatory frameworks – the Caribbean**

Country	Competency/ occupational standards for youth work exist	State guidelines on youth work	State/national ethical standards for youth work	Occupational health and safety standards for youth work in State sector
<b>Barbados</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Belize</b>	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Dominica</b>	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Guyana</b>	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Jamaica</b>	Yes	No	No	No
<b>St Lucia</b>	Yes	No	No	No
<b>St Vincent and the Grenadines</b>	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>	Yes	No	No	No

to the agency or programme to which the worker is attached than in the case of, for example, Trinidad & Tobago where there is a state code for those working under the Ministry of Education in schools.

Dominica uses the Commonwealth ethics guideline but the actual results of its use have not been clear. Neither has the State endorsed the Commonwealth ethical guidelines.

In Barbados, the ethical standards are based on established General Orders and the Public Servant Code of Conduct but with a strong focus on operational guidelines specific to staff working within the youth development programme – a research-led programme of the Government’s Youth Affairs Division. The Barbados code makes provision for staff supervision visits monthly at a minimum and sets out guidance on accountability, integrity, confidentiality and impartiality, and discretionary use of funds – making a clear case of the youth development worker as a service provider. Of particular interest is the section on fieldwork guidelines, which is the only section that speaks directly to the relationship between the worker and the ‘client’ and speaks to appropriate interactions with the community and clients of the opposite sex.

The former Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre’s development of the Competency Standards in Youth Development Work for the Caribbean which was endorsed by CARICOM in 2012. This has been accepted by all Caribbean Commonwealth member states and applies to them all.

**Box 10.1 Caribbean Competency Standards in Youth Development Work**

The Caribbean Competency Standards, developed by the Commonwealth’s former regional centre in consultation with stakeholders in the Caribbean, was meant to support the development of competency-based training and education for youth workers. Eighty-two Competencies were articulated for Levels II–V in youth work as is outlined in the Control Document of the competency standards (Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre, 2012).

Some member states have been actively using the standards to design job descriptions and codes of ethics, assess youth work practice, etc. (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2014).

None of the sampled countries in the Caribbean has a youth worker licensing processes in place but, as indicated, a few have issued ID cards. It is the perception of youth workers in the field that having an identification card gives the youth workers recognition as legitimate State employees in the sector as this is the norm with other State officials in other fields.

### 10.3.4 Europe and Canada

The European perspective is generally positive. Youth work is not fully developed in Cyprus so expectations for regulatory frameworks would not be realistic. On the other hand, Malta has a well-developed and socially embedded youth service with clear regulatory mechanisms.

Youth work in Canada is unrecognised at national (State) level and it would be inaccurate to say that the profession is understood in a single specific way nationwide. With no joined-up, national recognition or place for youth work, the profession will not have mechanisms in place to support such practice. That said, the nation has a raft of relevant and appropriate legislation and policy pertaining to young people and professional interventions into their lives. Moreover, child and youth care workers have had a place in the Canadian educational system, working in diverse ways.

There is no specific governmental spending on professionalising youth work in Canada and no accrediting body for youth work education and training.

The occupational standards in Malta are related to the duties of the Malta Youth Work Profession Board, associated with Article 4 of Chap. 533 of the Laws of Malta, as the functions of the Board included the task to:

Establish and, where necessary, assess existing youth work standards and develop new continuing youth work professional development and other standards, and recommend to the Minister in relation to initial and continuing youth work education, proficiency, experience and other qualifications required for holding a warrant under this [the Youth Work Profession] Act

**Table 10.4 Regulatory frameworks – Europe and Canada**

Country	Competency/ occupational standards for youth work exists	State guidelines on youth work	State ethical standards for youth work	Occupational health and safety standards for youth work
<b>Canada</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Cyprus</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Malta</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>UK</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Board also has the responsibility to:

Make recommendations to the Minister on the Code of Ethics to be prescribed for the professional behaviour of youth workers, following consultation with the associations and partnerships registered under the provisions of this Act

The following responsibilities are concomitant with this duty:

- Inquire into any allegation of professional misconduct, gross negligence or incompetence by a youth worker;
- Advise, or make recommendations or otherwise express its views to the Minister on any matter on which the Minister is to consult with the Board or on which the Board is to make recommendations to the Minister or on which the opinion or recommendation of the Board is sought by the Minister;
- Make recommendations to the Minister to prescribe in relation to the employment of persons who are in possession of a recognised honours degree or its equivalent but who do not qualify for a warrant under this Act, and who are working under the supervision of a registered youth worker in such establishments or agencies as may be prescribed;
- Perform such other functions as may arise from this Act or any other law, or as may be assigned to it by the Minister.

In the United Kingdom, the National Occupational Standards (NOS) can be used in every part of the UK where the functions are carried out. They are 'Occupational' because they outline the level of functioning that an individual needs to carry out the requirements of the workplace (in terms of their occupation).

NOS are Standards because they are statements of effective performance agreed by a representative sample of employers and other key stakeholders and approved by the UK NOS Panel. The standards are developed for employers by employers through the relevant Sector Skills Council or Standards Setting Organisation.

The NOS for Youth Work are not directly parallel to qualifications, they are deployed to derive appropriate competency-based qualifications for the youth work sector. The Standards, as the agreed standards of performance and knowledge required in youth work practice across the UK, can be used by employers to inform job descriptions, consider skills needs and identify areas of improvement, and can also support individual professional and continuous development.

As the UK Youth Work National Occupational Standards (National Youth Agency, UK (n.d.)) detail, the different contexts in which youth work is practised will have a bearing on how these NOS are applied. The relevant national, regional, local and political context, as well other applicable standards of performance or competence, should be taken into account when reading and applying the Youth Work NOS.

It should be noted that the approach to youth work differs across the four nations of the UK. The NOS have been written to enable the differences to be accommodated and to enable different terminology to be applied as appropriate.

However, regardless of the national context, at the core of all youth work practice are the values of youth work, and it is expected that all those working with young people will work within these agreed sets of values.

The NOS outline ethical standards in a general, rather than a specific way, but expectations for the behaviour and conduct of youth workers is clarified (see National Youth Agency, UK (n.d.))

Both the Institute of Youth Work and the NYA articulate what they understand to be the ethics of youth work that largely mirror, but perhaps more clearly demarcate, what is outlined in the NOS. However, the ultimate underpinning of any such code of conduct is what is required in terms of human rights, law and policy (for example in the UK the Children Act and more broadly the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child).

### 10.3.5 The Pacific

Apart from Australia and New Zealand, there seems to be little movement in terms of the areas focused on. It might be the case that a regional professional association could play a part in starting to address this situation. The case study in Box 10.2

**Table 10.5 Regulatory frameworks – the Pacific**

Country	Competency/ occupational standards for youth work exist	State guidelines on youth work	National ethical standards for youth work	Occupational health and safety standards for youth work in State sector
<b>Australia</b>	Yes	Yes Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)	Yes The Code of Ethical Practice for the Victorian Youth Sector. (2007)	Yes Working with Children Act 2005 Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
<b>Fiji</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Samoa</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>New Zealand</b>	Not for youth work specifically	None	Yes (but not State endorsed)	Not specifically for youth work
<b>Vanuatu</b>	None	None	None	None

describes the background and process undertaken to establish the Victoria Code of Ethics in Australia and its impacts.

**Box 10.2 The Victorian Youth Sector Code of Ethical Practice – an Australian success**

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**Background**

The youth sector in Australia, particularly in Victoria, had a long history of failed attempts at creating and sustaining both a professional association and a related code of ethical practice for youth work (Irving et al., 1995; Grogan, 2004). However, when the Victorian state government enacted new pieces of important youth-related legislation there was a renewed legislative impetus to look again at the professional practice of youth work in Victoria.

As a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, Australia has long been an active supporter of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). Various Australian state youth councils have consequently recognised the need to develop codes of practice for youth workers in their respective regions, however not all are based in human rights (Griffin & Luttrell, 2011; Grogan, 2004; Corney & Hoiles, 2006, 2007; Corney, 2014). The youth sector in the Australian state of Victoria, despite its best efforts over many years, was without a code of ethics or an agreed statement of good practice for the occupation of youth worker prior to 2007 (Goodwin, 1991; Irving et al., 1995; Grogan, 2004).

**The emergence of the code**

However, a series of related events, such as the enactment by the Victorian state Labor government of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005; the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005; the Working with Children Act 2005 and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, all gave legislative impetus to the youth sector to look specifically at the creation of a code of ethical practice for youth work based on human rights considerations (Corney & Hoiles, 2006, 2007; Corney, 2014). Further, debates regarding the professionalisation of youth work and the establishing of a code of practice – long championed by the CYP – were reopened after the appointment of Victoria's Child Safety Commissioner under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

Shortly after his appointment in 2006 the then Child Safety Commissioner, Bernie Geary, gave a significant address to the Annual General Meeting of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, in which he called for the sector to participate in the task of addressing child safety by developing a code of practice for youth workers. He outlined the need to protect not only young people, but also those who work with them, stating, 'I strongly believe that youth work needs to come

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out of the shadow of aligned professions and a major step will be a strong and proud declaration of a code of ethical practice [...]’ (Child Safety Commission, 2006b).

This call by the then newly appointed Commissioner, coupled with the incorporation of human rights into the enactment of various pieces of youth-related legislation, led to the convening of a Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) working group to explore the potential establishment of a sector-wide code of practice for youth work based in human rights (Corney & Hoiles, 2006, 2007). This occurred alongside the re-establishment of the Youth Workers’ Association, a professional association for youth workers in Victoria, and a global push from the Commonwealth contained in communiqués, such as the CYP’s PAYE goals (2007), explicitly calling for codes of practice based in human rights to be developed for youth workers across the Commonwealth.

The YACVic code working group was strongly influenced by Commissioner Geary, and its outcome focused on safe practice in youth work, particularly the safety of young people and workers, as well as the human rights of young people.

Debates around the drafting of the code was based on previous experiences from across Australia and internationally. A strong decision was made to draft a separate Victorian code based in human rights (Griffin & Luttrell, 2011; Quixley & Doostkhah, 2007; Corney and Hoiles, 2006, 2007; Corney, 2014).

In 2007, the post-consultation document titled ‘Code of Ethical Practice – A first step for the Victorian youth sector’ was published by YACVic and launched by the Victorian Government Minister for Youth Affairs Hon James Merlino and the Victorian Child Safety Commissioner Bernie Geary. The code was also subsequently endorsed by the Victorian professional association for youth workers (YWA) and by the Victoria University degree programme in youth work, the largest youth work training programme in Australia.

#### Content of the Code

The Victorian Code provides agreed statements about what is to be considered good youth work practice, and also provides an overarching frame of reference with which youth workers can engage in awareness raising on a range of human rights and citizenship issues. The Victorian Code, although supported and launched by government and the professional association, is self-regulatory and voluntarily adhered to by youth workers. Both the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and the professional Youth Workers’ Association endorse the Code.

Use of the Code has included

1. Training and induction of the code for the youth sector
2. Development of promotional material by the Youth Affairs Council

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And the Code and subsequent dissemination/publicity has resulted in

1. Degree-level youth work training courses incorporating units on the professional ethics of youth work as a compulsory component of their degree programme,
2. Its human rights basis encouraging youth workers to identify themselves and act as advocates and facilitators of human rights for young people.
3. Many agencies also now define their programmes and practices with young people in human rights terms and elements of their programmes contain human rights outcomes for young people.

#### Benefits for Youth

The benefits have been incredibly wide ranging and transformative – from the increased safety of young people and for workers, to improved competence and efficacy, through to providing a basis and definition to the role of youth workers. This has served to professionalise the youth sector, enhancing both the training and practice of youth work, the work of agencies and the outcomes for young people.<sup>4</sup>

In New Zealand, youth work is largely a community-based practice. It is not mandated by the State as a primary or preferred mode of working with young people. Despite evidence supporting the need for interdisciplinary teams to collaborate in the support and promotion of positive youth development in contexts like youth health services, the State has not formally endorsed youth work, or created any guidelines or supportive mechanisms that relate specifically to youth work.

Much movement has occurred in terms of guidance and ethics in the organised youth work sector outside of State structures. The sector is currently working to self-determine youth development competencies to underpin the national professional body. The Code of Ethics for Youth Workers in Aotearoa (New Zealand) is a document that was developed with the sector, with the principles of youth development and the Treaty of Waitangi<sup>5</sup> at the centre.

That said, as part of the Children's Action Plan (Ministry for Vulnerable Children, 2017) there are general core competencies for people working with young people, and regulations affecting youth workers that relate to health and safety and police vetting.

## 10.4 Trends in youth safeguarding and practitioner vetting

Because entrants to the professions will often be trusted with very personal aspects of people's lives, it is not only their skills and academic ability that needs to be assured. Their **attitudinal, behavioural, ethical and moral profiles** need to be considered. This might be ascertained by qualifying institutions and/or professional bodies, although, classically, both might likely be involved in this sort of investigation of

background and personal suitability of prospective professionals. Needless to say, in the youth work field this sort of safeguarding procedure should be of high priority, as professional qualification means that in effect practitioners are being licensed by qualification to work with, care and take responsibility for other people's children.

However, the picture in terms of entry to youth work across the Commonwealth seems a cause for concern, with little evidence of explicit youth safeguarding/protection policies, criminal history vetting for youth workers, or youth worker licensing being evident in the countries sampled.

National youth safeguarding policies within youth work were identified Canada, Australia, the UK, Malta and New Zealand, and were also reported in Bangladesh and Barbados. Criminal history vetting was evident where there was successful public sector history vetting with no specific requirements for youth work except in Canada, Malta, UK, Australia and New Zealand, and youth worker identification to protect both practitioner and young person were barely evident except in Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Malta.

**Table 10.6 Safeguarding and vetting – Africa**

Country	Youth safeguarding/ youth protection policies in State youth sector	Criminal history vetting for youth workers	Youth worker licensing/ID card
<b>Uganda</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Ghana</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Kenya</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Malawi</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Nigeria</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>South Africa</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Tanzania</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Zambia</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified

**Table 10.7 Safeguarding and vetting – Asia**

Country	Youth Safeguarding/ youth protection policies in State youth sector	Criminal history vetting for youth workers	Youth worker licensing/ID card
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Yes	Yes	None identified
<b>India</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Malaysia</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Maldives</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Singapore</b>	None identified	Vetting is carried out for those involved in certain youth-at-risk and residential programmes funded by the government	None identified
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Pakistan</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified

**Table 10.8 Safeguarding and vetting – the Caribbean**

Country	Youth Safeguarding/ youth protection policies in State youth sector	Criminal history vetting for youth workers	Youth worker licensing/ID card
<b>Barbados</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Belize</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Dominica</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Guyana</b>	None identified	None identified	Yes
<b>Jamaica</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>St Lucia</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>St Vincent and the Grenadines</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	None identified	None identified	Yes

**Table 10.9 Safeguarding and vetting – Europe and Canada**

Country	Youth Safeguarding/youth protection policies in State youth sector	Criminal history vetting for youth workers	Youth worker licensing/ID card
<b>Cyprus</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Malta</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>UK</b>	Yes	Yes	None identified
<b>Canada</b>	Yes	Yes	None identified

**Table 10.10 Safeguarding and vetting – the Pacific**

Pacific	Youth Safeguarding/ youth protection policies in State youth sector	Criminal history vetting for youth workers	Youth worker licensing/ID card
<b>Australia</b>	Yes	Yes	None identified
<b>New Zealand</b>	Yes	Yes	None identified
<b>Fiji</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Tonga</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Samoa</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified
<b>Vanuatu</b>	None identified	None identified	None identified

While the regional baseline surveys informing this document provided information about contextual or relative safeguarding or vetting procedures for entry to employment roles with young people, there was no information about procedures for entry to institutional qualifying programmes, which can include practice placements (unsupervised access to young people).

Overall, of the 35 countries involved, only a small number had any kind of youth-work-specific checks. In the UK, for example, it is a legal requirement for students working unsupervised with young and/or vulnerable people (which includes those undergoing professional training) to be subject to checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

In Canada provincial/territorial law refers to much the same procedures. For example, in British Columbia, the Criminal Records Review Act ensures that people who work with or may potentially have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults undergo a criminal record check by the Criminal Records Review Programme(CRRP).

A person whose criminal record suggests they present a risk of physical or sexual abuse to children or a risk of physical, sexual or financial abuse to vulnerable adults will not have access to these groups. However, unlike in the UK, the non-profit sector and volunteer organisations are not covered by the Act, but have volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults. This said, such organisations can have criminal record checks done by the CRRP at no cost. Most organisations, because of risk, reputation and associated funding, will look to carry out such checks.

For-profit organisations not covered by the Criminal Records Review Act that require criminal record checks for employees or volunteers are encouraged to contact their local police.

It is probably not a matter for debate that those working with children and young people at any level should be vetted in relation to safeguarding, as well as for their attitudinal and skill profile. Clearly this is of high priority as part of entry to professional studies, but also in terms of other forms of professional accreditation or certification.

#### 10.4.1 Trust

Professional accreditation, certification and qualification are kitemarks of knowhow, attitude, behaviour, ethical and moral awareness and conduct. As such, they reflect the levels of trust clients, employers and society might invest in individuals and qualified groups.

Very generally (and approximately) professional qualification will denote one's capacity to make professional judgements that can be trusted (and not just follow instructions).

All levels of qualification signify relative 'social trust'. Professional qualification carries with it the highest order of social trust, hence not everybody or anybody can enter a profession. If a profession (for instance by way of qualifying agencies and/or a professional association) gives entry to anyone and everyone, or just makes entry relatively easy, it has given up its gatekeeping role. What then might any trust that clients, employers and society invest in this profession be based on?

## 10.5 Conclusions

Regulatory frameworks such as ethical standards and competency frameworks catering specifically for the youth work profession were still in their infancy in most sampled countries. The Caribbean competency standards supported by the Commonwealth was an example of a region-wide adoption of standards in the design of competency-based professional courses for youth work. Ethical codes of conduct and competency/occupational standards were relatively well implemented in countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and Malta, but were still emerging in most other countries. Even where they existed, often, implementation and practised regulatory measures were not that clear. Any member state interested in translating legislation and policy to practice would need to ensure ethical codes of conduct and competency frameworks that are developed collectively by practitioners and receivers of services, young people. All other frameworks need to be developed as deemed relevant to local, national and regional contexts.

## Notes

- 1 There is no specific ethical standard and protection policies for youth work, but it has been manifested different ways in different policies and acts applicable directly for organisations, hence applicable for youth as well, such as the Bangladesh Skill Development Policy 2011, Youth Organisation (Registration and Operation) Act, 2015, Youth Policy 2003.
- 2 However, for youth workers who work with youth at risk there is a competency framework under <http://www.sasw.org.sg/site/national-social-work-competency-framework>.
- 3 NYWC Framework factsheet <https://app.msf.gov.sg/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=iRIwHqWvxcpc%3d&portalid=0>
- 4 This case study has been informed by Commonwealth of Nations (2007), Corney (2014), Corney & Hoiles (2006 and 2007), Child Safety Commission, Australia, 2006), Goodwin (1991), Grosan (2004), Griffin & Luffrel (2011), Sercombe (1997), Irving et al. (1995), Surrey County Council UK (2006), The National Youth Agency, UK (2004), Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (2003), Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (2007), Children, Youth and Families Act 2005. Victoria. Australia, Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005. Victoria. Australia, Working with Children Act 2005. Victoria. Australia, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, Victoria. Australia, Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2012. Victoria. Australia, Working with Children Act 2005. Victoria. Australia.
- 5 The Code of Ethics for Youth Workers provides youth workers with guidance on how they can make a significant contribution to supporting Māori development in every context and community. Bicultural practice in a diverse postcolonial nation is central to youth work in New Zealand.