

Articles and Papers on Muslim Youth Work

To find out more about these articles and papers, please send an eMail request to :

info@muslimyouthworkfoundation.co.uk

Benn, T. Ahmed, A. (2006). *Alternative Visions: International Sporting Opportunities for Muslim Women and Implications for British Youth Sport.*
Youth and Policy (92) 119-132

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to establish the global context for alternative separatist sporting events such as the Women's Islamic Games, for example by acknowledging the polarized debate of secular versus Islamic feminists' perspectives of Muslim women in sport. The discourses underpin the early research of Aisha Ahmad, who was one of thirteen British Muslim women to compete in the Fourth International Women's Islamic Games in Tehran, Iran, September 2005. Her research is based around a case study of participation in the event as competitor and observer. This paper does not offer analysis and interpretation of that experience but provides glimpses of its significance for Muslim women and raises implications for British Youth Sport and provision of opportunity for Muslim girls and women.

Cressey, G. (2006). *Muslim Girlswork: the ultimate separatist cage?*
Youth and Policy (92) 33-45

Abstract: 'It gets them out of the house' is Muslim Young Women's equivalent of 'it gets them off the street'. Just as young Muslim men have been stereotyped and classified as a monogamous crowd of young people vulnerable to recruitment by drug pushers, gangs and extremists, young Muslim women have been stereotyped and classified as a monogamous hidden domestic army vulnerable to forced marriages and subordination by parents and brothers. Youth workers too often slip into popular discourse of this essentialising kind when justifying their work to funders and communities. This paper explores on what grounds, if any, provision for young Muslim women (separate from other young women as well as from young men) can given for single sex work with Muslim young people and challenges discourses that shape uncritical custom and practice of work with young Muslim women. It suggests that different intentions cause different processes and outcomes, some positive and some damaging. Projects that target Muslim young women are compared with generic work with young women and girls. Empirical evidence from interview with Birmingham young women, parents and youth workers is used as the basis for this discussion.

Fulat, S. & Jaffrey, R. (2006). *Muslim Youth Helpline: A Model of Youth Engagement in Service Delivery.*
Youth and Policy (92) 151-171

Muslim Youth Helpline (MYH) is an integrated support service currently offering two forms of telephone and e-mail counseling, supported by a community outreach programme. This is achieved via the Helpline, which operates seven days a week. muslimyouth.net is an online web-guidance and support channel. The website aims to support, and profile issues such as mental health and related social problems. MYH specializes in reaching out to marginalised ethnic minority communities by responding innovatively to the cultural conflicts and religious sensitivities of Muslim youth. This short paper discusses the history and operational functionality of MYH as an example of Youth Work for minority communities.

Hamid, S. (2006) *Models of Muslim Youthwork: Between Reform and Empowerment.*

Youth and Policy (92) 81-89

Abstract: The predictable moral panics from certain sections of the media after the terrorist attacks in London obscure the more mundane challenges that British Muslim young people share with their non-Muslim peers. Despite struggling against socioeconomic disadvantage and discrimination, most Muslim youth are concerned with very adolescent concerns about 'fitting in', relationships, and identity exploration, and generally trying to succeed in life. This article outlines different approaches of working with Muslim young people in Britain. It begins by sketching some of the everyday challenges which they face and goes on to describe and evaluate some of the conceptual frameworks and outreach methodologies used. It concludes with some of the challenges that lie ahead for practitioners and suggests how Muslim faith based approaches to Youthwork can be supported.

Hussain, T. (2006). *Working Islamically with Young People or Working with Muslim Youth?*

Youth and Policy (92) 107-118

Abstract: Working Islamically with young people or working with Muslim youth? Using case studies, this article describes the daily struggle I face as a social worker practicing in a multi-disciplinary youth offending team and how this highlights the development of my practice. I describe how this section of youth have been demonized by society and forgotten by Muslims. I highlight a sinister trend in South London of young people becoming Muslims not for spiritual reasons but to acquire reputation via involvement in criminal gangs. I outline the process of setting up a group to enable young people to discuss how this trend affected them. The article also focuses on the group process, and discusses the group's effectiveness..

Khan, M.G. (2006). *Towards a National Strategy for Muslim Youth Work.*

Youth and Policy (92) 7-18

Abstract: This paper discusses the reasons for the development of a Muslim youth work response in the youth work domain. As a follow on from the conferences it delves into the learning and outcomes that emerged from the two national conferences organised on Muslim youth work in Dec 2005 and March 2006. It presents the necessary actions for the way forward and argues that without the 'naming' of this response much of what is possible and what can be offered by Muslim youth workers, Muslim youth work organisations and those working in the statutory services who wish to trial alternate approaches will go unrecognized. It goes onto the beginnings of a differentiation of whether Muslim youth work is a religious or spiritual exercise, the implications of where this is located is left to the reader.

Laachir, K. (2006). *French Muslim Youth and the Banlieues of Rage.* **Youth and Policy (92) 59-68**

Abstract: The recent riots that spread across the banlieues of France's big cities from the end of October to the middle of November 2005 have been explained by some sections of the media as an 'Islamic' rebellion even though not all of the rioting youth are of Muslim origin. Others, especially some sections of the French media and the centre-Right interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy, have described them as acts of criminality and delinquency. This helps the French State to turn a blind eye on the real problems and the causes of inequalities in the banlieues. In this paper, I argue that the rebellion of the youth of the banlieues cannot be explained only in terms of economic deprivation and marginality. I suggest that colonial legacy has played an important role in framing the policies of integration for these young people. Therefore, the revolt is to do more with the way the youth of the banlieues are considered as second class citizens bearing the legacy of colonial stereotypes.

Malik, R. (2006). *British or Muslim: Creating a Context for Dialogue.* **Youth and Policy (92) 91-105**

Abstract: In the current climate, post 9/11 and 7/7, young Muslim identities are the sites of vehement contestation. This paper offers a psychosocial analysis of the construction of Muslim identities. It argues that identities are embedded within a matrix of social relationships and are socially constructed through a complex process of negotiation.

Referring to a newspaper article post 7/7, in which one of the suicide bombers is contrasted with one of the victims, both of whom are Muslim – the article illustrates how dominant social discourses tend to construct young Muslims in terms of essentialised dichotomous positions. Such discourses not only have consequences for Muslim social identities, positioning and relationships, but can also be internalised. Psychoanalytic concepts are drawn upon to illustrate how the external world can structure the internal world and sense of self. Young Muslims, however, are contesting socially demonizing discourses by asserting and self-defining their own identities. These new articulations draw upon Islam as a meaningful category, linking past and present within a British context. An example from a therapeutic session with a young Muslim woman illustrates how new meanings can emerge which move beyond oppositional thinking. It is argued that the therapeutic space can act as a nodal point where social and personal processes come together but for it to be an empowering space for marginalized groups; a context needs to be created which is cognisant of broader socio-political processes and their impact on identities.

Marsh, S. (2006). *Exploring the development of Jewish identity in young people.* **Youth and Policy (92) 47-57**

Abstract: In this article I consider the role Jewish youth workers have for developing young people's personal and religious identity within a Jewish youth work environment. Based on interviews with a group of Jewish youth work practitioners, I have explored the dichotomies of British and Jewish identities and their hybridity in the 21st century. The issues of alienation, gender and access to learning are key elements in the formation of the youth workers' own identities and the role modelling they are able to facilitate with young people.

Mogra, I. (2006). *Intervention for Transformation: Activities among Young Muslims of Britain.* **Youth and Policy (92) 133-149**

Abstract: The loyalty, identity and participation in nation building of the Muslim community, in particular that of the youth has been under discussion in the context of educational and social participation. How are some young people reforming their lives and what motivates them to do so? In what way have they benefited through this process of change: personally, socially and spiritually? To consider the above transformation, questionnaires, and group and individual interviews were conducted to elicit the intervention, the process and the transformation among young Muslims in an inner city area of the West Midlands. These young Muslims share their experiences of restructuring and the value of engaging in two specific religious activities with global networks. Based on the evidence gathered and personal testimonies, suggestions are offered for extending the remit of the characteristics of youth work provision.

Roberts, J. (2006). *Making a place for Muslim Youth Work in British Youth Work.*
Youth and Policy (92) 19-31

Abstract: This article reflects on the experience of a white British youth work lecturer and practitioner attending the Muslim Youth Work conference held in December in 2005. Where does this debate honestly fit into the reality of where youth work stands? What connections are there between the critical tools used in university courses and those being explored in Muslim youth work? The author uses a historical perspective of the Abermarle report to challenge the lack of developmental thinking in this area of youth work.

Note published on 10 January 2006