

Hobby Potential for Positive Youth Development and Wellbeing

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The paper studies the potential that pursuing a hobby in leisure time has for positive youth development and wellbeing. A hobby refers to voluntary, intrinsically motivated, autotelic, mainly individual activities pursued in leisure time. These activities differ in their capacity for mental activation, can be more or less creative, private or public. They are activities that an individual chooses in accordance with their interest, abilities, knowledge and resources and pursues them continually, thereby investing time and energy. A hobby can fulfill different functions: relaxation and entertainment, research and interest, ability, talent or skill development, knowledge acquisition, identity building, self-expression, personality development and so on. A hobby can be an introduction and preparation for formal studies and practices, and can, itself, be formalized, structured and led to a certain degree. Nevertheless, hobby is a neglected research topic despite all the developmentally motivating characteristics for children and youth (and adults too); even when it is studied, specific hobbies are selected and observed in isolated manner disconnected from other variables. Empiric studies tell us that a small number of young people in Serbia have a hobby and that they devote very little time to them. This paper studies the findings related to the connection of hobbies pursued by young people in Serbia with: typical patterns of young people's behaviour in their leisure time, idol type preferences, problems that concern them, risk behaviours and in particular life satisfaction and their experience of well being.

Key words: hobby, leisure time, positive youth development, wellbeing