

**AN INQUIRE INTO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF YOUTH WORK AS A
PROFESSION IN THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH**

by

LIEZL SWARTZ

MASTERS DIACONIOLOGIAE
(YOUTH WORK)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER: DR C H THESNAAR

JOINT PROMOTER: PROF A P PHILLIPS

NOVEMBER 2003

SUMMARY

An applied study was undertaken to describe the current position of youth work as profession in the Dutch Reformed Church and to identify factors influencing the sustainability. A review of relevant literature, as well as an empirical survey were conducted to investigate pertinent factors such as the working conditions, the person and the training of the youth worker.

In the empirical research respondents completing questionnaires consisted of former students of the Huguenot College currently employed as church youth workers, and those who left the ministry. Interviews were conducted with congregations currently employing or having employed youth workers. It is evident from this study that the youth work profession is not yet satisfactorily established and thus contributes to youth workers leaving the ministry.

In the interest of youth ministry, it is essential for the Dutch Reformed Church to acknowledge these factors influencing the sustainability of youth work as profession, in order to get this occupation properly established.

KEY CONCEPTS

Calling, Sustainability, Church Youth Work, Church Youth Worker, Curriculum, Dutch Reformed Church, Huguenot College, Practical Theology, Occupation, Profession, Professional Body for Youth Workers, Training, Working Conditions, Youth Work, Youth Worker.