Transcription Dynamo - Online impact coordinator

📍 Hello everyone. Thank you so much for tuning in. My name is Louise Aniba and I am an online impact coordinator for Dynamo, which is located in Amsterdam East. Previously my function was online youth worker, but because it is quite a strategic role, with a lot of content planning, shaping, also the culture within youth work in Amsterdam and how that developed this online youth work that we are doing. So after two years of being an online youth worker, my function shifted into online impact coordination. This is because I already alluded to it a little bit online youth work or digital youth work, it's very broad and every organization implements this to the best of their ability, but all in a different way. For us, my manager, he decided that he wanted an online youth worker in the team in order to have this online space where the youth were to have that covered. And with a couple of studies done by the universities in Amsterdam in my pocket, I kind of had to make my way with all that information in this new online world that we had to be in.

That was a lot of figuring out and trying to see, okay, where can I implement things from this youth work perspective in a way that will do our youth work and our talent development that we offer youth justice in the online world. So from that grew a strategy that we have been implementing for two, two and a half years now, and I'm happy to see that it is bringing forth some fruits. So we are seeing that our following on Instagram has grown on, TikTok has grown, and also that it's not just the following that we have online, but also real results that we are booking in real life.

So as an online youth worker, when that was still my function, I was kind of the first to do it in Amsterdam. And what I noticed quickly is that in order for an online youth work to work and to become viable, to take root, it is something that needs to be carried by not only just one person in one organization, but multiple people in the organization, and if you are so blessed to have that multiple people throughout the city. So luckily in Amsterdam we have Samen voor jongeren Amsterdam, which is Together for Youth Amsterdam, which is a convenant between multiple youth work organizations throughout the city. And from all these organizations we have the top online youth workers within that circle. So what does this do? It allows for a team of youth workers that are very engaged that work together on implementing strategies citywide on youth work and then specifically online youth work, of course. So we are currently working on a podcast that we are making, peer to peer. So from youth workers to other youth professionals where we are gonna talk about the common misconceptions, the common issues that you run against when you're working online. So in this way, we are trying to create a space where youth workers can also find information, but also acknowledge their struggles that they might be experiencing.

And in that way, very much similar to Cities of Learning, we are trying to carry out this strategy throughout the city because then it's starting to work. We are also seeing now that just having these tight lines of a community that works together allows for the same strategies to be passed around and it's like a little fire that goes around.

A lot of my colleagues in, for example Amsterdam North, are now working with the same social media strategy as we are doing. We also have moments of where we have a work visit and then they come for an hour and then I explain how I do it. And in that way, we start to carry this online youth work question mark as a city instead of just a area in the city.

So how have we been implementing this? Well, we had a, a bunch of reports from universities that actually showed it would be a really nice way to work with influencers and to position the youth workers as influencers in this online space. For me, that immediately caused me to be a little bit like influencers? They're youth workers. So why put them in that position? But as I looked into it, I saw that it is a very viable way of connecting youths with your organization and your specific organization because the. The youth workers of the organization make the message of the organization. So when you have the youth workers shown online and you allow the youth to kind of make a connection with them before even stepping foot in the location, the youth work location that you're working at, it allows them to kind of lower the anxiety that they do have in this time, unfortunately, about taking steps, meeting new people, putting themselves out there. And we have really seen that it allows for us especially girls, to easier connect with the youth workers that are visible online. So, in that way, that has been a big part of our strategy online to kind of allow that to be, a little bit more in the forefront.

Which also makes this online youth work that we are doing quite focused on marketing and branding purposes. So for me as an online youth worker slash now online impact strategist, I try to really showcase the values that we as Dynamo have online. And that is the kind of translation that I would like to invite you to try and make for yourself also. What do we stand for and how do we kind of showcase this in our online spaces? Now, there's tons of apps that you can be active on. Rght now we're focusing on TikTok because this is a platform that's very widely used by youth. Snapchat is even more used, some would say, but TikTok allows much better data analysis, which is why we prefer being active on here. We see that our youth like videos with explainers about topics that they struggle with. Think about, for example, money management, also even debt. We see a lot of kids struggling with that.

For example, in Amsterdam we have fat bikes, which often causes kids from a young age to already rack up bills, because of these bikes because they go really fast and then they don't know. They just think, oh, my friend has one, so I'll have one. And we see it as our duty to then kind of inform them on how to be safe about having this type of bike.

But also things like exposing, you know, Amsterdam is a big city, so there's a lot of stuff happening here and we try to be mindful of making that type of content to not only be a platform where they can have fun and get to know our youth workers, but also be informed in the same way as they would in the youth centers.

We use this strategy in order to also inform online about the topics we would also inform about offline. And how do we do this in a strategic way? We connect with other organizations in the municipality, for example, as youth work organization you don't have all the answers to the problems that youth face, but you have a lot of people in your network that do. Also a lot of them

are willing to also be shown online and to fulfill this online youth work goal together with you. They also like having this platform, especially when there's somebody involved that is also skilled with working these platforms.

So I have done a lot of teaming up with other organizations, for example, youth counselors or dept counselors, in order to make videos that highlight both. Just a fun video for kids, which is my expertise, and then also with theory and actual input that is valuable to them, which comes from the network.

So in that way, we provide structurally good information for youth to look back on because it's also on a social media platform, so that makes it easy for them to save, watch it later, send it to friends. And yeah, that's how we kind of keep this value that the municipality is also very excited about for youth to have, is not only enjoyment online, but also counseling online.

And, some would say that's a value that the school should fulfill, but the schools are in Amsterdam at least not really stepping up in this sense. So it kind of falls on the shoulders of youth work and that's why I find it important to talk about this and to bring this to the forefront because it is a step that is a little bit more marketing and a little bit more in the branding spheres, but it's very much still important to also implement this in your digital youth work.

So as we are working online with youth, we are very mindful of the safety and security measures that you have to take if you are working with a younger group. How we do this is we try to make content without youth in frame. Unfortunately I noticed with a lot of colleagues or for example with people from higher up in your organization they could be very, not annoyed, but upset to hear that because that is the vision that they have. That is also the vision that kind of came out the early 2010's where kids were jumping up and down in order to to be in front of the camera, to be part of this process. But we really see that after COVID, this excitement kind of died down.

The online world is a very interesting and very important world for youths to explore and figure out, but they want to do so very anonymously, so we try to not include them in the videos as much as we would like to. Of course what we do is we try to include them behind the scenes. What type of content would you like to see? Maybe you wanna try and film this part. Do you know how this microphone works? So when we notice that there's interest in this world of making and creating, we do try and include the youth, but we don't actively try to include them when we don't see that enthusiasm. So that is a way in which we are trying to safeguard their privacy.

Also, a big one is safeguarding privacy. For example, when we have a big event, we still want to make an after movie because it could give insight for other youths to want to come to, for example, our soccer games. But in these after movies, it is very hard to blur out people's faces. So we just go with the video.

Then what we do see is that a lot of the time, for example, girls can come to us and say, I started to wear a hijab, so please remove the video. This is something that you can try to build something into, for example, you can make a quit claim so that the content that you make is yours and it's just their rights are basically non-existent anymore.

But morally, this is of course, a difficult question. So that is something that as an organization you would have to consider for yourself. How do I want to go about these privacy regulations and privacy requests? Do I want to be sympathetic or empathetic towards, for example, privacy wishes due to religious reasons or any other reason that could be coming from a youth that would want something removed.

So in this way, we just try to kind of leave the youths behind the scenes and have them very involved in the type of content that we make. But we try to not show them as much as possible if we show them. We sometimes do so, by making them private. So, for example, we only film the back, and even if we would want to post that, we would need explicit consent from the parents in order to share.

 So of course it is a beautiful world to be a part of, especially as a youth work organization. You're working with youth. They're online, so you kind of have to be online. But then it is quite challenging to figure out how to be online. I'll be the first to say that for us as well, it's a challenge to figure out ways in which we can add on to the online world that the youths are in. We make videos of course, and we see by saves and shares that there's value to these videos. We see in real life effects of people seeing the videos online and then them being excited to meet, for example, one of our youth workers in school or in the youth work location.

So it does have an effect, but are you a marketing person or are you fulfilling youth work goals as well? So that is kind of a balance that you have to try and find. The online world moves very fast, so it will ask you, especially if you're online, on a platform like TikTok, to make videos and content at least three times a week.

So that is something where you have to find a system for it. That system will probably take quite some time in order to make sure that the right amount of content comes online weekly. But it should still allow time for you to make sure that you can constantly measure whether you're making content of value.

So it's not just the making of the content, but also what are we actually making? What are we putting out? What is coming in because of what we are putting out. This is something I have found a structure in. I use multiple AI scheduling tools such as Notion, and Motion. It's very similar, but one is an agenda and the other one is like a platform where you can store all your bigger projects together in order to create clarity in the chaos because it is very chaotic. You can have a content calendar, for example, for months and months and months, but then something happens in the news or a new trend arises, and you have to switch it up and be there quickly to play into this. For example, youth face a whole lot of challenges online.

And who are we as youth workers if we do not play into these things and are the voice of reason for them in this world? That's just 10 yes men. And then 10, no, this is wrong. It's very hard for youth to figure this out themselves. So just like for example, school. We also need to play that role of being, that voice of reason for them, figuring out how to do that besides just making content is a challenge.

And that will probably evolve for the coming years, to see for all types of organizations that work with youth, how we're going to play into this request that youths have. Because if it's not coming from us, who's it gonna come from in the online sphere? So that is a challenge that I'm very excited to figure out.

And who knows where we're gonna stand in, in, in two years, we will see. But that is something that Cities of Learning is making possible for us to make it much easier to see what the evolvement is of this big question that I think we all have in youth work. So, for me personally, my goal would be to give off a little bit more of a round online youth work as Dynamo, now we are very in the online space of youth just by making these fun videos, having them get to know us as youth workers. But I would love to work with, for example, more influencers, in order to really change this emotional way of looking atthis is a youth, this is an influencer that I really like because he looks like he has a lot of money and he has nice brands of clothing to shift that idea to, oh I like this influencer because he's giving back to the community, or he's doing this other thing that's inspiring to me, that's actually building character for me.

So that is a thing that I would like to explore further, but also ways to be less sense and send and more making together with youth. So that is something that we are hopefully going to figure out in the next couple years on how to do that, given the challenges that are unfortunately also playing along with youths in 2025.