

Youth Development and Cultural Programs in Quito

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Location and Purpose



Quito, Ecuador

Quito is the capitol city of Ecuador. Quito is placed among the mountains in Ecuador, has numerous historic sites, and is a World Heritage Site.

The city of Quito speaks mostly Spanish, while a small percentage of the population also speaks Quichua. There are numerous ethnicities in Quito, such as Mestizo, Afro-descendents, and numerous Native ethnicities.



Global Field Agency

I was able to visit various organizations in Quito. Each organization that I spoke with worked with children, youth, and/or families in the Quito area.

- Guagua Quinde worked with family and children who are street vendors.
- Fundación Honrar La Vida is a neighborhood based organization providing school to children and family education to parents to decrease maltreatment.
- MIESpacio Juvenil provides a space for creative expression, where programs are created by youth for youth.
- COMPINA registers all organizations that serve children, youth, and family.
- Casa Metro Juventudes creates several programs to increase youth involvement to create a sense of community. I visited the Copeira and music program.

Outcomes

The two weeks that I was in Quito I spoke to community stakeholders to learn about services for the youth and family. I was also curious to learn about if and how cultural programs were created for youth development.

Key findings:

- Cultural specific youth development programs would be found in other areas of Quito that focus on the Native population.
- Regardless of how the programs are organized, children and youth require support and resources that are in proximity in order to grow.
- Quito would prefer to focus on being “One Ecuador” and focusing on the similarities of each other, rather than acknowledging the differences between ethnic cultures.



Connections

Classrooms:

SW 560 Introduction to Community Organizing:

Being aware of where the organization decided to locate their programs was essential. Some organizations placed their program within the community neighborhood, making it easier for families to find services, while others focused on creating in locations where bus lines were closer so the whole city could use the services.



Future career:

The development of culturally specific programs will depend on the population and what the population would like to see. Like in Quito, there will be populations that will like to focus on the “one-ness” rather than the differences of socioeconomic groups and ethnic groups.

Conclusion

Although I had discussed this in numerous environments prior, arriving to Quito I was still working with my own lens of what cultural programs should look like.

Advice

Before working in a different country, make sure to build connections and set exact dates with the organizations you hope to work with. Also, intensively study the map.

Before working with any population we must be aware of our own biases. So, before working with any community, we must listen to what they want and how they want it processed. Also, before starting any work, we must think about why we are looking to do the work, is it for ourselves or is it for the community?

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