Young asylum seekers' conceptions of 'home' at a time of transition to adulthood

YHRMP ID
129
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Aims

To explore young asylum seekers’ definitions and experiences of ‘home’ and ‘belonging’ at a time of transition to adulthood and adjustment to life in the UK.

Methodology

A three-session focus group was conducted with seven students [aged 18-25] attending an informal English language class at a young people’s resource centre, plus four semi-structured interviews with two females and two males.

Key issues

The article reviews the literature on asylum seekers' constructions of 'home' and experiences of housing. The methodology and ethical concerns of the research are discussed. Findings are presented that relate to home and time, home as 'normal' life, counter-narratives on home, support networks, home as safety and racist harassment.

Conclusions

Home for young asylum seekers can be seen as multi-layered and multi-dimensional incorporating material and emotional aspects, private and public space, and local, national and transnational attachments. Young people had renegotiated 'home' and 'belonging' through their migration pathways in parallel to their transition to adulthood.

Migrant Group
Asylum seekers
Topic
Children and young people
Community cohesion
Housing needs
Integration
Place
Leeds
West Yorkshire
Year
2008

Resource Type
Journal article
Resource

International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care

Volume
4
Number
1
Pages
12-27

Source URL: *https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/research-entry/young-asylum-seekers-conceptions-home-time-transition-adulthood*