



Changes in Young Peoples' Social Networks and Welfare Reform in Australia

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ABSTRACT

Recent proposals for social welfare reform in Australia are predicated on the assumption that passive welfare systems have eroded pro-work attitudes and values. Staying on welfare is believed to have become either a life-style choice or a form of learned helplessness that is transmitted across generations within 'work poor' families and communities. This paper draws on data obtained from interviews with male school leavers and their parents in New Zealand to inform the current debate over welfare reform in Australia, and to draw a richer picture of the barriers to employment that young people face.

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