

Understanding the Historical Consciousness of Children and Young People

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Abstract : Creating historical consciousness in children and young people is critical to global inclusion and engagement. In a context of international and technological flux, children are confronted with shifting national identities. Within this quantitative study of Australian children and young people, the concept and development of historical consciousness are explored. The analysis reports on how children and young people are connected through national, collective, and personal narratives to understand historically significant events and changes, anchor themselves to universal and intergenerational traditions and norms, be open to divergent perspectives and resilient to perpetual socio-cultural shifts. This paper presents the development and factors that shape national historical consciousness in children and young people using established international frameworks and stages of historical consciousness. This research reports on quantitative surveys conducted with over 680 school children from ages 12 years to 19 years within Australian schools. Concepts of global citizenship, inclusion, and engagement with national historical memory and significance are explored. Findings identify the social benefits of collective and personal historical consciousness and consider the current barriers and enablers in developing a young person's historical consciousness for the future.

Keywords : curriculum, global citizenship, historical consciousness, significance

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