

Detached Youth Work Guide



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Introduction to the Detached Youth Work Guide

Who is this pack for?

This pack is for youth workers who are interested in detached youth work, whether they are already a detached youth worker or wanting to develop detached youth work. This pack looks at the practicalities of detached youth work and the benefits of it.

What is detached youth work?

Detached youth work is youth work that takes place out on the streets, parks and other public areas in the communities where the young people are i.e. the young people's turf. Detached youth workers do not have a building that they work from. Detached youth work isn't about getting young people off the streets and signposting young people into youth clubs.

In the past detached youth work has been thought of as a way of trying to get young people to stop offending or engaging in anti-social behaviours (soft policing), but in reality, it has much more to offer young people and communities. At its core, detached youth work is just the same as any other form of youth work, the only difference is that it is done out on the streets, parks and other public spaces.

What is Youth Work?

The National Youth Work Outcomes Scotland defines youth work as an *"informal education practice that is concerned with engaging young people where they are, young people choosing to participate and young people and workers being equal partners in the learning process."*

Youth Work has three essential and definitive features:

Young people choose to participate

The young person takes part voluntarily. She/he chooses to be involved, not least because they want to relax, meet friends and have fun. The young person decides whether to engage or to walk away.

The work must build from where young people are

Youth Work operates on young people's own personal and recreational territory—within both their geographic and interest communities. The young person's life experience is respected and forms the basis for shaping the agenda in negotiation with peers and youth workers.

Youth Work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in a learning process

The young person is recognised as an active partner who can, and should, have opportunities and resources to shape their lives. The relationship and dialogue between the young person and youth worker is central to the learning process.

For information on outcomes please see Appendix C.





What is outreach youth work and how is it different?

Outreach youth work is similar to detached youth work as detailed above, however, in outreach youth work youth workers have a base they can direct the young people to. Some clubs might decide to do outreach youth work as a way of engaging and signposting young people to current youth provision.

Why is detached youth work important?

Detached youth work is a vital service as it engages with young people who might not engage anywhere else. It truly starts from where the young people are geographically, and it is accessible to young people in the community as there is no cost involved and no issues involving traveling to a club etc. Detached youth workers are in the young people's environment and as such are more likely to observe issues or concerns in the area.

Fundamentally, detached youth work is about young people choosing to take part or they can simply walk away.



Getting started

Before you and your colleagues go out to deliver detached youth work it is important that you have the following in place

- Policies and procedures (Child Protection, GDPR, Health and Safety, Staff Code of Conduct—a reference of detached youth work needs to be briefly outlined within relevant policies and procedures)
- Trained staff that have a PVG and have passed all reference checks and recruitment policies
- Insurance
- Risk assessments
- Clear outcomes (see **Appendix C**)

What do youth workers need?

See Appendix B for a copy of the National Youth Work Induction Checklist.

What makes a good detached youth worker?

Some qualities that a detached youth worker can have include:

- Engaged
- Present/perceptive
- Open; active listening
- Responding to needs
- Friendly body language
- Meets young people where they are
- Meets all criteria of the National Youth Work Induction

Before heading out to deliver detached youth work, youth workers should:

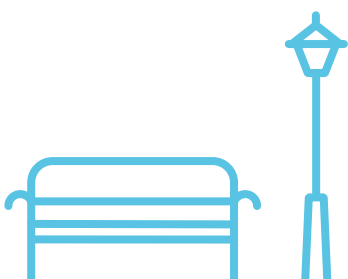
- Wear sensible clothing, dressing appropriately to the weather conditions. Take water with you. Sun cream in the summer, hats, gloves and scarfs in the winter.
- Wear an ID badge from your organization, so young people and members of the public can see your name and where you work.
- Have access to relevant emergency numbers in case of an event. For example as a sticker in the back of your ID badge and saved in your mobile phone as well.
- If possible, wear your organisations branded clothing (hoodies, hats, t-shirts etc.) so that young people and passers-by can identify what organisation you work for. It's also a good idea to wear something luminous when working in dark conditions.



Safety is key!

As detached youth work is based outside it's important to take safety measures just as you would inside a youth club to ensure young people, youth workers and the general public are safe. Here are some safety suggestions detached youth workers may want to use:

- Safety in numbers—as with all youth work it is better to work in pairs and this is especially true of detached youth work, please consult your policies and procedures regarding safety ratios. We would normally recommend no more than three staff members in an area as it can feel intimidating for the young people.
- Contact local police department to let them know you are doing detached youth work in the local area. This will allow the police to contact you if there is an incident in the area or if someone phones in with a concern that there are unknown adults talking to young people, police can check whether or not that was youth workers or a cause for concern. Some police stations may advise emailing in a list of locations the detached youth workers will be and some police departments may want detached workers to raise a stormcard.
- What is a stormcard? Please note, not all areas use stormcards for detached youth work. A stormcard lets the police know what area you are in. If a member of the public is concerned that someone has approached their child and calls the police, the police can confirm that there is detached youth workers talking to young people in that specific area. If something dangerous happens in the local area police will phone you to make sure you are notified of the incident. This is also a precaution for the detached workers as they can call in to the police if they believe either themselves or someone else is at risk of harm. You have to give the location of where you will be working to the police, if you change area you must update your stormcard and call in to cancel the stormcard at the end of a shift.
- Contact your home-based contact at the start of your shift and tell them where you are going. Remember to contact your home-based contact at the end of your shift to let them know you have finished.
- Self-care—If something doesn't feel right it probably isn't. Don't put yourself in harm's way. If your colleague doesn't feel safe proceeding into an environment listen to them and don't proceed on your own—putting yourself and others in unnecessary danger.
- Safe phrase—workers should agree on a safe phrase to say if they don't feel safe in a situation; something inconspicuous like "do you want to go for chips" or "I've left something in the car" This way the other youth worker is notified that their colleague feels unsafe and they can leave the situation without upsetting the young people.
- Staff should stay together and should not wander off; you should not be out of sight of your colleagues.
- Make sure you have appropriate resources with you.
- Contact your home based contact if you are changing locations.





What's in a detached youth workers bag

As detached youth workers don't work from a base they have to carry their resources with them. This is a list of some of the items a detached youth worker may want to have in their bag:

- Forms—consent forms/ child protection concern forms/ session recording forms
- First aid kit
- Torch
- Mobile phone
- Pen
- Clipboard
- Personal safety alarm
- Information on local supports or small leaflets about resources in their area
- A bottle of water

Do your research

Before you deliver detached youth work it's important to find out more about the area you will be working in. You may want to:

- Talk to local stakeholders (e.g. Police, shop keepers, community residents)
- Talk to local young people and ask them what the issues are in their area in relation to them and their peers.
- Ask what local people think the issues are in their area in relation to young people.
- Map the area (what are the facilities like, are there barriers to young people engaging? Are there any areas of interest, identify 'hot spots' where local young people gather, identify and note behavioural evidence e.g. graffiti, tagging, alcohol or drug usage.
- Find out trends—e.g. seasonal areas, local events.
- Crime stats etc.



Engaging young people in detached youth work

It's really important that when you make contact with young people that you introduce who you are and say what organisation you work for. Explain to the young people what detached youth work is and what opportunities you can provide for them. Check in with the young people about what they want/feel about their area.

Detached youth work geographically and developmentally starts where the young people are, so it is important to consult with the young people on what their interests are, what is available locally and are there any barriers to them participating activities.

Some young people might choose not to participate and walk away and that's absolutely fine as that is their choice.

Sometimes it takes a number of weeks for the young people to build a relationship up with youth workers. The relationship is key to engagement and participation.

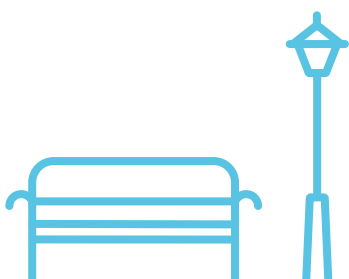
As with all good youth work, it builds from where the young people are, by consulting with them and building on their interests and needs. Do not promise anything that you can't deliver!

Engagement tools

Using engagement tools is a great way for young people to engage in detached youth work whether that is a cup of hot chocolate on a cold winters night or a BBQ in the summer months. Engagement tools are a great way to start a conversation and help build trusted relationships between young people and youth workers. Here is a list of engagement tools you can use:

- Hot chocolate
- BBQ
- Music—a portable speaker
- Art—chalk
- Outdoor movie night
- Cooking
- Issue based Workshops
- Advocacy
- Leaflets and brochures
- Sports—street football

If for example you are thinking about BBQ or a portable speaker, get in contact with the local council to gain permission/consent if necessary or appropriate.



Consultation evenings

Once initial contact has been made and the young people have an established relationship with the youth workers, the next thing to do is to hold a consultation. A consultation is when you consult with young people about what they would like to do going forward. You may have identified perceived needs and may want to include your suggestions as well.

The key to a good consultation is for it to be as fun, as possible, by making it creative and fun young people are more likely to engage. Providing food and other incentives works well. Youth Scotland has a Creative Consultation Pack available for ideas and tips.

Detached sessions

You can deliver just about every activity that you would normally do in youth clubs in detached youth work. For example, you can do outdoor cooking by using a generator and electric hobs. Be creative and ensure you have carried out a risk assessment to support your session.

The sessions should be informed by what the young people identified at the consultation and what workers perceived as a need.

Evaluating a detached session

Due to the nature of detached sessions interactive and fast evaluations work best. This could be as simple as young people putting up their thumbs if they liked the session or putting down their thumbs if they didn't like the session. You can also use props such as emoji faces to show how the young people felt the session went (Youth Scotland's Creative Consultation and Evaluation Pack).

Portable base

Sometimes, the weather in Scotland can be rather rainy. For times like this you may want to use a gazebo if possible. Some detached youth work organisations use portable bases like tents, buses or even shipping tankers that they kit out with games and information for the young people.

Local stakeholders

Detached youth work does not exist in a silos. We recommend that you work with the community and form relationships with these organisations to develop partnership work.

End of group

With reference to Bruce Tuckman's Group Theory make consideration of this when you start this project so the young people will know what to expect, clear boundaries are set from the beginning, how long this will last for and what may happen when the project ends.





Art activities to do outside

Detached youth worker resource pack—creative activities and ideas for sessions

Note: all of these activities are designed to take around 20/25 minutes to complete, although of course you can shorten or lengthen the activity to suit the individuals or group that you are working with. They can be used with a wide range of participants, although we would suggest that the suitable age range is probably 6 and upwards.

These activities should be introduced to the group you're working with once it is clear to you that the young people are comfortable engaging with you and happy to take part in activity—we would suggest using a suitable 'icebreaker' as a warm-up activity to build confidence, trust and engagement.

It's a good thing to try these activities out for yourself with a colleague before you take them out and use them for a session, just so that you feel familiar with them and confident in explaining them to young people.



Activity title: Our House

You will need:

Markers/Sharpies, roll of lining paper to draw on

Aims of the activity:

To get young people to think creatively about what they need and want from the space they live in

To collaborate on a large-scale drawing and work as a team to share resources and space

Introduction:

“This is a drawing game, it’s not like anything that you’ll have done at school or college, as there’s nothing to get right or wrong. What we’re going to do is make a big house on this piece of paper that everyone can have a room in.”

Activity structure:

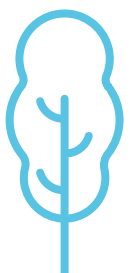
Allow a couple of minutes to introduce the activity and get everyone prepared.

This session uses drawing as a means of focusing attention on the home and interior spaces (real and imagined) that participants inhabit. It aims to explore the emotional content and associations of those spaces through drawing and discussion, again with a view to helping the young people to articulate how they feel about their environment.

Taking part in the activity yourself alongside the young people is a good way to build investment in the task and break down barriers to participation. Try to do this while still moving discussion around the members of the group and prompting them where needed (“What else could you put in your room?” is a good one).

No artistic skill is required—the respondents can fill the garden with words which describe it if they feel uncomfortable with drawing. This will happen on a large roll of paper. Participants might also imagine or contribute to shared spaces and facilities or imagine ways to connect to different parts of the house. The idea is to let the different areas connect to one another to form ‘Our House’.

You can also move this activity from site to site, allowing it to build up over time with everyone contributing their own room.



Activity title: Doodles

You will need:

Pens/pencils, A4 paper to write on, clipboards to lean on

Aims of the activity:

To build confidence and explore collaborative drawing in a fun and accessible way

Introduction:

"This is a drawing game, but it doesn't really matter whether you think you can draw or not, as it's not about how good the drawings are, but just about having fun with it."

Activity structure:

Allow a couple of minutes to introduce the activity and get everyone prepared.

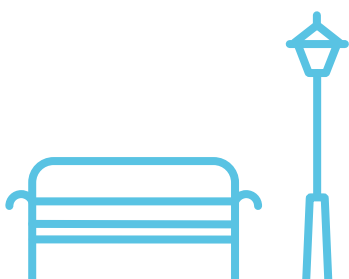
Everyone takes a piece of paper and folds it in half and then folds it in half again. Then unfolds it and put it on their clipboard.

Now without letting anyone else see, every participant should draw a silly or funny head of any kind in the top quarter of the paper, letting just a little bit of it go over the crease into the second section of the paper. When that's done, they unclip the paper and fold the section with the head that they've drawn on back so that it can't be seen and only the 'neck' shows, then they pass it onto the next person.

The process then repeats— the next person draws a body and arms, leaving a bit of waist showing under the fold, then folds the body section back and passes it to the next person, who follows the same process but draws legs, and then it repeats for a final time with the fourth person, who draws a pair of feet that connect to the legs. By now all that can be seen should be the feet.

Gather everyone together and unfold the drawings one at a time, leaving space for everyone to share or comment on what has been made.

The activity can be repeated as required to suit the time available.



Activity title: Taking a Line for a Walk

You will need:

Box of large coloured chalks

Aims of the activity:

To build confidence and explore collaborative environmental drawing in a fun and accessible way

Introduction:

“This is a drawing game, but it doesn’t really matter whether you think you can draw or not, as it’s not about how good the drawings are, but just about having fun with it. Today we’re going to take a line for a walk and see where we end up.”

Note: do make a point of making sure that you are doing this in a safe environment, i.e. that there’s no broken glass or moving vehicles.

Activity structure:

Allow a couple of minutes to introduce the activity and get everyone prepared.

Everyone takes a piece of chalk and then bends down to begin making a mark on the floor, the idea is not to lift the chalk up, but to keep it pressed to the floor, and also to decide where you are going collectively, rather than setting off in individual directions (although that can work as well). You can also experiment with several people holding the chalk at once and seeing what happens then. Try to keep going until the chalk is too small to draw with.

Repeat with variations as discussed above as required.



Activity title: Space String Drawings

You will need:

Balls of string or wool, bright colours work best for this. Scissors for removing string afterwards if necessary

Aims of the activity:

To build confidence and explore collaborative environmental making in a fun and accessible way

To develop soft skills in relation to turn based activity and watching/learning

Introduction:

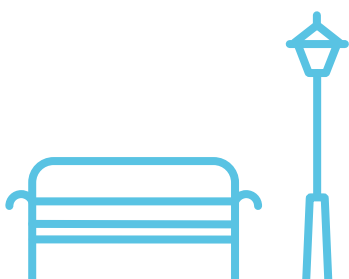
"This is an art game, but it doesn't really matter whether you think you are good at art or not, as it's not about making anything that looks like anything, but just about having fun with it. Today we're going to do some drawings in space with."

Activity structure:

Allow a couple of minutes to introduce the activity and get everyone prepared.

Take a ball of string, tie one end to a lamp post, street sign or a fence and then stretch it to another point, wrap it round and pass it to the next person in the group, who then takes the string to the next point and wraps it round, then passes it to the next person. The game is finished when there is no more string.

Encourage participants to take photos of what they have made together before you remove it. Try to re-use the string if you can but cut it away with the scissors if necessary.



Appendix A—further reading:

infed.org – Detached, street-based and project work with young people:

<http://infed.org/mobi/detached-street-based-and-project-work-with-young-people/>

[youthassociation.org](http://www.youth-association.org) – Detached Youth Work Policy:

<http://www.youth-association.org/downloads/TheYouthAssociation-DetachedYouthWorkPolicy.pdf>

[CWVYS \(the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services\)](http://www.cwvys.org.uk) –

Detached and Outreach Youth Work Method and Resource Handbook:

<http://www.cwvys.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/HB-Detached-and-Outreach-Youth-Work.pdf>

[YouthLink Scotland Padlet](https://padlet.com) resource for detached youth work:

<https://padlet.com/ahunter36/d03oqu1mw8oz0jp2>

[Dynamo International](http://docs.wixstatic.com) – Street Work, An international handbook

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/988023_15f2f6b05aa245ebad0c5c85e22bba91.pdf

[Training guide. Social street work and communication towards the media:](http://docs.wixstatic.com)

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/988023_400544bc8be54c4bababa9320b72b10d.pdf

[National Youth Association \(England\)](https://youthworksupport.co.uk) – Introduction to Detached Youth Work

https://youthworksupport.co.uk/detached-youth-work-course/story_html5.html

[Youth Scotland training for youth workers:](https://youthscotland.org.uk)

<https://youthscotland.org.uk/training-events/training-for-workers/>

Suggested books:

- 101 things to do on the street by Vanessa Rogers
- Don't Shoot!: I'm a Detached Youth Worker by Mike Burgess





National Youth Work Induction Checklist

The Youth Work sector has developed this checklist of topics that should be covered during induction training for youth workers. Facilitated by YouthLink Scotland's Youth Work Training Forum, this checklist should ensure inductions give a good sense of the values, principles, approaches and skills needed to deliver youth work as well as key practical considerations. These topics help practitioners to meet the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work and the competences for Community Learning and Development (CLD).

The purpose is to have a minimum induction standard across Scotland so that staff and volunteers can expect the same level of induction training wherever they practice and so that induction is transferable across organisations and locations. This recognises training that practitioners have already participated in, the time commitment they have given and the quality of induction provision across the youth work sector.

The principles of this checklist are:

- The pitch and level expected is one of awareness raising. There is an expectation that practitioners will do further training in these areas.
- The content should be adapted to your organisation and the nature of the young people you work with, making use of existing resources and learning opportunities.
- We have agreed a notional minimum learning time of two hours per section throughout the checklist.
- We would recommend that practitioners complete this induction within 12 months of starting youth work practice.



Understanding Young People in Society

- What is it like to be a young person?
- Young People's development:
 - Social
 - Physical
 - Emotional



Youth Work Skills

- Role of the Youth Worker
- Communicating with young people
- Group work
- Youth participation
- Digital youth work
- Practical Resources (ice breakers, team building)
- Dealing with and understanding challenging behaviour





Values and principles of youth work

- Nature and Purpose of Youth Work
- Values and principles
- Children's Human Rights
- CLD code of ethics
- Professional boundaries
- Handling difficult situations



Safeguarding and Child Protection

- Why PVG?
- Child protection and safe guarding procedures in your organisation
- Creating a safe youth work environment
- First Aid procedures
- Data protection



Equality and diversity

- Understanding young people's barriers to participation
- Inclusive youth work practice



Planning cycle in youth work

- National Youth Work Outcomes and Indicators (impact of youth work)
- Involving young people in planning
- Recording sessions
- Evaluation and reviewing
- Celebrating young people's achievements



Understanding your community

- What does youth work look like in your community?
- Partners and stakeholders
- Awareness of policy context of youth work e.g. National Youth Work Strategy



Working with your team

- Skills audit: what are you bringing to the team?
- Roles and responsibilities
- Teamwork
- Leadership



Post Induction Options

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Building resilience
- Young carers
- Supporting care experienced young people
- First aid
- Food & hygiene
- Excursion guidelines
- Residentials
- Peer education
- Youth Awards (Awards Network)
- Detached youth work / street work
- Outdoor education
- Arts & culture
- Literacy & numeracy
- International youth work
- Funding and fundraising

Progression routes

As well as further training offered informally, youth workers can progress on to further qualifications including:

- Certificate in Youth Work Practice
- Professional Development Award in Youth Work
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Youth Work

Support for training for your organisation

This is what we recommend you provide for individuals getting involved in your youth work provision as staff or volunteers. Some organisations will already have a lot of resources, training plans and support for youth workers on these topics.

If you need any help with delivering training or finding resources on these themes please contact YouthLink Scotland or Youth Scotland for support and signposting to existing resources.

If you don't have some of the organisational policies e.g. child protection in your own organisation we recommend you contact a national organisation e.g. Youth Scotland.



#youthworkchangeslives

National Performance Framework

National Youth Work Strategy

Curriculum for Excellence

Getting it Right for Every Child – Wellbeing Indicators



Youth Work Outcomes

1. Young people are confident, resilient and optimistic for the future
2. Young people manage personal, social and formal relationships
3. Young people create, describe and apply their learning and skills
4. Young people participate safely and effectively in groups
5. Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control
6. Young people express their voice and demonstrate social commitment
7. Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Nature and Purpose of Youth Work

Young people choose to participate

The work must build from where young people are

Youth work recognises the young person and youth worker as partners in a learning process



Youth Work National Occupational Standards

The Competence Framework for Community Learning and Development

Values of Community Learning and Development

Code of Ethics for Community Learning and Development

Version: 2020-07

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A company limited by guarantee No: 125456.

Scottish Charity No: SC000501.

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