

Many definitions have been offered for Outreach and Detached Youth Work. Here we present the definitions agreed by the National Development Project Steering Group (see page 5 for list of members). Whilst these definitions do not provide an exhaustive list of all the activities undertaken in Outreach and Detached work, we believe that they provide effective working definitions.

THE TWO MODES OF WORK

A review of the literature relating to these two models of work with young people indicates that, whereas there is much support for Outreach and Detached Youth Work, there are few definitions.

The distinctions between Outreach and Detached work are not always made clear. This may be partly due to the fact that there can sometimes be some similarity in practice in the places where the work is carried out (on the streets, in parks and cafes).

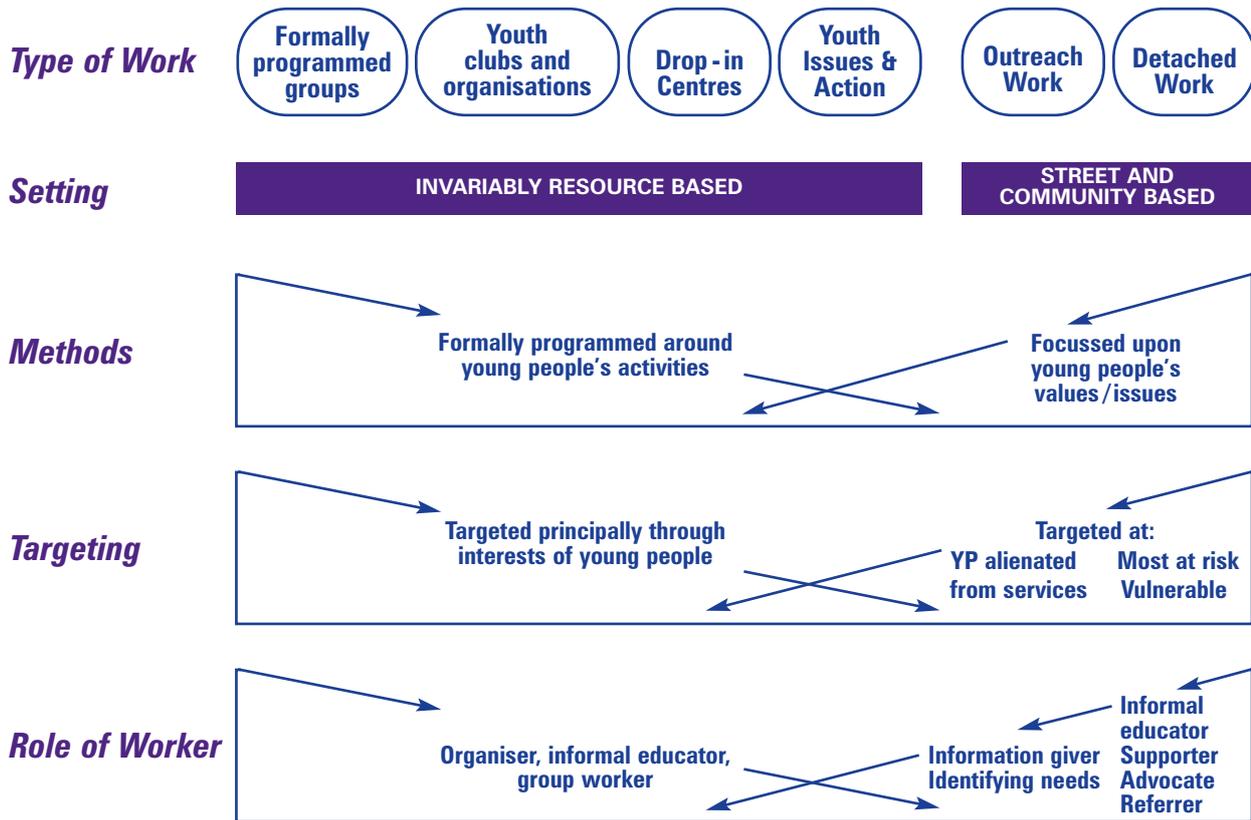
Both models often target similar groups of young people, those who are disaffected or alienated, not taking part in more formal activities. There is even some evidence from fieldwork that there can be an occasional overlap in practice between the two modes of work. For these and other reasons, definitions have received less emphasis in the literature than the principles and intentions of each of these modes of work.

A CONTINUUM OF INFORMAL WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

In an attempt to make these differences in principles, intentions and work practices more clear, the continuum overleaf sets Outreach and Detached Youth Work within a range of approaches relating to informal work with young people.

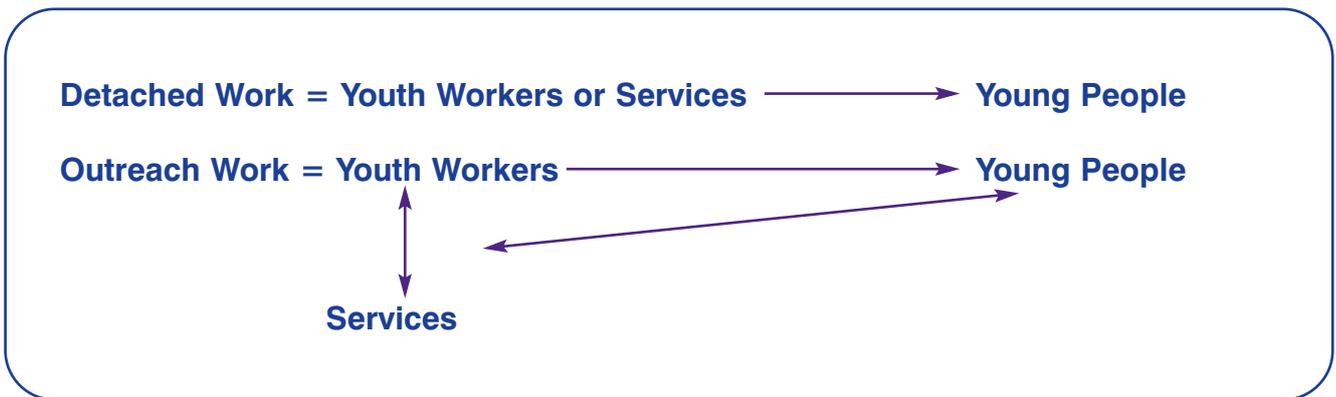
This diagram is illustrative, giving a broad representation of types of informal work with young people – and sets these against a range of methodological characteristics which, in general, apply in differing degrees to each type of work. Whilst in practice there will be exceptions to the general trends being indicated in this diagram, the principles, intentions and approaches are supported by research and observation.

A continuum of informal work with young people



OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF OUTREACH YOUTH WORK AND DETACHED YOUTH WORK

One further diagram helps to display significant differences between Outreach youth work and Detached youth work. In its original form it appeared in the YMCA Report 'On the Streets' and is reproduced here with slight modifications.



On the basis of consultations with key fieldworkers engaged in these types of work, and the observations above, our own definitions for the purposes of the project are as follows.

DETACHED YOUTH WORK

Detached Youth Work is a model of youth work practice, targeted at vulnerable young people, which takes place on young people's own territory such as streets, cafes, parks and pubs at times that are appropriate to them and on their terms.

It begins from where young people are in terms of their values, attitudes, issues and ambitions and is concerned with their personal and social development. It is characterised by purposeful interaction between youth workers and young people and utilises a range of youth and community work methods.

OUTREACH YOUTH WORK

Outreach work is normally related to services which are available elsewhere and is generally aimed at feeding young people in to those services.

Whilst it can and does take place on young people's own territory, it can also include work in existing youth facilities, educational institutions and commercial settings.

It is characterised by purposeful interaction between youth workers and young people and involves contact, information giving, and the invitation to join existing or proposed youth programmes and other services designed with them in mind.