

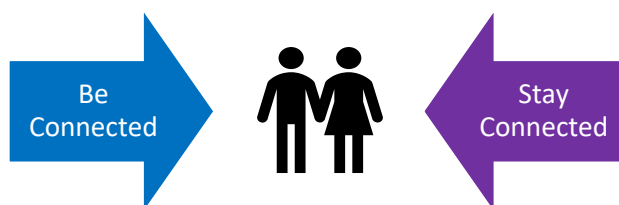
GUIDANCE – NYA YOUTH WORK EXPERT GROUP

The National Youth Agency (NYA) convened the Youth Work Expert Group to discuss the unprecedented challenges faced by youth work organisations in England as a result of Covid-19.

KEY QUESTION 1: SHOULD YOUTH WORK PROVISIONS CLOSE TEMPORARILY?

Youth work is an essential service for many young people, particularly those that are vulnerable. There is a need to carefully balance the needs of public health crisis that we currently face, against the need to provide essential support to young people at a time of heightened challenge.

ADVICE: We advise all non-essential group meetings are closed or delivered digitally (FaceBook, Google Hangouts, WhatsApp group call, for example). Acute youth work support is essential and should continue. More socially based youth work support (drop-in youth club etc) should cease.



Where groups do have to close, a dynamic (constantly reviewed) risk assessment should be carried out to determine the risk and impact on young people. We recommend a plan is put in place to provide contact and maintain relationships and support via the telephone, social media or digital platforms.

Young people should be given contact information for additional support services, including the digital offer provided by The Mix (free poster available through Youth Work Support – see below)

Some services may move to operating a fully detached or outreach provision, to make best use of outdoor spaces (within social distancing guidelines).

For those acute services that need to remain open for young people (targeting for example serious youth violence, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse, health and wellbeing) we would recommend the following:

- Keep group sizes small, or preferably 1:1, 2:1 ratio.
- Follow all social distancing and Public Health England guidance.
- Maintain a distance of at least two meters between participants. Avoid physical contact – no fist bumps, handshakes or touching.
- Sanitise and disinfect spaces regularly, with focus on all ‘touch points’.
- Try to operate digitally instead of in person, where possible.
- Keep regular contact with all vulnerable young people, via phone or appropriate messenger service.
- Keep yourself well, self-care is even more important during these times of crisis.

We will provide support and guidance on delivering digital youth work in the coming days.

The NYA is working in partnership with UK Youth to develop and deliver web resources to support youth work, specifically during this pandemic. Keep connected through joining the NYA Network or the UK Youth movement.

To access a growing body of the free support, resources and training for youth workers go to <http://www.youthworksupport.co.uk/>