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Evaluating Youth Work with Vulnerable Young People

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Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

■ Introduction

This report represents the culmination of an eighteen month research project funded by the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID) into the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people. The research was carried out jointly by the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) and the Youth Education and Employment Research Unit at Glasgow University between January 1996 and June 1997. The research primarily focused on young people aged thirteen to sixteen.

Six distinct geographical areas of Scotland, characterised by disadvantage, were investigated. In each neighbourhood the project examined young peoples and service providers' experiences of youth work with vulnerable young people.

■ Perspectives on youth work

By tracing changes in the philosophies underpinning youth work, it is clear that the circumstances of young people have changed considerably in recent years. The philosophy of youth work of the immediate post war period was appropriate in an age of rapid and fairly predictable transitions but does not address the more complex and protracted extended transitions of contemporary youth and also ignores other changes such as the lowering of the average age of puberty and the impact of the media. In other words, the main models of youth work were developed at a time when the client group was much more clearly defined. One measure of effectiveness relates to the extent to which youth work remains attractive and meets the needs of the different age groups of young people as they face complex decisions and challenging economic circumstances.

■ Collecting evidence

The qualitative and quantitative approaches used to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people were based in a range of urban and rural areas in which young people are potentially vulnerable. A comparison between the selected areas and national statistics on unemployment and deprivation show that young people from single parent families and from homes without a full-time wage earner are over-represented in this sample; levels of school exclusions are high, with young survey respondents frequently being the focus of police attention.

In each locale, researchers conducted a questionnaire survey (totalling nearly 1200 informants) and focus group discussions with pupils in local secondary schools. A number of individual interviews were also carried out with young people who had been engaged by detached or

outreach projects. Interviews were also conducted with a range of youth service providers some of whom participated in a seminar/workshop towards the end of the project. These sources enabled the researchers to comment on the extent to which existing youth work provision is being utilised by those who are most vulnerable and whether it is helping to reduce risks.

■ Young people's leisure lifestyles

It is evident from the ways in which young people use their leisure time that the transition from organised activities for groups to more casual leisure activities can increase vulnerability. Leisure time activities are shaped by a number of factors including gender, age, social class, access to resources and the type of provision available locally. This study showed that

- Teenagers move from spending a lot of their leisure either at home or in organised activities to more casual leisure activities – with an emphasis on 'hanging around' with friends – between the ages of 14 and 16. Organised youth work is likely to have the greatest appeal for the under- 14 year-olds.
- Patterns of association changed with age: older young people were less likely to spend time with their families and were more likely to spend time with mixed sex groups and with boyfriends and girlfriends.
- Participation in sports and other organised leisure activities tended to decline in early adolescence as young people begin to engage in more casual leisure pursuits; commercial activities, such as discos and dancing, increased with age.
- There were no significant differences between young people in families with, or without, a full-time wage earner but young people participating in the study were likely to have a narrow leisure life style due to living in relatively disadvantaged areas of the country with access to a limited range of facilities.
- The young people in this study reported spending a significant proportion of their time 'hanging around' and when this was outside their homes, they frequently engaged in forms of behaviour which made them vulnerable to police attention and intervention. Both males and females mentioned conflicts with the police.

■ Use of youth clubs and activity groups

Against this background of leisure activity, the study examined in more detail young people's participation in youth and activity groups. Findings show that:

- About half the girls and six in ten boys were currently involved in some sort of youth club, uniformed organisation or activity group with participation declining with age – female membership of youth groups declined more sharply than for males.
- Although nearly six in ten young people had been members of a uniformed group at some point in their lives, membership of uniformed organisations and youth clubs was less common among this sample of vulnerable young people than in the more representative sample reported by Hendry and colleagues (1992).
- Whilst family circumstances did not have an impact on patterns of participation among females, males from families without a full-

time wage earner were significantly less likely to attend some form of youth provision

■ What vulnerable young people think about youth work

The sample of young people involved in this study tended to make relatively positive evaluations of youth work.

- Young people clearly valued the opportunity for social contact provided by youth organisations and appreciated having access to a place in which they could meet with their friends or develop new circles of friends. However, there were complaints about the 'troublemakers' who were attracted to some clubs and the age range of members in many organisations: older young people often felt constrained by the presence of younger members.

- Youth organisations also provided these young people with the chance to develop new skills and take part in different activities including those which would normally be financially outside their reach.

- While a range of youth organisations provide social benefits and help vulnerable young people acquire new skills, youth clubs organised by community education stood out as providing a useful source of information on personal and social issues such as AIDS and drugs.

- Although youth group members tended to be relatively happy with their level of involvement in decision making (especially about choice of activities), it is clear that they were seldom given real responsibility either on a financial level or in terms of making and enforcing rules.

- One area in which general youth work failed to meet its objectives for this vulnerable group was in guidance and counselling. Among those who were currently attending youth groups, just one in twenty said that they would discuss personal concerns with a youth worker.

- In most areas young people were fairly positive about their youth workers and leaders. The best youth workers were seen as those who were friendly, approachable, had a sense of humour and were tolerant of the members. The worst were strict or bossy and tried to impose their own standards on the young people.

- Outreach and detached workers tended to focus on an older age group and were highly rated by the vulnerable young people, their clients. From our limited evidence it seems that the guidance and counselling of outreach and detached workers was effective and provided these vulnerable young people with an essential source of advice and support.

■ Youth work and the reduction of vulnerability

Findings from the pupil survey indicate that:

- The most vulnerable are least likely to participate in organised youth activities: there are low levels of participation among those who truanted, had been excluded from school and/or had been before a children's panel.

- Those who used youth clubs and groups tended to spend less time 'hanging around' and were occupied at times when they might otherwise have engaged in risky behaviour or become the focus of police attention. However, those from families without a full-time

wage-earner were just as likely to report 'hanging around' regularly even when they were members of a youth group.

- Youth clubs and groups tend only to be available for a limited number of evenings (typically two) per week: those who lacked the financial resources to develop broad leisure life styles involving a range of activities still spent substantial periods of time 'hanging around'.
- Relatively few young people in the sample admitted involvement in illegal activities (including the use of drugs), although those most heavily involved were less likely to participate in youth groups than those whose involvement in illegal activities was less pronounced.
- Although regular participation in creative and social activities within a supportive environment is likely to lead to increased levels of self-confidence, currently being a member of a youth groups resulted in no significant difference in self-esteem (as measured by the Lawrence scale).

Multivariate analysis was used for a more in-depth analysis of the relationship between youth work and the reduction of vulnerability and a 'high risk' group were identified which included those involved in drug abuse, had been excluded from school, and/or a high level of involvement in criminal activities.

- Among 'high risk' young people, levels of participation in youth groups were relatively low.
- Those from families without a full-time wage-earner or who reported spending a lot of time 'hanging around' were most likely to fall into this 'high risk' category.
- Current membership of a youth group was not associated of itself with a reduction in risk. However, attending a youth club meant less time spent on the street which in turn could indirectly reduce risk.

■ Managing youth work

Information collected from service providers indicated that in most of the areas there was extensive and varied provision for young people but that it was difficult to establish exactly how much youth work existed within a particular locality. The main obstacle was the sheer variety of provision, different funding and the lack of central co-ordination at the local level.

- In each study area, community education and uniformed organisations had a presence – with a different mix of 'traditional' youth work, sports groups, interest groups and uniformed organisations. There was also a diverse range of initiatives which have been developed by individuals or groups of people to meet what they see as the particular needs of young people in the locality.
- In the neighbourhoods studied in some detail, there were remarkably few cases of detached or outreach work which often targets the most vulnerable young people in our society.
- All providers report that their major aim was to empower young people, to help them take control over their lives. Providing up-to-date, accurate information and offering activities to enhance young people's confidence and self esteem are two approaches used by youth workers. Detached work is more directly responsive to the needs and problems identified by individual young people.

- A difficulty faced by providers is being able to respond to changes in society and to the challenges presented by the high-tech culture of the young generation. Traditional youth clubs and voluntary groups have few modern facilities using new technology and their image tends to be rather unglamorous compared with (albeit more expensive) commercial leisure attractions which may be available locally.

- As a whole, youth work is dependent on voluntary workers and providers report that whereas youth leaders are fully trained, the voluntary staff and untrained sessional workers have least qualifications but often the most direct and sustained contact with young people. In practice qualified youth workers find themselves spending less time with young people and more on administration and fund raising.

- This study took place during the year of transition to new unitary authorities in Scotland and the shortage of funds and uncertainty of future funding were the major concerns for providers. For them, the main issue facing youth work is economic survival and reliance on untrained workers in key roles which together result in methodological conservatism reflecting low resources and uncertainty.

■ Working with young people and measuring success

- Overall, providers tried to be inclusive with provision available for as many young people in the area as possible. However they acknowledged that it is often very difficult to engage with those young people who are deemed most at risk. Some providers who had engaged with such young people within, for example, a club setting reported difficulties due to the disruptive influence of some individuals on the rest of the group.

- Looking at the characteristics of good youth workers, most providers see, enthusiasm, commitment, and a sense of humour as core qualities. Providers, like the young people themselves, tend to identify personal attributes and personality as being of prime importance rather than training or possession of specific skills.

- Providers felt their work had contributed to reducing vulnerability among young people especially in promoting self confidence and self esteem which allowed young people to take control of their lives and be less influenced by negative experiences. Interaction with adults was seen as important in providing young people with positive role models and opportunities to discuss issues impinging on their lives. However, potential reductions in vulnerability were more likely to take place in sections of the population that are, relatively speaking, not the most vulnerable.

- Information from detached/outreach workers in two localities and from the young people they work with, supports the assertion that they *are* engaging those young people who are among the most vulnerable in the community.

- All providers have mechanisms of evaluation which are currently too underdeveloped to secure confirmation of success or failure in their ability to meet the needs of vulnerable young people. Some community education workers expressed doubts concerning the ability of evaluations to account for the complexity of youth work, its aims, and the multi-layered nature and variety of outcomes. Evaluation was largely seen as an externally imposed and operated procedure focusing on simple quantitative and easily observable measures – for example the number of young people

attending groups and activities as some measure of success. They were also more likely to record group activities than the experiences and development of individual participants in youth work.

- Providers were less aware of other dimensions and approaches to evaluation and few had training in monitoring and evaluation as part of a youth worker's routine daily working environment rather than an externally initiated operation.

■ Resources

Resourcing is a key concern for providing effective youth services. Resourcing affects all dimensions of service provision, influencing the scale of operation, the methods of working, duration of provision and the opportunities for staff training.

- Services for vulnerable young people could have as much as £160,000 per annum to cover four full time staff and 32 sessional worker in an urban aid funded community centre project or as little as £400 in a local branch of a uniformed organisation. It is therefore difficult to make comparisons of expenditure and costs between providers or localities since there are no common accounting procedures. Expenditure on staffing and accommodation differs according to the services offered. Community education projects tend to have a core of full-time staff while at the other extreme some projects are fully staffed by volunteers. Accommodation varies from purpose built centres to village or church halls shared with other users for which there may, or may not, be a charge.
- The common component, especially among some of the professional providers, seems to be uncertainty about future funding. The lack of certainty about funding especially in community education is reflected in: time being spent on chasing additional funds which bites into the time of qualified staff and reduces direct contact with young people; conservatism in provision as youth workers become reluctant to experiment and prioritise the maintenance of existing provision.
- Where funding is fixed term in nature and grant applications are successful, the youth workers remain on the treadmill of close accountability in the short term to sustain the grant, and of formulating new grant proposals to guarantee the maintenance of the service.
- Any further reduction of resources would have negative consequences. In particular, young people would spend more time hanging around the streets, would lack opportunities for constructive social interaction, information on important social issues and the chance to become involved in decision-making within a structured organisation.
- There is some evidence that involvement in youth work can reduce participation in illegal activities and drug and alcohol abuse and therefore it may be worthwhile to consider a shift of resources from crime control to prevention via an enhancement of youth work provision, especially when targeted towards the older age range and at those who are most vulnerable.
- A major issue is the lack of detached youth work to help the most vulnerable young people but the employment of a detached youth service for a few individuals may use the equivalent resources to

those needed to fund a mainstream youth club for many more people.

■ Conclusions and implications

Most of the five key dimensions of effective youth work identified by the Scottish Inspectorate are being met. Young people are provided with opportunities for social contact and tend to appreciate having access to places in which they could meet with their friends. Youth organisations also provide young people with the chance to develop new skills and take part in different activities, some of which are normally outside of the financial reach of the most vulnerable young people. Youth clubs can also provide a useful source of information on personal and social issues.

Youth work provision in Scotland largely comprises youth clubs, uniformed organisations and various voluntary agencies which between them cover a wide range of programmes designed to meet the needs of young people and provide them with interesting and useful leisure pursuits, although in some areas the range is limited. However, individuals are likely to have relatively little choice of accessible youth work provision and services for older teenagers tend to be poor. The vulnerable young people taking part in the study drew attention to the lack of guidance and counselling within mainstream youth work.

There is no imperative for unitary authorities to provide any form of youth work; they are only empowered to provide it as part of the service to the community. Consequently, in times of financial restraint, youth work provision can be a soft target and the needs of vulnerable young people may be ignored which will, in the long term, be to the detriment to society as well as young people themselves. In Scotland, there is a such a wide range in the scale of budgets, voluntary support and what comprises direct and indirect costs that it is impossible to make direct comparisons on the costs of services. Such costs have to take into account the immense contribution from volunteers without whom much provision would collapse. The many apparently positive outcomes from youth clubs and activities are not being monitored and evaluated and therefore the costs of services and their impact on vulnerability are difficult to verify.

The most vulnerable young people are under-represented in the uptake of youth work provision. Cost is one factor in the failure to attract the most vulnerable; cultural factors as well as local environmental issues can also deter young people from attending youth groups. Moreover, there is no doubt that there is insufficient detached and outreach work to make a difference to the circumstances of the most vulnerable young people. Detached and outreach work is not only expensive but it is difficult to demonstrate success other than through individual stories or through predicted costs arising from individuals if they prove unable to adjust to the responsibilities and demands of adulthood.

Providers of mainstream youth work themselves value constructive activity and may find the confused or anarchic values and behaviour of some of the most vulnerable difficult to cope with. Detached youth

workers have different priorities and can largely work with their clients in very responsive situations which only involve a small group or individuals and activities can therefore tailor to their needs.

Youth work involvement reduces the amount of time young people spend hanging around outside and in this way clearly has some impact on the reduction of vulnerability. On the other hand, young people can only spend a very limited amount of time at youth clubs so the overall impact of youth groups may be diluted.

The following suggestions for future developments in youth work arise from the project:

Meeting the needs of young people today and tomorrow
- a comprehensive review of the ways in which 'old' models of youth work can evolve in ways which help meet the needs of young people in a rapidly changing world
- the monitored development of a range of new models of youth work which are appropriate to the distinct needs of different age groups
- priority given to the role of guidance and counselling within all forms of youth work
- a reconsideration of ways in which the 'casual leisure' activities and information needs of young people can be met within attractive informal settings which are available throughout the week.

Supporting the most vulnerable
- a comprehensive review of detached and outreach work and an assessment of the ways it meets the needs of the most vulnerable young people
- a longitudinal study of the impact of youth work which will establish the extent to which involvement reduces risk and vulnerability.

Funding
- greater stability in long term funding which will encourage providers of youth work to be more innovative and encourage experimentation with new models of youth work
- consideration of the transfer of resources from criminal justice to youth work as a means of reducing the long-term economic and social costs associated with crime
- additional training opportunities for voluntary and sessional workers
- a review of the implications of funding cuts which are having a strong impact on detached and outreach work for vulnerable young people.

Monitoring and evaluation
- the enhancement of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as part of a strategy to provide evidence of effectiveness and thereby encourage more stability in funding arrangements for youth work
- if evaluation is seen as an increasingly important element in developing youth services, then service funders, managers, and workers may have to be more involved in the development of suitable and acceptable methodologies.

1 Perspectives on youth work

■ Introduction

This report provides an overview of an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people in Scotland. The task is complex because the central concepts are all contested: there is no clear definition about what constitutes youth work, of how it's effectiveness should be measured or about which young people can be regarded as vulnerable. It is also clear that definitions of youth as a stage in the life cycle are socially and historically variable and that transitions to adulthood have become increasingly protracted across much of western Europe. Before presenting the results of the evaluation, in this introductory chapter we briefly discuss some of the key changes affecting youth as a stage in the life-cycle. We then relate these changes to central assumptions about youth work through describing the development of youth work in Scotland, by outlining the main types of youth work which exist today and by highlighting the philosophies which underpin different youth work models. In the following chapters we describe the methods used in our evaluation and then go on to look first at young people's experiences of youth work and, second, to examine the effectiveness of youth work from the perspective of the service providers.

■ Defining youth

In the modern world, youth is an intermediate stage in the life-cycle: children are regarded as dependent and in need of protection, while adults are regarded as full citizens. Youth is a period of semi-dependency: young people are treated differently from children and granted certain rights, but denied the full range of entitlements granted to adults. Youth is problematic because 'there is no clear end to the status of childhood and no clear age at which young people are given full adult rights and responsibilities' (Coles, 1995). Importantly, various legal rights and responsibilities are granted in stages, some of which are based on chronological age (such as the right to marry) while others are dependent on the completion of stages in the transitional process (such as the completion of full-time education). Moreover, being defined as a period of semi-dependency through which young people pass prior to being granted full adult status, the boundaries of youth are highly variable because the attainment of independent adulthood is conditioned by social norms, economic circumstances and social policies.

In the early modern period, young people frequently began work before puberty, while in the 1950s and 1960s youth was frequently seen as synonymous with the teenage years and many young people gained a degree of economic independence at the age of 15 or 16. Over the last two decades, youth transitions have become increasingly protracted and complex: young people are remaining in full-time education for longer periods, and, partly due to changes in benefit regulations, frequently remain dependent on their families until their mid-20s.

In our view these changes have important implications for youth work as to be effective, models of youth work must evolve so as to keep pace with the experiences of young people in modern contexts. Young people today face a more uncertain future than that experienced by the previous generation (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Changes in the labour market and in education, a broadening of social networks and a restructuring of employment opportunities are central to an understanding of the experiences of young people in modern Scotland. The decisions which they have to make are more complex and a lengthier involvement in youth cultures can lead young people to become more involved in risky behaviours such as crime, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and sexual experimentation.

For youth work these changes are particularly significant insofar as youth organisations have been seen as 'a device for policing the child out of mischief or one for speeding him (sic) more quickly into the adult world? (Jephcott, 1954: 152–3). Indeed, a recent Home Office report on young people and crime argued that:

> *If it is true that young people grow out of crime, then many will fail to do so, at least by their mid-twenties, simply because they have not been able to grow up, let alone grow out of crime (Graham and Bowling, 1995: 56).*

In this context, a central feature of effective youth work relates to the ability of youth organisations to support young people through complex and protracted transitions and to find ways of appealing to young people beyond the teenage years.

■ Origins and development of youth work

In many respects, youth work is characterised by confusion and uncertainty, it's aims are ambiguous and potentially conflicting and workers are frequently unable to adopt long-term strategies due to the lack of a statutory base and the consequent financial uncertainty in a time of economic restrictions. Indeed, Banks (1994) argues that the history of youth work is one of crisis management, uncertainty and missed opportunity. To understand the position of youth work today and the ways in which youth work agendas are set, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the origins and development of youth work.

The origins of youth work are probably buried in the mists of time forever and the precise date when organised youth work began will remain a mystery. The beginning of organised youth work is thought to

have originated shortly after the industrial revolution: prior to industrialisation, youth formed a less distinct stage in the life-cycle and the family played a key role in the economic socialisation of its young.

The formal origins of youth work in Britain date back to the early nineteenth century when voluntary groups were formed in response to the perceived needs of young people, which frequently related to the alleviation of poverty and a perceived need to provide moral leadership for the young. In Britain, the oldest existing voluntary youth organisation is the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) which was founded in 1844. Many different reasons have been cited as to why voluntary youth groups began to emerge in this period, ranging from a concern about declining moral standards in young people to fears about 'the potential threat posed by the working classes at the time, by socialising young people into middle class values and ways of thinking' (Evans, 1994: 180). Indeed, in recent years there has been a tendency to criticise the values of early voluntary youth groups although MacAlister Brew warns of judging early youth organisations from a modernist perspective:

> *It is true that the work was often tinged with patronage and flavoured with a kind of piety which is distasteful today, but that it made an incalculable contribution to the lives of many young people in an age when few cared for them is indisputable and should not lightly be dismissed (1957: 119).*

One particular criticism has centred on the claim that early youth organisations over-emphasised Christian evangelism, that organisers frequently had little knowledge of the needs of young and that intervention often inhibited learning through experience. Davies and Gibson (1967), for example, argued that middle class adults often became involved in youth organisations to ensure:

> *that the young people grew into 'full Christian manliness' together with training them to be 'good citizens' and for responsible roles in society', all involved preparing the young to accept an economic, political and religious structure because it was there and because any disturbance of if would have endangered the position of those who controlled it (quoted in Evans 1994: 180).*

In this context, the early youth organisations tended to have a philosophy which was based on the idea of correcting young people who had perceived deficiencies, rather than encouraging them to make informed choices about their lives: the original aim of most uniformed organisations being to instil discipline into young people. Despite these criticisms, in general the early voluntary youth groups responded to the perceived needs of young people of that era, assisting disadvantaged young people within society through providing various services.

Until 1945, voluntary organisations were the backbone of youth work provision in Britain. Statutory youth work provision was introduced into Scotland in 1945 under the Education (Scotland) Act. The philosophy behind the Act was that statutory organisations, through youth work, could provide informal education for young people. Since 1945 there have been numerous alternative visions about the objectives of youth work. In

1951, Sir John Redcliffe Maud put forward the view that the aim of youth work should be:

> *to offer individual people in their leisure time, opportunities of various kinds, complementary to those at home, formal education and work, to discover and develop their personal resources of body, mind and spirit and thus better equip themselves to live the life of mature, creative and responsible members of a free society (National Youth Bureau: 1990: 9).*

It must also be remembered that the 1950s was a period of rapid social change which had specific consequences for the life experiences of young people. In the 1950s a teenage consumer market emerged for the first time with consumer goods such as clothes and records being specifically targeted at teenagers. The growing affluence of young people in this period, together with an expansion of the youth leisure market, also had implications for youth work:

> *With the emergence of teddy boys and .... beatniks, even the most casual observer had to notice that the Youth Service was ill equipped to offer much to young people, who if press reports were to be believed, were achieving staggeringly high levels of lawlessness, rebellion and bad manners (National Youth Bureau: 1990: 9).*

The emergence of a new category of consumer who had access to their own money and had the power to spend on a distinct range of products created problems for both the older generation and the youth service. The implications of the increased affluence of young people was investigated by Abrams (1959), who presented his evidence to the Albermarle Committee which was reporting on the future of the youth service. The Albermarle Report (1960) (covering England and Wales) and the Kilbrandon Report (1964) (covering Scotland), led to a change in youth work philosophies and the development of a new focus and direction to youth work. Davies (1992) suggests that the Albermarle Report moved youth work from an old philosophy of patronage to a new direction which involved providing young people with personal and social education. The report summarised the task of the youth service as helping 'many more individuals to find their own way' (quoted in Davies 1992: 35). The Albermarle Report was also significant insofar as it recommended the introduction of training for youth leaders, the building of youth centres based on social interaction, starting programmes for unattached youth and strengthening the relationship between the voluntary and statutory sectors. However, there have been several criticisms of the report and it has been argued that the recommendations soon became outdated, certain sectors of the population were completely ignored and the report was not far-sighted enough. Indeed, Milson (1970) suggests that because of the massive social changes occurring in the 1960s, the recommendations of the Albermarle Report were outdated within ten years. There were many issues which were not addressed in the report, which, for example, failed to predict the increased number of young people from ethnic minorities in Britain, the changing pattern of women's lives, and challenges to the moral values of the older generation.

In Scotland, the Kilbrandon Report (1964) had a somewhat narrower focus and was primarily concerned with 'children in trouble'. Lord Kilbrandon was explicit in identifying the major focus of youth work as:

    a) those with delinquent behaviour
    b) those in need of care or protection
    c) those beyond parental control and
    d) those who persistently truant (Stone 1995: xi).

The Albermarle Report (1960) and the Kilbrandon Report (1964) both stressed the importance of personal and social development in young people through involvement in youth work, although the terms used were often vague: such as 'personal growth' and 'development of character'.

The next milestone for youth work in Scotland was the publication of the Alexander Report in 1975. One of the key recommendations was that youth work should be delivered by the community education service which provides informal education for all age groups. Subsequently, local authorities began to specify the aims and objectives of youth work more clearly. Strathclyde Regional Council, for example, argued that community education should be:

> *responsive to the personal educational needs of the individual whether social, intellectual or recreational and within a community development context, so that it is concerned with the individual's role in relation to wider society (Strathclyde Regional Council 1984).*

At a national level, the Scottish Standing Committee of Voluntary Youth Organisations (later Youth Link Scotland) argued that:

> *Youth work is essentially educational and interventionist. It has as its aims the personal and social development of young people. While it must adapt to meet changing needs, there are certain unchanging principles which form the core of youth work. Youth work must always help young people in the formation of attitudes to life; the formation of standards; the testing of values and beliefs; and the development of skills for involvement in society (SSCYO 1989).*

In sum, the history of the development of youth work is chequered and has its roots in the Christian values of the Victorian era. The original aims of youth work were to provide young people with the opportunity to develop through constructive use of leisure time and a number of recent writers have argued that in essence youth work has not moved far from its nineteenth century roots (Jeffs, 1979).

■ Current models of youth work

One of the major problems in evaluating youth work in a contemporary Scottish context stems from the lack of a single agreed definition as to what constitutes youth work. As Williamson argues:

> *'Youth work' is a somewhat amorphous concept, encapsulating a range of methodologies in work with young people in a range of organisational and institutional contexts (1997: 101).*

The numerous different types of youth work which can be identified (such as uniformed organisations, club based work, outreach and detached work as well as sports and general leisure clubs which focus on the needs of young people) makes a precise definition of youth work extremely difficult. Banks (1994) argues there are four different categories of work with young people:
- leisure based work
- personal and social development
- preventative work and
- youth social work.

Two of these categories (personal and social development work and preventative work) are frequently seen as capturing the essence of youth work. The youth club is one example of work which emphasises personal and social development work and informal education through structured leisure based activities. Preventative youth work targets certain groups in an attempt to reduce a specific problem (eg teenage pregnancy). At the same time, Banks (1994) recognises an overlap between the different categories: preventative youth work often moves away from group work and focuses on specific individuals – at which point it can become indistinguishable from youth social work. Moreover, with an increase in young people's leisure activities, the personal and social goals are frequently diluted as young people become involved in activities that do not encompass formal youth work but which nevertheless aim to help them develop various skills and competences.

In this section we try to identify the main models which underpin youth work in Scotland. The models of youth work implemented by different organisations is partly conditioned by their perceptions of the problems facing young people and of the sort of solutions which are prioritised. Theoretically, a distinction can be made between approaches which highlight individual deficiencies and aim to help young people to find individual solutions to their personal problems and a contrasting perspective which attempts to locate young people's experiences within a set of social, economic and political structures. These perspectives are reflected in the key youth work models outlined below.

Control Model

The control model of youth work rests on the assumption that young people are a threat to the prevailing social order and that action by the state or voluntary organisations is required to help control and monitor young people. Historically this model was fairly explicit in the types of organisations which emerged in the immediate post-war era as a response to an increase in youth leisure time and the emergence of youth cultures which were frequently perceived as a threat to the social order, stability and moral values of society. With shorter working hours and an extension in the period occupied by education, young people were spending an increasing amount of time on unstructured leisure activities and were

frequently seen as being at risk of 'acquiring bad habits', 'getting into trouble' and even 'risking contamination'.

Jeffs and Smith (1994) argue that the Government response to this perceived problem was to provide young people with structured and acceptable leisure activities and supplementary education through youth work. Jephcott (1954) also considered the youth organisations in the early 1950s to be authoritarian, attempting to instil military discipline into young people (especially uniformed groups which placed an emphasis on character building through discipline).

In this context, successive youth policies implemented by different Governments were aimed at the control of deviance and perceived unacceptable behaviour. Jeffs (1979) and Smith (1988) both argue that the investments made by the governments into youth work and education were justified as being a method of social control. The idea that youth policies have been implemented as a means of social control are well documented (see Williams, 1988 and John, 1981) and it has been argued that early youth workers saw the control of working class youth as part of their duty and attempted to replace working class values with middle class ones. Hannah, who is sometimes portrayed as the founder of the first youth club, stated that young people were not innocent beings, but were corrupt and had evil dispositions which could be corrected through informal education (Hendrick 1994).

Socialisation Model

The socialisation model of youth work begins with a similar premise to that underlying the control model: that young people should be acclimatised into the values and norms of society as part of the transition to adulthood. Effectively the control and socialisation models are both concerned with the containment of young people (Springhall, 1977; Jeffs, 1979; Davies 1985), although the socialisation model highlights the positive personal benefits which are associated with the structured use of leisure time. Rather than explicitly emphasising control or the need to reduce a potential threat, the prime aim of the socialisation model is to prepare young people for their roles in adult society and to encourage them to explore the choices and opportunities which may be available.

In many ways, the socialisation model can also be seen as a 'deficit model' in which young people are portrayed as lacking in skills or in need of guidance: a deficit which youth work attempts to address. Cockerill (1992), for example, argues that key themes such as empowerment and equality are based on a 'deficit model' and that youth work frequently attempts to target disadvantaged groups. As such youth work is frequently seen as 'a rescue mission for the disadvantaged' (Cockerill, 1992: 18).

Informal Education Model

The importance of informal learning or education as an integral part of youth work is frequently emphasised, highlighted in the following statement from the Inspectorate:

> Youth work comprises a wide range of educational activities which aim to provide young people with opportunities for personal and social development outside the formal system of education. It may take place in statutory or voluntary youth clubs, uniformed youth groups such as the Girl Guides or the Boys' Brigade or even on street corners. Regardless of the setting its fundamental characteristics remains the same: purposeful interaction between adults and young people. When youth work is of high quality it has a clear educational content which is understood by all those involved (HMI 1992: 1).

From a theoretical point of view, Freire (1975) argued that informal education can help empower young people and ultimately help them to take more control of their lives. Rogowski also claims that informal education is about the empowerment of disadvantaged groups and for young people helps ensure that they:

> are not integrated into the structure of oppression, but (instead) transform that structure so that they can become beings for themselves (1990: 31).

On a more practical and less political level, the concept of empowerment through informal education has been one of the central tenets of youth work in Scotland:

> Within the principles of youth work there is a clear ideology about the empowerment of young people, who through their participation in youth work programmes will grow and develop as individuals having particular knowledge, skills and the confidence to participate fully in their clubs, organisations, projects, communities and society in general (Principal Community Education Officers Scotland, 1989).

In this context, attempts have been made to increase the amount of decision making young people have within many youth organisations. The empowerment of young people through their involvement in decision making processes was highlighted by the Scottish Community Education Council who wrote:

> Youth work should be restructured in a way which permits young people to influence the making of decisions (1986: 9).

Citizenship Model

In recent years there have been various debates about the ways in which youth work can provide young people with opportunities to develop as citizens, although Williamson (1997) has argued that the relationship between 'citizenship' and 'youth work' is hard to grasp because both concepts are difficult to define and are dependent on the political climate for their formulations. For Williamson:

> Youth work may have a part to play in preparing young people for at least some elements of citizenship and for participation in civil society (1997: 11).

Citizenship is a concept related to an individual's access to services (health, benefits etc.) or to social integration or social solidarity. The

majority of definitions of citizenship are based on Marshall's (1950) argument that citizens should have three types of rights: social, political and civil. There has been much debate around young people's access to citizenship rights (see Jones and Wallace 1992 and Coles 1995) and Williamson (1997) argues that over the last decade there has been an erosion of concern about rights and more emphasis has been placed on obligations. The citizenship model of youth work evolves from a concern to help young people to become active citizens within their society: in this vein, the Review Group on the youth service in England (1982) stressed the importance of developing political and social education for young people.

Although Williamson (1997) suggests that new mechanisms should be introduced into youth work which promote citizenship and help guide and assist young people, he remains somewhat sceptical about the potential for developing a citizenship model of youth work: relatively small numbers of young people are involved with youth work and funding tends to lack stability. The author concludes that:

> *Youth work may be one such mechanism which has, in the past, been overlooked as a policy measure for achieving this end. Youth work can do little to affect the 'status' elements of citizenship for young people though, through the provision of advice and support, it can ensure that they avail themselves of their diminishing entitlements (1997: 14).*

■ Types of youth work

Earlier, we suggested that the term youth work covered a broad range of activities in a range of different contexts. It ranges from the supervision of very informal leisure pursuits through to preventative work with vulnerable young people and sentenced offenders. In many ways it is difficult to connect such a diverse set of activities and identify common aims. In this section we identify the different strands of youth work which exist in Scotland today. Youth work is an all encompassing term which relates to many activities involving young people. The range of different types of youth work are highlighted in Youth Work in Scotland:

> *It (youth work) may take place in statutory or voluntary youth clubs, uniformed groups such as the Girl Guides or the Boys Brigade or even on street corners. Regardless of the setting, its fundamental characteristics remains the same: purposeful interaction between adults and young people (HMI 1991).*

The main thrust of youth work then is a focus on the interaction between adults and young people and the majority of youth work is conducted in a base whether this be a purpose built youth club, a church hall or a community centre. Here we outline four main types of youth work: mainstream youth work; issue and project-based youth work; detached and outreach work and intensive group work.

Mainstream Youth Work

Mainstream youth work is often seen as taking place in a traditional youth club setting. The youth club provides young people with a safe environment to enjoy structured leisure activities and participants are provided with the opportunity to develop personal and social skills through informal education. Mainstream youth work is frequently supported by community education but the voluntary sector plays a strong role in the provision and staffing of local clubs. In this context, Principal Community Education Officers (1989) see the youth club as providing 'a direct service to young people in the form of social education, cultural experiences, leisure, recreation and citizenship'. Or, as Williamson argues:

> Youth work … may be viewed as a 'playground for the learning of citizenship, a platform for giving young people a voice and for promoting their initiative, self-confidence and creativity, within a framework of support, guidance and credible advice and information (1997: 102).

However, while the youth club model may be relatively successful in providing opportunities for personal growth and raising self confidence, many young people do not attend centre based youth organisations or may only join in for a limited period of time. Moreover, there are concerns that non-attenders are perhaps the most vulnerable young people. These are issues which will be considered in later chapters.

Issue – and Project-Based Youth Work

The philosophy behind issue-based youth work is that young people can face many cultural, social, political and economic issues which:

> can result from unsatisfactory family relationships, inadequate housing, unemployment, poverty, poor health, low self esteem, or can be issues on racism, sexism and changing roles in society. Such issues are of concern to young people and can be manifested in terms of vandalism, homelessness, truanting, gang activity and drug abuse (Principal Community Education Officers 1989: 3).

As such, issue-based youth work aims to help young people deal with a specific set of problems which they are facing or may face in the future and aims to equip them with the skills or information to deal effectively with these situations. Youth information services are included in this category of youth work.

Jeffs and Smith (1989) put forward two major criticisms of issue-based youth work. First, serious issues can be trivialised leading to shallow debates: racism, for example, may be reduced to an individual issue without a full discussion of social dynamics and cultural histories. Second, the young people can be influenced by the leaders' opinions and 'moral righteousness' is frequently inherent in the message being conveyed:

> The emphasis on young people adopting particular value positions and behaviour does mean that there tends to be a failure to fully address existing beliefs and actions. In other words, there is a drift towards the attempted imposition of the practitioner's viewpoint, rather than an exploration and development of the young person's (Smith, 1988: 80).

Detached and Outreach Projects

Detached and outreach youth work involves youth workers seeking out the clients, rather than waiting for young people to find their way to youth clubs. The first detached youth work projects started in Britain in the 1960s (see Goetshius and Tash, 1967). 'Detached' projects are frequently issue-based with youth workers operating in the young person's environment and trying to contact potentially vulnerable young people who are not involved in traditional youth clubs. When detached youth work is an extension of centre-based work, it tends to be referred to as 'outreach' work: the aims are fairly similar although detached workers sometimes aim to draw young people into more formal club settings.

Mountain (1989) sees detached and outreach workers as trying to contact young people who do not have the confidence or inclination to participate in club based activities. The aim is to communicate with young people in their own community, which is seen as the most natural environment for contacting young people who are 'at risk' (Hening, 1977). Detached work can provide a bridge between young people and the local agencies which may be able to meet their needs (Graham and Smith, 1993).

Although detached youth work is seen as meeting the needs of potentially vulnerable young people and as providing a credible challenge to club-based work, it's growth has been slow (Wathan, 1989). Indeed, the major drawback with detached projects is that they can take time to establish and can be resource intensive. On the other hand, the main advantage of detached work is that youth workers are working with young people in their own environment and they can learn much about their fears, lifestyles, hopes and aspirations. This background information can provide the detached youth worker with the tools to provide for the needs of potentially vulnerable young people.

Intensive Group Work

Intensive group work (IGW) (until recently known as Intermediate Treatment (IT)) is a term used to refer to intervention through group work with young people who are identified as in trouble or 'at risk' of getting into trouble. Jones (1985) argues that IT represents a step before removing young people from their homes. Pickles (1983) states that IGW has various objectives, some are concerned with personal growth and development, similar to the main aims of youth work in general. IGW also aims to provide young people with skills and education and may try to prepare young people for the world of work. In Scotland, IGW is associated with community-based welfare approaches and is not linked to juvenile justice, as is the case in England and Wales.

It is important to recognise that IGW is not universally recognised as youth work insofar as attendance is compulsory and young people may have little control over the level of their involvement (Jeffs and Smith,

1988). On the other hand, Pickles (1983) argues that IGW has benefits for those most at risk.

Control is explicit in IGW and Rogowski argues it needs to adopt a more radical approach with greater:

> *emphasis on risk-taking and empowering young people as opposed to control and discipline, together with a recognition of the societal pressures that young people in trouble are under. There is also an emphasis on equal relationship between the workers and the young people, and of starting from the real world which they inhabit and of enabling them to exercise more power over their own lives (1990: 33).*

■ Summary

In this chapter we have explored a number of perspectives on youth work and traced the historical roots of youth provision in Scotland. Although we have been able to trace changes in the philosophies underpinning youth work, we have argued that in recent years the circumstances of young people have changed considerably: transitions have become more complex and protracted and youth work models which were appropriate in an age of rapid and fairly predictable transitions may be less appropriate in today's world. In other words, the main models of youth work were developed at a time when the client group was much younger and one measure of effectiveness relates to the extent to which youth work remains attractive and meets the needs of older youths (especially the most vulnerable) who today face complex decisions and challenging economic circumstances. The issue of measuring effectiveness is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

2 Methodology and sample characteristics

■ Research Design

The central objective of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people – primarily between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. Four complementary methods were adopted: a survey of secondary school pupils; a series of focus group interviews with young people with experience of youth work; and individual interviews with particularly vulnerable young people and with key service providers. The research focused on youth work activities in six geographical areas of Scotland where, for different reasons, a significant proportion of young people might be seen as vulnerable. In order to protect the anonymity of individuals and groups, areas are referred to by pseudonyms. These areas included inner city areas, smaller towns and rural areas with the level and type of youth work provision varying between areas. In broad terms, three of the areas were characterised by urban deprivation, the other three by rural poverty and/or isolation.

Name	Location	Area characteristics
Norward	Large city estate	Concentrated poverty
Leyton	Central town	High local unemployment
Kirkness	Eastern town	Pockets of deprivation
Westport	Remote island town	Isolation and rural poverty
Brockley	Western town	Rural ex-mining town
Heston	Borders town	Isolated with buoyant economy

The urban areas selected included a depressed area of a major city ('Norward') in which levels of unemployment and economic deprivation were particularly high compared to average rates within the city. Unemployment within the postcode sectors which cover Norward averaged 39 per cent in the 1991 Census (McLoone, 1995) and the school from which the sample was selected has consistently been placed close to the bottom of performance 'league tables'. Leyton, a town on the edge of the Greater Glasgow conurbation ('Leyton') was ranked fifth out of 280 British local labour markets (together with a neighbouring town) for the highest level of unemployment. Leyton also has a high level of concentrated poverty (Green, 1994). A town on the East coast of Scotland ('Kirkness') has a mixed set of neighbourhoods: levels of unemployment in postcode sectors ranged from 8.3 per cent to 44.4 per cent (McLoone, 1995).

In a recent report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Hills, 1995), it was argued that poor city areas are characterised by large numbers of lone parents surviving on benefits, high rates of youth unemployment, crime and vandalism (often related to boredom and sometimes involving young children), substandard schooling and poor parenting. These are characteristics which, in different degrees, applied to our urban study areas and which justify our strategy of treating all young people within these areas as potentially vulnerable.

Although rural poverty tends to be less visible, young people who grow up in sparsely populated and remote areas may also be vulnerable, but in different ways. Facilities for the young may be lacking, transport is often poor and young people may have to make their own entertainment. A range of rural areas was selected in which the problems facing young people differed. In a remote island town with few facilities for young people and with above average rates of unemployment (8.8 per cent in November 1996 compared to a Scottish average of 7.3 per cent), young people in 'Westport' face a different set of problems to their urban counterparts. 'Brockley' is located on the periphery of the central belt of Scotland, but with the collapse of employment in mining, the town has high rates of unemployment (18.4%) and poor public transport. 'Heston' is a more affluent rural town with unemployment rates just below the national average, but the range of facilities available to young people are limited. Moreover, concerns have recently been expressed about patterns of drug and alcohol abuse among young people in Heston (Goodlad et al., 1994).

■ Effectiveness and vulnerability

By concentrating on areas in which young people are particularly vulnerable (as a consequence of socio-economic disadvantage or spatial isolation), this study adopts a multi-dimensional approach to the evaluation of youth work with vulnerable young people. Since the formation of the modern youth service in 1945, when informal education for young people was given a statutory base in the Education (Scotland) Act of 1945, there has been little agreement about the aims of youth work or about the ways in which youth work can be evaluated. Indeed, one section of the youth work profession has always challenged the validity of measuring effectiveness, although it is often suggested that youth workers are able to recognise positive outcomes (France and Wiles, 1996): this it is not a view to which we subscribe although we accept Watts' (1990) point that is very difficult to evaluate any organisation which does not have clear goals and which has blurred objectives.

At a simple level, the 'effectiveness' of youth work is sometimes measured by counting the numbers of young people who attend particular youth groups. Indeed, some youth workers argue that if young people are turning up to programmes on a regular basis then the service being provided must be good. However, young people may participate in

clubs only as convenient meeting places and stated aims, such as social or personal development, may not be achieved. At the same time, regular attendance is likely to involve regular social contact which can have positive benefits. The importance of learning through association with peers was highlighted in the HMI report into youth work in Scotland where it was argued that:

> *the club provided a 'safe' environment ... pleasant, enjoyable, social atmosphere, with the educational element of the programme distinctly under-played ... and was clearly a meeting place where young people could learn from each other (SOED 1991:8).*

In contrast to mainstream youth clubs, issue-based projects perhaps have the potential to measure their effectiveness through, for example, an assessment of changes in the local crime rate or teenage pregnancy rate. However, Utting and colleagues (1993) argue that although the provision of structured leisure activities is thought to help prevent young people from drifting into crime, there is little research into the links between youth work and young people's patterns of offending. Moreover, other central aims of youth work may be difficult to measure: youth workers frequently argue that involvement in youth work has a positive impact on levels of self-esteem and confidence, but few attempts have been made to assess these claims objectively. However, it has been suggested that:

> *with care, appropriate ways can be found, and more subjective kinds of evidence could be used, such as inviting young people to assess changes in themselves. Generally, indicators of effectiveness are underdeveloped (OFSTED 1992: 10).*

While recognising that indicators of effectiveness can be developed, it is important to recognise that:

> *any evaluation of the efficacy of youth work practice is highly problematic, with measurable 'outcomes' (beyond the most superficial) difficult to establish and even more difficult to attribute with confidence to the interventions of youth work (Williamson 1997:14).*

The approach we adopt in this report is multi-dimensional and we attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people by:-

- means of measuring patterns of use among vulnerable youth, through examining the association between youth work and the development of 'active citizenship' (Williamson, 1997) among participants and
- examining the association between involvement in youth groups and the reduction of risk behaviour.

One of the main themes in this evaluation relates to the ways in which vulnerable young people use existing youth work provision and to the extent to which services are targeted towards those most at risk. While young people are vulnerable to a series of risks, in this study we focused on the risks associated with involvement in illegal activities, school exclusion and isolation from same-aged peers. The aim is to provide an overview of patterns of involvement in youth groups and to examine significant differences in use between males and females, between those from different socio-economic backgrounds and according to age. Given

that the risks faced by young people tend to increase between the ages of 12 and 16, we aimed to assess the extent to which providers were effective in attracting vulnerable young people in the older age group.

Another central theme of the evaluation centres on the relationship between youth work and the development of 'active citizenship' among vulnerable groups. In this context we suggest that one of the main aims of modern youth work organisations should be to 'assist young people, in an informal setting, to grow towards responsible adulthood' (SOED, 1991: 5). From a citizenship perspective, Williamson (1997) argues that effective youth work is empowering: it helps extend citizenship rights and tries to counter socio-economic exclusion through informal education and by increasing young people's ability to participate in their communities. According to Williamson, youth work is

> *a playground for the learning of citizenship, a platform for promoting their initiative, self-confidence and creativity, within a framework of support, guidance and credible advice and information (1997).*

The provision of informal education and the promotion of 'active citizenship' tend to be central to the aims of youth work providers and on this level its effectiveness has been the subject of evaluations by HM Inspectorate. In a recent report on youth work in Scotland (SOED, 1991), the Inspectorate argued that youth work involved five key dimensions:
- learning through social contact
- participation and decision-making
- guidance and counselling
- the imparting of knowledge and information
- teaching of skills.

Drawing on information from young people and providers, we examine the effectiveness of youth work in developing citizenship skills among vulnerable youth through discussion of these five objectives. We also assess the level of association between the objectives of providers and those of the users in order to assess the view of Hendry and colleagues (1992) that there is often a mismatch between the aims and objectives of youth work providers and those who use their facilities.

■ In-school survey of young people

In order to build a comprehensive picture of the use of youth provision, the first stage of the research revolved around a series of in-school surveys which were conducted between September and December 1996 in eleven secondary schools. In each of the urban areas, young people were selected from one denominational and one non-denominational school. (In the more remote areas, all young people attend the one school.) In Heston, the research was confined to the one local school and in Westport the sample included young people attending both the main high school and a smaller vocational school.

Within each school, all pupils from one class in years S1-S5 were asked to complete a questionnaire (Appendix I) during the school day and under

the supervision of a researcher. So as to build up a comprehensive picture of young people's perspectives on youth work, the researchers aimed to collect questionnaire evidence from 1200 12-16 year olds. The aim of the surveys was to provide an overview of leisure pursuits, group membership, peer activities, experience of youth service provision and attitudes of young people who were living in areas characterised by isolation and/or deprivation.

■ Group interviews with young people

Following preliminary analysis of questionnaire responses, schools were revisited and a group of pupils with some experience of youth groups were selected for follow-up discussion (Appendix II). Due to difficulties in gaining active participation from a wide age range of pupils in a group discussion, the researchers concentrated on 14 to 16 year-olds. Single sex group discussions were conducted in the eleven schools (22 groups in total with 132 young people participating) (Table 2.1). Group discussions each lasted up to 45 minutes and, to encourage open discussion, were led by a researcher of the same sex. Discussion groups complement the other data sources through adding a qualitative dimension and by providing young people with the opportunity to explain and explore needs which could potentially be met through youth work providers.

Table 2.1: Numbers of young people taking part in discussion groups by area and sex

	Males	Females
Leyton	12	16
Brockley	18	17
Heston	8	8
Norward	5	5
Westport	14	13
Kirkness	9	8
Total	65	67

Note: The low number of participants in Norward partly reflected small year groups within the school but also reflected the low rate of participation in youth groups and absentees on the day of the group discussion.

■ Individual interviews with vulnerable young people

In order to provide a rounded evaluation of the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people and to develop an in-depth understanding of their experiences and perspectives, it was also considered necessary to conduct a series of individual interviews (Appendix III). The researchers originally aimed to hold up to 60 individual interviews among young people identified as particularly vulnerable by outreach and detached youth workers. However, as most of our areas proved to be characterised by an absence of detached and outreach youth work we concentrated on vulnerable young people identified through outreach and detached youth workers in Kirkness, the only area in which outreach and detached youth workers were employed. In order to compensate for this lack of outreach and detached work in

the other study areas, a further series of interviews was conducted in an estate in Glasgow.

A total of 20 young people were interviewed. These interviews offered an opportunity to consider more subtle issues relevant to vulnerable young people who have personal experience of a range of youth activities including detached and outreach programmes. These interviews were difficult to arrange as some of the young people concerned had already demonstrated their distrust of conventional approaches. Interviewers had to be opportunistic and flexible enough to adapt questions and issues to the varied experiences and circumstances of those who agreed to participate and a number of interviews were conducted on street corners.

■ Interviews with youth work providers

In each of the areas, individual interviews were carried out with providers of youth services (excluding sports clubs and commercial enterprises). The researchers contacted relevant senior workers in community education, health, social work, and the police, asking them to supply information and contact names on any local initiatives for young people in the areas and to grant us permission to contact these people. We also contacted national organisations including Youth Link Scotland who keep a register of voluntary organisations. Additionally we independently contacted churches and uniformed organisations with the same request.

From these responses we built up lists of local contact persons. These providers were then sent a self completion 'grid' which contained questions concerning the number of young people who attended the group, the frequency and duration of the provision, the age range, sex, and charges levied (Appendix IV). Information from returned grids was combined with data from the school survey about which groups and services young people were using and using most often. This 'area profile' was then used to select providers for interview. Since the focus of the project was on the 12-16 age group, interviews were only conducted with those who provided for young people in this age range.

Interviews were based on the use of a schedule which sought in-depth information on a whole range of areas including; the background and training of providers; knowledge of the neighbourhood and young people's situations; policy, aims and objectives; funding and resourcing, levels of involvement of young people; recording, evaluation and outcomes; and the impact of local government reorganisation (Appendix V). Interviews were either conducted face to face or over the telephone, each lasting between 30 and 90 minutes.

In each of the areas we interviewed community education workers since they provide much of the direct or support work for young people's services. In addition representatives of uniformed organisations were interviewed in all of the study areas although not necessarily from the same organisation. Beyond these 'base line' interviews the number of providers interviewed reflected the differing patterns of provision in each

neighbourhood. Table 2.2 summarises the kinds of providers interviewed in each area.

Table 2.2: Providers interviews, by area

	Community Education	Uniformed Organisations	Voluntary Sector and Others*
Leyton	3	1	1
Brockley	3	1	6
Heston	2	1	3
Norward	4	1	4
Westport	1	1	2
Kirkness	2	1	2

includes heath board and social work employees

■ Validation

The preliminary results of the evaluation were presented at a workshop held in Edinburgh in April 1997. More than twenty practitioners attended, drawn from a range of organisations including the health boards, community education, the police, urban aid, Youth Link Scotland, the Scottish Office and representatives of the voluntary sector. The primary purpose of the workshop was to validate the findings and ensure that the perspectives of youth organisations were not being misrepresented. Participants endorsed the researchers' findings and analysis as well as contributing further comments.

■ Characteristics of the in-school sample

The in-school survey resulted in questionnaires being completed by 573 males and 561 females (total 1135) from 11 schools in 6 areas (Table 2.3). In Leyton, Brockley, Norward and Kirkness questionnaires were distributed in a non-denominational and a Roman Catholic school. In Heston there was no Roman Catholic school and in Westport pupils at the main school and at a smaller vocational school were contacted. Just over a third of the sample gave their religion as Roman Catholic (35%) slightly fewer were Protestants (32%) and one in ten followed other religions (10%). Just over one in five said that they followed no religion (21%) and one per cent failed to answer the question. Ninety-nine per cent of the sample were white. The age of sample members is shown in Figure 2.1.

Table 2.3: Area distribution of sample (n)

	All	Males	Females
Leyton	221	108	112
Brockley	267	146	121
Heston	92	48	44
Norward	162	57	105
Westport	151	88	63
Kirkness	242	126	116
(n)	1135	573	561

Figure 2.1: Age distribution of sample (%)
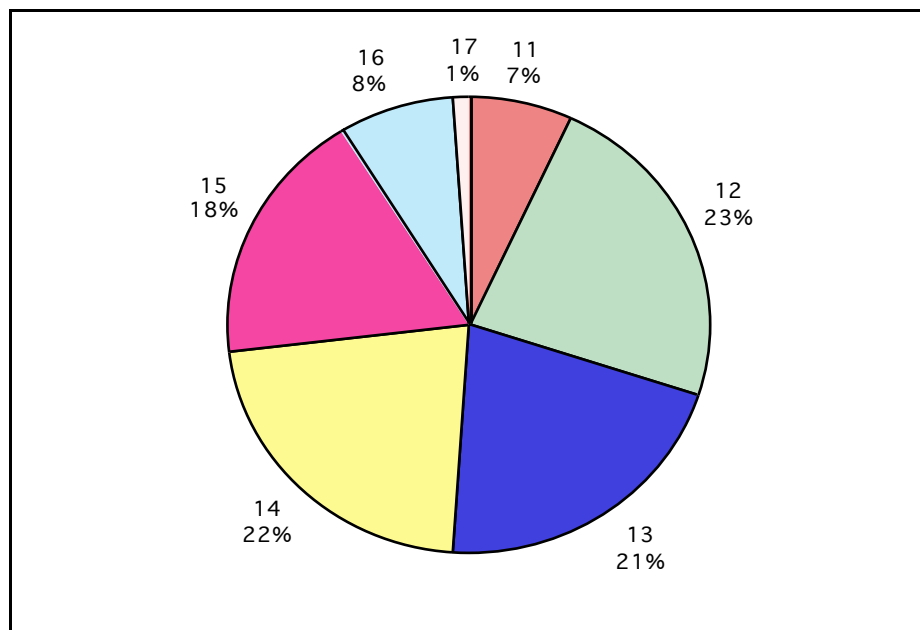
■ Socio-economic contexts

Although the survey areas were selected to represent a range of contexts in which young people were potentially vulnerable, the socio-economic circumstances of young people and their families varied considerably. While national unemployment rates stand at around 7 per cent (Labour Market Review, 1997), just 63 per cent of the sample reported that their fathers were in full-time employment, while a further 6 per cent had fathers who worked part-time. Thirty-six per cent of the sample had mothers in full-time employment while a further 27 per cent worked part-time. In comparison to evidence from the 1994 General Household Survey (CSO, 1996), the mothers of respondents were less likely to be in employment, but more likely to work full-time. Figures from the GHS show that 29 per cent of married women with dependent children over the age of five work full-time, while 46 per cent work part-time (a labour market participation rate of 76% compared to 63% among the sample). The higher rate of female full-time labour market participation is likely to be a consequence of a lack of male employment. It is probable that many full-time female workers are sole wage earners with below average wages. Low rates of economic activity among respondents' parents provides further justification for the areas selected: in all, 29 per cent of the sample lived in households without a full-time wage earner whereas the 1991 Census puts the rate of economic inactivity for Scottish households at 14 per cent. However, it is important to recognise significant differences between areas: in the Norward area, over half of the sample lived in a household without a full-time wage earner, compared to just 13 per cent in Heston (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: Percentage of respondents living in households without a full-time wage earner, by area

	%	(n base)
Leyton	29	(221)
Brockley	31	(267)
Heston	13	(92)
Norward	54	(162)
Westport	22	(151)
Kirkness	21	(242)
All	29	(1135)

The majority of respondents (73%) lived with two natural parents, while a further 8 per cent lived in a re-constituted, two parent family. Sixteen per cent lived in a single parent family (Table 2.5). In comparison to national figures, there is a slight over-representation of young people living in single parent families: a national survey of 10,000 young Scots showed that 14 per cent of young people lived with a single parent (SCEC, 1993).

Table 2.5: Current residential status of sample (%)

Both natural parents	73
Reconstituted, two parent, family	8
Single parent family	16
Other	4
(n)	(1135)

Although a large proportion of the sample were selected from schools serving economically depressed areas, two-thirds of respondents had their own bedroom, while eight in ten (80%) said that there was a room in the house they could go to if they wished to be alone. The level of crowding in residential accommodation was greatest in Norward and lowest in Westport.

■ Vulnerability

In order to be able to examine the impact of youth work on patterns of vulnerability and risk, the in-school questionnaires gathered some information about young people's contact with the police, about truancy and about school exclusions. In all of the areas, it was common for young people to become the focus of police attention: more than six in ten males (63%) and more than four in ten females (42%) reported having been stopped by the police; among the oldest age group (15-17 year-olds) three out of four males (75%) and more than four in ten females (42%) said they had been stopped. Almost one in four males (24%) and one in ten females (9%) said they had been searched by the police and again older youths were more likely to have been searched (35% and 15% of males and females respectively) as were those living in Norward (37% of males and 10% of females) or Leyton (36% of males and 11% of females). Very few young people in Heston (12% of males and 7% of females) or Westport (8% of males and 5% of females) reported having been searched. Although a large proportion of the sample had come into contact with the police,

just nine per cent of males and five per cent of females said they had been in front of the Children's Panel.

For some young people, truancy was another source of vulnerability. Overall, around three in ten young people had stayed away from school without permission on at least one occasion (32 per cent of males and 29 per cent of females). Truancy was much more common among the older age group with more than half of the 15-17 year old males (53%) and more than four in ten females (45%) having played truant. The main reasons for truanting were being fed up with school (79%), followed by a dislike of teachers (32%), being too depressed to face school (26%) and to do something specific, such as meeting with friends (22%). A few young people also said that they were too frightened to go to school (7%) or that they needed to help at home (7%).

A relatively high number of respondents had been in serious trouble at school: almost one in five males (18%) said they had been excluded from school (five per cent of the male sample had been excluded on three or more occasions). Exclusions among the female sample were much rarer: six per cent had been excluded on at least one occasion, and just one per cent (six girls) had been excluded on three or more occasions. These factors provide further justification for our methodological approach.

Self-esteem

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people, it was important to be able to assess the extent to which provision was utilised by a broad cross-section of young people. Aside from looking for associations between socio-economic contexts and participation, we also wished to be able to assess whether youth work was attracting young people with low self-esteem as well as confident and outgoing young people. While providers frequently claim that youth work has a positive impact on confidence (Hendry et al., 1992; Partridge, 1988; Williamson, 1997), our cross-sectional survey design ruled out the possibility of arriving at statements of causality. However, the inclusion of a measure of self-esteem does enable us to assess the extent to which providers are reaching those who are vulnerable psychologically. Further longitudinal work is necessary to substantiate claims that youth work involvement has an impact on self-esteem.

In order to measure self-esteem among the sample, the Lawrence Scale was adopted. This scale has been widely used in studies of young people and has been regularly included in self-completion questionnaires. The self-esteem of respondents varied significantly between males and females (being lower for females) and between areas (Table 2.6). For males and females, self-esteem tended to be highest among those living in Kirkness and Leyton: it tended to be relatively low among males in Norward and Heston and among females in Westport and Norward. For males and females self-esteem was significantly lower among those from families without a full-time wage earner (Table 2.7). Self-esteem was also

affected by age, being more positive among the older age group. Moreover, the differences in self-esteem between males and females were much narrower among the older age group (Table 2.8) suggesting that self-esteem among females develops at a slower pace during adolescence than it does for males.

Table 2.6: Mean self-esteem scores, by area and gender

	Males	**(n)**	**Females**	**(n)**
Leyton	7.935	(108)	7.125	(112)
Brockley	7.061	(146)	6.394	(121)
Heston	6.645	(48)	6.909	(44)
Norward	5.859	(57)	5.596	(104)
Westport	7.454	(88)	5.301	(63)
Kirkness	7.960	(126)	7.267	(116)

Anova p=0.0001

Table 2.7: Mean self-esteem scores, by economic activity of family

	Males	**Females**
Full-time wage earner in household	7.548	6.918
(n)	(410)	(392)
No full-time wage earner in household	6.779	5.494
(n)	(163)	(168)

Anova p=0.0001

Table 2.8: Mean self-esteem scores, by age group and gender

	Males	**(n)**	**Females**	**(n)**
11-12	7.017	(171)	5.192	(161)
13-14	7.198	(247)	6.489	(243)
15-17	8.019	(152)	7.869	(153)

Anova =.0000

■ Summary

In this chapter we have described the methodological approaches which were used to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people. These methods are based on a range of urban and rural areas in which young people are potentially vulnerable and included qualitative and quantitative approaches. A comparison between the selected areas and national statistics on unemployment and deprivation justifies our choice of areas. Information from the in-school surveys provides further justification by showing that young people from single parent families and from homes without a full-time wage earner are over-represented in this sample. Moreover, the survey suggests that these young people are indeed vulnerable with levels of school exclusions being high and with respondents frequently being the focus of police attention. In later chapters we examine the extent to which existing youth work provision is being utilised by those who are most vulnerable and whether it is helping to reduce risks.

3   Young people's leisure and lifestyles

■ Introduction

In each of the study areas, youth work providers had developed ideas about the demands of vulnerable young people and about the ways in which youth work complemented other free time activities. Some providers (notably community education in Heston) were able to draw on surveys so as to look systematically at the ways in which young people used their leisure time. Most providers, however, were only knowledgeable about the leisure activities and preferences of their own members. In this chapter we provide an overview of leisure and lifestyles before looking, in the next chapter, at young people's participation in youth work activities and at their perspectives on youth provision. Use of leisure is shaped by a number of factors including gender, age, social class, access to resources and the type of provision available locally (Deem, 1986; Glyptis, 1989; Roberts *et al.*, 1990; Garton and Pratt, 1991; Hendry *et al.*, 1993; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Here we pay particular attention to linkages between use of leisure time and vulnerability.

■ Use of free-time

The in-school survey provided the opportunity to ask a number of general questions related to young people's use of leisure time, both within and outwith their homes. At home, the main activities on which young people spent a lot of their free time were talking with friends, listening to music and watching television (Table 3.1): this was especially true for the females. For other activities, there were stronger gender differences; more females spent a lot of their time talking on the telephone, reading magazines and comics, reading books, listening to the radio and doing their homework. Males spent more time on the computer, playing computer games or engaged with a hobby.

There were also strong age differences in the use of free-time within the home. The younger boys (11–12) tended to be involved in a much greater range of activities that older boys. Among the older girls, fewer reported spending a lot of time reading books and magazines or playing games than they did at a younger age, but many more spent a lot of their time talking to friends, on the telephone, and listening to the radio and music. These age-related changes in use of leisure time have been identified by previous researchers (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1975; Smith, 1987; Hendry *et al.*, 1993): participation in sports and other organised leisure activities tends to decline in early adolescence as young people

begin to engage in more casual leisure pursuits with its emphasis on 'hanging around' with friends. Casual use of leisure tended to peak between the ages of 14 and 16 with commercial leisure becoming more important among the 16 plus age group. Girls tend to make transitions from one type of leisure activity to the next at a younger age than boys (Hendry *et al.*, 1993). These changes in the ways in which different age groups use their leisure time has implications for youth work which, as a form of organised leisure, is likely to have greatest appeal to under–14 year-olds.

Table 3.1: Percentage of respondents reporting spending a lot of time on various home-based activities, by gender

	Males	**Females**
Watch videos	20	16
Read books for fun	9	19
Talk with friends	58	78
Talk on the 'phone	22	60
Play card or board games	9	8
Play SEGA/ Nintendo	36	17
Use a computer	33	16
Read magazines/comics	23	45
Do homework	26	36
Help around house	21	30
Daydreaming	21	29
Hobby	30	21
Watching TV	57	61
Listening to radio	27	41
Listening to music	56	72
Caring for pets	32	38
Playing musical inst.	15	13
(n)	(532)	(546)

Both males and females reported spending a lot of their free time with friends of the same sex and with their family (Table 3.2). However, patterns of association varied across age groups: older youths were less likely to spend time with their families and were more likely to spend time with mixed sex groups and with boyfriends and girlfriends. Around one in four young people reported spending a lot of time on their own.

Table 3.2: Do you spend a lot of your spare time with the following people?, by age group (%)

Males	**11–12**	**13–14**	**15–17**
Your family	73	74	62
On your own	24	25	31
Your best friend of the same sex	78	75	77
Your boyfriend/ girlfriend	31	37	52
A group of boys	76	70	79
A group of girls	13	19	13
A group of boys and girls	45	52	55
Adults outside of the family	28	24	28
(n)	(158)	(241)	(149)

Table 3.2 (continued): *Do you spend a lot of your spare time with the following people?, by age group (%)*

Females	11–12	13–14	15–17
Your family	78	72	70
On your own	25	31	27
Your best friend of the same sex	88	90	90
Your boyfriend/ girlfriend	35	50	54
A group of boys	23	31	30
A group of girls	70	71	62
A group of boys and girls	62	69	68
Adults outside of the family	29	28	26
(n)	(149)	(243)	(152)

Table 3.3 describes external leisure activities in which young people had participated at least once during the previous month. For males, the most popular leisure pursuits were team sports, cycling and swimming: for all of these activities more than two thirds of males had been involved at least once in the last month. Participation in the main activities did not vary much by age. For females, the cinema, swimming and cycling were the most popular out-of-home activities: differences in participation between age groups were also small, although between 11–12 and 15–17 cycling declined in popularity while commercial activities, such as discos and dancing, increased.

Table 3.3: *Activities undertaken at least once in the last month, by gender (%)*

	Males	Females
Cinema	58	67
Disco	42	56
Swimming	67	66
Gym	56	49
Team sports	85	55
Cycling	76	57
Badminton/ tennis	50	39
Martial arts	27	14
Skating	34	43
Karting	24	9
Arts and crafts	36	42
Dancing	21	52
(n)	(540)	(535)

In order to assess the variation in leisure activities more accurately, responses for each of the activities listed above were given scores to reflect levels of involvement during the previous month. Mean leisure scores were then computed for different groups of young people (Five or more=3, three or four=2, once or twice=1, never=0) Table 3.4. An assessment of the variation in levels of leisure activity showed that males were more active than females and that members of the younger age group were more active than older youths. The narrowest leisure lifestyles were found among those in Leyton and Westport. Perhaps suprisingly,

young people from families without a full-time wage earner did not lead significantly narrower leisure life styles than those from more affluent families. Previous studies have tended to show an association between family resources and leisure life styles (Garton and Pratt, 1991; Hendry et al., 1993; OPCS, 1995). The lack of a significant family effect among our sample is likely to reflect generally depressed leisure activities among a sample of young people living in less affluent parts of the country and in areas where the range of facilities is limited.

Table 3.4: Mean leisure scores, by gender, age, area and family wage

	Mean score	**(n)**	**Anova (Sig)**
All	10.0	(1134)	
Males	10.8	(573)	
Females	9.3	(561)	
			p=.0002
Age 11–12	11.6	(332)	
Age 13–14	10.3	(491)	
Age 15–17	8.0	(305)	
			p=.0000
Leyton	9.1	(221)	
Brockley	10.1	(267)	
Heston	11.4	(92)	
Norward	11.2	(162)	
Westport	9.3	(151)	
Kirkness	9.9	(242)	
			p=.0211
No full-time wage earner	9.6	(333)	
Full-time wage earner	10.2	(802)	p=.2151

An assessment was also made of the extent to which active leisure life styles were associated with high self esteem. Mean levels of self esteem were compared for those with low leisure activity scores (bottom third), medium (mid third) and high activity scores (top third). For females differences in self esteem were not significant (6.58 for those reporting low activity levels compared to 6.42 for those with higher scores). For males, those with high activity scores had significantly higher (at the 5% level) self esteem (7.57 compared to 6.67).

Many young people spend a lot of time either on their own or with other members of their family, yet still enjoy active leisure time with friends. Others will be relatively isolated socially and will spend a lot of their time at home on their own watching television, videos and playing computer games. Using information about the people with whom respondents reported spending their free time, a small group of people were identified (n=29) who reported spending a lot of their free time with their families but who did not spend much time with their peers. Using this definition of social isolation, three per cent of males and two per cent of females were identified as potentially vulnerable due to social isolation. Isolation was not confined to a particular age group and was just as common among 11 to 12 year olds as among 15 to 17 year-olds. Due to

the low number of young people defined as socially isolated, statements about area distribution are unreliable. However, social isolation was most common in Heston (6 per cent of the sample) and least common in Leyton and Westport (1%).

Young people who were socially isolated tended to have extremely low self esteem (mean score of 2.68 among those who were identified as isolated compared to 7.03 among the others p=.0000). Isolated young people also tended to have lower leisure activity scores (mean of 7.3 compared to 10.1 among the others). Previous work on young people and leisure has linked positive psychological development to engagement in fulfilling leisure activities (Hendry, 1983). Moreover, in a study of vulnerable young people in Dublin, peer group integration and active leisure lifestyles have been shown to be associated with a reduction in psychiatric illness (Fitzgerald *et al.*, forthcoming). As such, we would expect to find an association between the provision of youth activities or facilities promoting peer interaction and psychological well-being and reduction of vulnerability.

■ Hanging around

Despite evidence of reasonably varied and active social lives among the majority of the sample, young people frequently spent time 'hanging around' away from their homes. Indeed, researchers have suggested that the leisure activities most favoured by vulnerable young people tend to be 'passive but sociable' (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 1995: 357). Overall, more than eight in ten females (85%) and more than seven in ten males (74%) reported spending some time hanging around outside. Almost a third of females (32%) and nearly one in four males (24%) said that they spent time hanging around nearly everyday, with the most common places being in the street and in the park. For both males and females, time spent hanging around varied significantly by age, with older youths being most likely to hang around on a regular basis (Figure 3.1): again this is consistent with research showing a preference for casual leisure activities among young people in their mid-teens (Hendry *et al.*, 1993).

Among each age group, females were most likely to hang around regularly and began to do so at an earlier age than males: whereas there was a sharp increase in the number of females hanging around regularly between the ages of 11–12 and 13–14, for males the largest increase came between the ages of 13–14 and 15–17. The proportion of respondents reporting hanging around on a regular basis also varied by area: more males in Leyton (37%) and Norward (27%) said they were hanging around on a daily basis than in any of the other areas. For females, regular hanging around was most common in Norward (52%) and Westport (46%) (Table 3.5).

Figure 3.1: Percentage of respondents reporting hanging around outside nearly every day, by age group
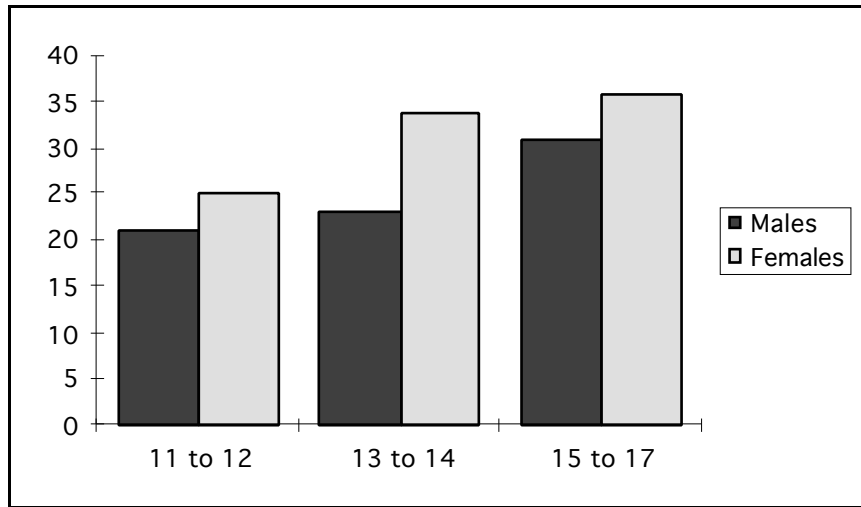
Figure 3.2: What do you do with your free time when you're not attending youth groups?
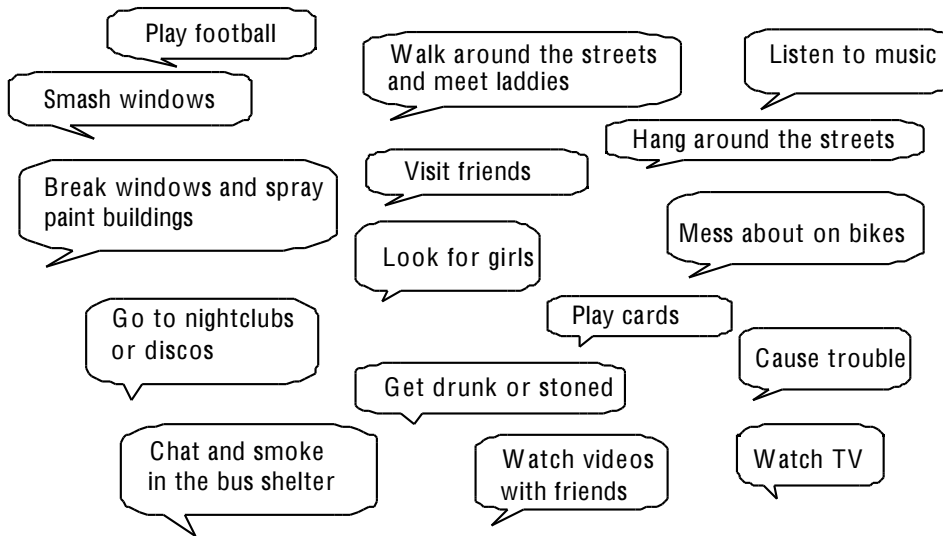
Table 3.5: Percentage of respondents reporting hanging around outside nearly every day, by area

	Males	**n(base)**	**Females**	**n(base)**
Leyton	37	(98)	25	(107)
Brockley	23	(135)	26	(115)
Heston	11	(46)	33	(43)
Norward	27	(44)	52	(95)
Westport	24	(79)	46	(63)
Kirkness	19	(115)	21	(109)

Among males and females, the most common reasons given for hanging around were, first, to talk to friends (mentioned by 63 per cent of males

and 73 per cent of females), second, because there is nothing better to do (mentioned by 56 per cent of males and 63 per cent of females) and, third, in order to get out of the house (46 per cent of males and 52 per cent of females). Those in the oldest age group (15–17) most frequently said that they had nothing else to do or that they wanted to get out of the house. In other words, 'hanging around' with friends should be regarded as a normal form of association among young people, but there is a sense in which a shortage of alternatives leads many young people to spend more time on the streets than they would in ideal circumstances.

Additional information on the use of leisure time was collected through the group interviews with young people. In each of the areas, the group members spent some time talking about the ways in which they spent their leisure time when they were not attending youth or activity groups. The group interviews provided further evidence that young people spent a significant proportion of their time hanging around and that they frequently engaged in forms of behaviour which made them vulnerable to police attention and intervention (see Figure 3.2). The males mentioned taking part in games, such as football and golf, or activities such as cycling or roller-blading. They also spent time drinking on the streets, smoking cannabis, joyriding and participating in acts of vandalism. In the majority of groups both males and females mentioned conflicts with the police. The female groups tended to mention indoor activities more frequently, such as visiting friends' houses, watching TV and videos or going out to discos and night-clubs. Like the males, they also spent time hanging around outside, smoking drinking and taking drugs. Petty crime and vandalism were also mentioned frequently by female groups. Further discussions of such behaviours are discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to youth work and the reduction of vulnerability.

■ Summary

In this chapter we have highlighted the ways in which young people use their leisure time and have drawn attention to the ways in which the transition from organised to casual leisure activities can increase vulnerability. The preference for passive social activities among young people in their mid-teens, combined with a lack of 'safe' places to pursue these activities, can lead to conflicts with the police. Fulfilling use of leisure time has positive psycho-social benefits and therefore policies which help promote active leisure life styles may ultimately reduce vulnerability. For youth work to be fully effective with vulnerable young people, it is important that activities are attractive to those within the 'casual' leisure phase: this issue is explored in the next chapter.

4 Use of youth clubs and activity groups

■ Introduction

In this chapter we draw on information from the in-school survey and individual interviews with young people to describe their involvement in youth and activity groups and to start to identify factors associated with participation and non-participation. We begin by looking at overall patterns of involvement in any kind of youth group, uniformed organisation or interest groups and then focus on differential patterns of participation between groups and at over-lapping membership. Finally, we look at involvement with detached and outreach youth workers.

■ Overall levels of involvement

Among the in-school sample, half of the females and six in ten males were currently involved in some sort of youth club, uniformed organisation or activity group (Figure 4.1). For males, sports clubs were named most frequently (29%), followed by youth clubs (21%) and uniformed organisations (19%). For females, youth clubs were the most popular type of club (20%) followed by sports clubs (17%) and interest groups (15%). Among participants, the average rate of attendance was twice weekly.

Figure 4.1: Current involvement in youth or activity groups, by gender (%)*
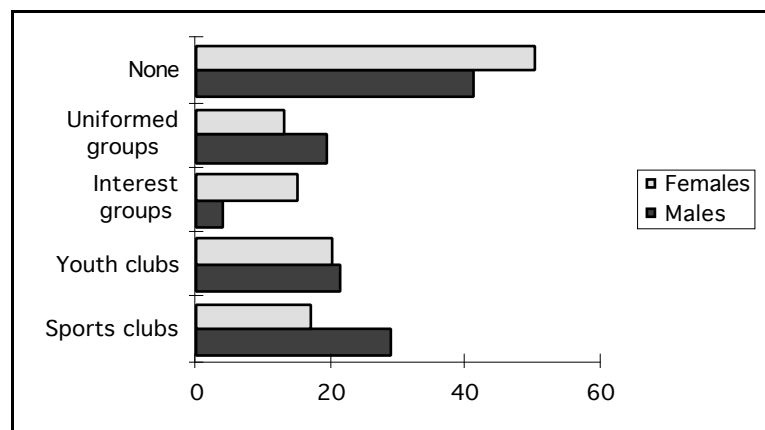
(n=1134)
Note: *Totals exceed 100 as some respondents were involved with more than one club or group.

Within each age group, levels of participation in clubs and groups tended to be lower for females. Among the males, more than two thirds (67%) participated in clubs and groups at age 11–12: by age 15–17 this had dropped to around a half (52%) (Figure 4.2). Among the females

participation at age 11–12 was lower (58%) and by the age of 15–17 just less than four in ten young women participated in clubs or groups (39%).

Figure 4.2: Respondents who are currently involved in any youth or activity groups, by age and gender (%)
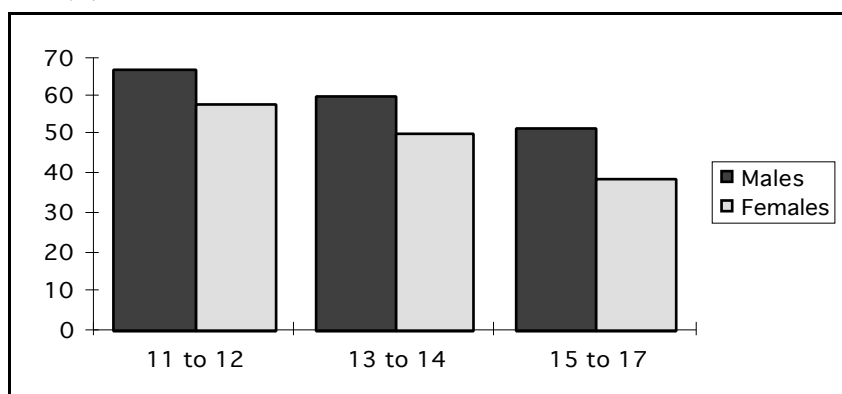
(n=1128)

In general, levels of participation in clubs and groups was highest in Westport, although there were important gender variations which cross-cut areas (Figure 4.3). Males in Heston and Westport were particularly active with almost seven in ten reporting involvement in a club or group (69%) and were lowest in Norward where just over half (53%) reported involvement. For females, those living in Westport were most actively involved with 68 per cent reporting participation, while in Brockley, Leyton and Norward fewer than half of the females were involved in youth or activity groups.

Figure 4.3: Respondents who are currently involved in any youth or activity groups, by area and gender (%)
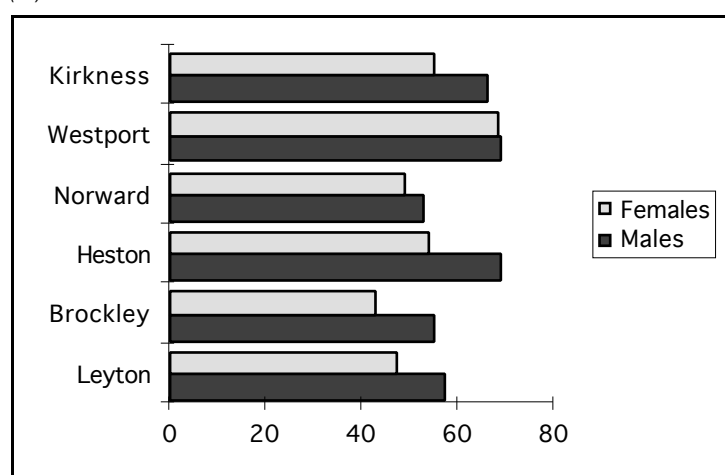
(n=625)

Patterns of participation in clubs and groups was also affected by religious affiliation. Among the males, Protestants were more likely to participate in youth or activity groups than those with 'other' or no, religious affiliation while Roman Catholics were least likely to participate (Table 4.1): for females differences were smaller (and not statistically significant), although the lowest level of participation was again found among Roman Catholics.

Table 4.1: Percentage of respondents who are currently involved in any youth or activity group, by religious affiliation

	Catholic	Protestant	No Religion	Other	X^2
Males	54	70	56	57	p=.001
n(base)	(197)	(193)	(115)	(68)	
Females	46	53	53	47	n.s.
n(base)	(197)	(176)	(127)	(61)	

Although the cost of participation in many youth clubs and groups is low, males from families without a full-time wage earner or from single parent families were significantly less likely to attend youth or activity groups (Table 4.2). In contrast, family circumstances did not seem to have a significant affect on female participation. In this respect, youth work providers need to consider ways of increasing the participation of less advantaged males who may be vulnerable to a variety of risks.

Table 4.2: Percentage of respondents who are currently involved in any youth or activity groups, by family situation

	Males	Females
Full-time wage earner in household	64 (n 410)	52 (n 392)
No full-time wage earner in household	51 (n 163)	46 (n 169)
X^2	p=0.01	n.s
Resides with two parents	62 (n 473)	50 (n 447)
Resides with one parent	49 (n 94)	49 (n 107)
X^2	p=0.05	n.s.

Almost three in ten males (29%) and just over four in ten females (43%) reported having left a youth or activity group at some stage. Of those who had left a club or group, just over a third (35%) left because they thought that the group was 'boring' or 'rubbish', one in four (23%) left either because they moved to another area or because the club had ceased to operate and almost one in five (19%) left because they felt they were too old. A small number left as they were being bullied (1%) or because they felt the club was too expensive (2%). One in five (19%) gave other, more specific, reasons for leaving.

■ Uniformed groups

Almost six in ten young people (58%) in the localities studied had experienced membership of a uniformed group at some point in their lives: no gender differences were observed among the sample; area differences, however, were particularly strong (Figure 4.4). Among males in Leyton, more than seven in ten had been a member of a uniformed group at some stage, compared to just one in four in Norward. Among the females, more than three in four of those living in Heston had experienced a uniformed group, compared to less than four in ten in Norward. These area differences are likely to be affected by the availability of groups.

Figure 4.4: Percentage of respondents who have been a member of a uniformed organisation at any time, by area and gender
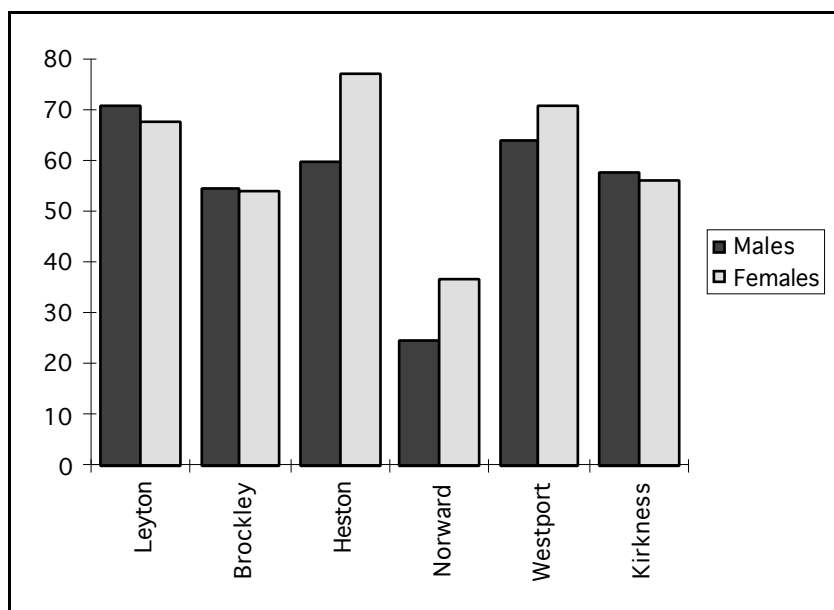
(Base n=1135)

In part, differences in membership of uniformed groups also reflect a variation in the economic resources of families. Whereas 62 per cent of young people from families with at least one full-time wage earner had at one time been a member of a uniformed group, the corresponding figure for those from families without a full-time wage earner was 47 per cent. However, in Norward, the local Guides group supply free uniforms and the low level of participation in certain areas must be seen as partially cultural. Although as a branch of youth work uniformed organisations are part of the experiences of a majority of young people, for economic and cultural reasons they seem to be less effective in providing for vulnerable young people living in economically disadvantaged areas.

Of those who had ceased to be members of a uniformed group, the majority said that they had left because they found the activities boring or because they thought the organisation was 'rubbish' (Table 4.3). Twenty-seven per cent of females and seventeen per cent of males left because they were too old (some of these will have left cubs or brownies for age related reasons, others will have left because they felt too old for groups such as the Scouts or Guides).

Table 4.3: Reasons for leaving uniformed organisations, by gender (%)

	Males	**Females**
Too old	17	27
Boring/ rubbish	58	52
Moved area	4	6
Bullied	4	2
Not enough attention	2	2
Other	16	11
(n)	(573)	(561)

At the time of the survey, 19 per cent of males and 13 per cent of females were current members of uniformed groups with around a third in the Scouts and Guides, a third in the Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade and just less than one in four in the army or air cadets. The gender difference in membership at this stage seems to reflect the tendency of females to abandon uniformed groups at an earlier stage than males, probably as they start to spend time with older boyfriends. At age 11–12, similar proportions of males and females were members of uniformed groups (21 per cent of males and 19 per cent of females). However, after the age of 12 female membership declined more sharply than male membership. By the age of 15–17, 16 per cent of males but just 7 per cent of females were members of a uniformed group (Figure 4.5). In the study by Hendry and colleagues (1992) levels of participation in uniformed organisations was found to be slightly higher (25 per cent of 12 to 15 year-olds). This difference probably reflects the more representative nature of Hendry's sample and provides further evidence that membership of uniformed organisations is less common among vulnerable young people.

Figure 4.5: Percentage of respondents who are currently members of a uniformed group, by age
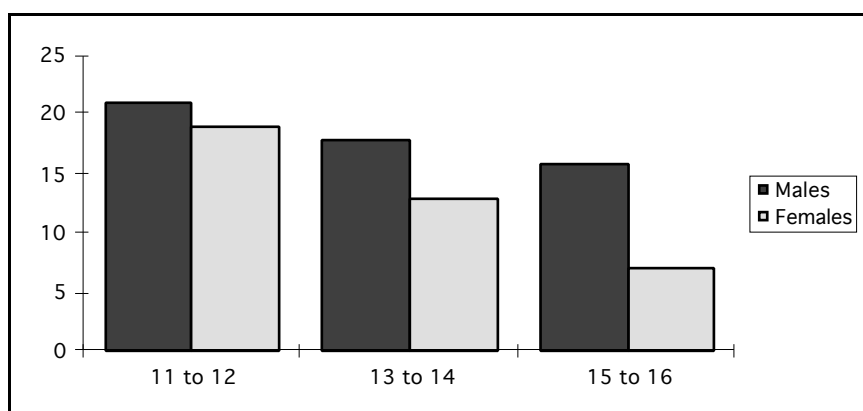
(Base n=1128)

Figure 4.6: Current membership of uniformed groups, by area and gender (%)
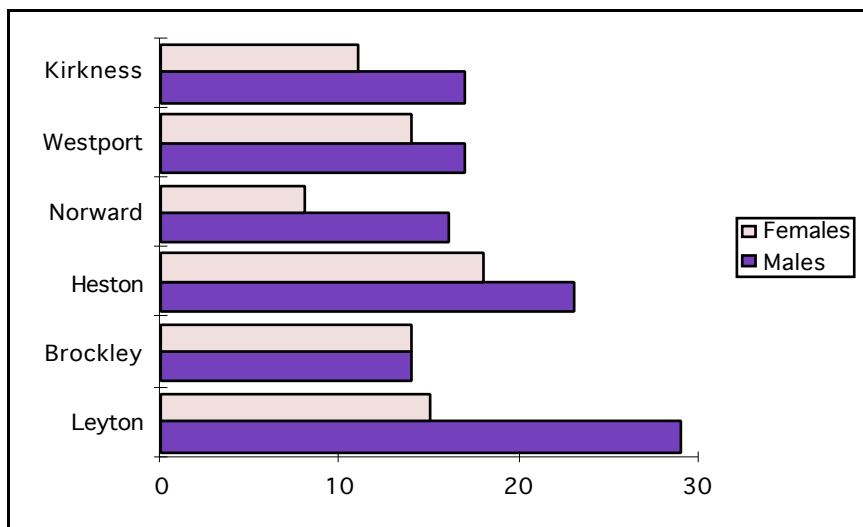
(Base n=1134)

Current membership of uniformed groups also varied by area with the pattern being similar to that reported for overall experience of uniformed groups (Figure 4.6): for males current membership was highest in Leyton and for females highest in Heston. For males the lowest level of current membership was found in Brockley while for females the lowest rate of membership was in Norward.

■ Youth Clubs

Although the majority of young people had some experience of a uniformed organisation, among our respondents more young people were currently attending youth clubs (20%). Moreover, the age-related decline in membership which was particularly pronounced for uniformed groups was far less significant in relation to youth clubs. While rates of participation were the same at age 11 as at age 16 (19%), participation fluctuated across the age range with a peak in participation between the ages of 12 and 15. As we noted earlier, female participation in clubs and groups tends to decline at an earlier stage than for males: youth club membership was highest among males at age 15 (27%) and among females at age 12 (24%).

Comparisons with levels of youth club participation reported in other studies leads us to the firm conclusion that vulnerable young people are far less likely to make use of youth club provision than their more advantaged peers. In an earlier Scottish study, Hendry and colleagues (1992) found that 47 per cent of 12–15 year-olds were members of a youth club: more than twice the level of participation found in the present study of vulnerable young people. However, among our sample, current participation in youth clubs was not related to the economic circumstances of the family.

■ Sports Clubs

Among the school sample, more young people were currently members of a sports club than any other type of club or group (23%), although males were much more likely to be involved than females (29 per cent of males compared to 17 per cent of females). Moreover, among sports club participants males were more likely to be involved in team sports (84 per cent of male members as compared to 56 per cent of females). Sporting females were more likely than males to be involved in individual sports such as swimming (71 per cent of females as compared to 52 per cent of males). Those from families without a full-time wage earner were significantly less likely to be members of a sports club (18 per cent were members compared to 25 per cent of those with a parent with a full-time wage) (Significance=.00801).

Membership of sports clubs tends to decline with age: whereas 29 per cent of 11–12 year-olds were members of a sports club, among 15–17 year-olds just 16 per cent were members. For both males and females the peak age for membership of sports clubs tended to be between the ages of 12 and 14.

■ Interest Groups

Young people also participate in a wide range of other clubs and groups which we refer to as interest groups. Interest groups cover hobby and collectors groups (such as Chess clubs and Stamp collecting clubs) to musical groups, dancing clubs and drama groups. Interest groups tend to be less popular than the other groups we have described (just 9 per cent were members) and membership tends to be heavily skewed towards females (15 per cent of females compared to 4 per cent of males). Membership of interest groups tend to fall sharply after the age of 13. Those from families without a full-time wage earner were significantly less likely to be members of an interest group (6 per cent were members compared to 11 per cent of those with a parent with a full-time wage) (Significance=.00942).

Of the males who were members of interest groups, most (54%) were involved with musical groups, followed by collectors and hobby groups (19%), dancing clubs (15%) and drama groups (11%). Among the female members, dancing clubs were the most popular (76%), followed by musical groups (19%) drama groups (10%), and collectors and hobby groups (1%) (Total exceed 100 as respondents were occasionally involved in more than one interest group.)

■ Multiple club membership

One in five respondents (21 per cent of males and 19 per cent of females) attended more than one club or group, although many of these were young people who participated in more than one sports club. Just over one in ten young people (13%) attended more than one type of

organisation (e.g. a sports club and a youth club or a uniformed organisation and an interest group).

Those who attended more than one group were more likely to be in the younger age group (23 per cent of 11–12 year-olds were members of more than one group as compared to 15 per cent of 15–17 year-olds) and more likely to come from families with a full-time wage earner (22 per cent as compared to 14 per cent of those from families with no full-time wage earner). Multiple group membership was most common in Heston, Kirkness and Westport.

■ Outreach and detached work

Most of the study areas lacked outreach and detached provision and our information on the these forms of youth work are drawn from just two areas: Kirkness and Glasgow. In a study of this sort, it is difficult to gauge patterns of involvement. Given the tendency to cut-back on this sort of work in the light of reduced funding, there is a clear need for further research into the effectiveness of detached and outreach work.

Our evidence suggests that outreach and detached workers tend to concentrate on older youths who are no longer involved in mainstream provisions (we came across several young people between the ages of 20 and 24 who were involved with outreach and detached workers and one of the Glasgow youth initiatives targets those under the age of 26). Youth workers either attempt to encourage these young people to join particular groups or engage with them on the streets. Many of those we talked to were unemployed and were having to contend with a range of problems (such as obtaining benefit entitlements as well as drug and housing issues) and it was clear that youth workers were targeting those young people who were perceived as most 'at risk'.

Many of those interviewed had a long-established relationship with particular youth workers. Most had been involved with this type of youth work for over a year and one young person had been involved for 10 years. The involvement of these young people tended to be a consequence of direct action by youth workers (see Figure 4.7). Most said that they were approached whilst 'hanging around' with their friends and invited to join a particular club. Others described how youth workers had talked to them about possible activities and constructed a new programme around their own priorities. Indeed, a few young people explicitly talked about the ways in which they were able to determine their own agenda and older youths seemed to value this ability to influence priorities. The examples provided by young people included requests for discos to be organised and the setting up of a football tournament.

Figure 4.7: Example of outreach and detached youth work

Case study I

Outreach and detached youth work

Alex is 17 and became involved in Craigtown youth group in Glasgow after having being approached by a youth worker whilst 'hanging around' on the streets with a group of friends. The youth workers approached them on a number of occasions, got to know them and persuaded them to come along to the group. Alex had not previously considered joining a youth group, but has now been attending regularly for three years.

Activities are varied and include games on the premises such as football and snooker as well as visits to other leisure and activity centres. Visits to the Laser Quest Centre and McDonalds are given as examples. There also opportunities to go away for weekends and the group recently spent a day at Alton Towers. Many of these activities require additional resources and members take part in a variety of fund raising events such as jumble sales. On a more educational level, there have been visits to the High Court and to the local Family Planning Clinic.

There are many aspects of his involvement which he appreciates and he feels that he is involved in decisions about future events. The club provides him with the opportunity to meet with friends and to participate in activities which would otherwise not have been possible. He has the opportunity to talk alone with the youth worker about particular problems and feels that if he were not attending the group he would be spending a lot more time hanging around the streets 'getting into fights'.

Local youth workers were also credited with helping to make the area safe by reducing conflict between rival gangs. One of the youth workers had helped Alex's friend get a place on a building course at the local FE college.

■ Summary

In this chapter we have examined patterns of participation in youth clubs and various organised activity groups. Although the majority of young people have some involvement with clubs and groups, participation tends to decline with age, with females leaving at an earlier stage than males. This age-related decline in the use of groups and clubs is likely to reflect a tendency for young people to seek less organised and more casual activities during their early teenage years. In this context it is notable that detached and outreach workers seem to be in touch with an age group who find more traditional forms of youth work inappropriate.

Traditional youth clubs are an important part of the leisure activities of young people with around one in five of our sample currently being involved in youth club activities. Yet other types of provision was also important; males, for example, were more likely to be involved with sports clubs than youth clubs. Most young people also have some experience of

uniformed groups, although membership declines from the age of about 12 whereas the age-related youth club membership decline is much less pronounced. In this respect it would seem that youth clubs are more successful in attracting or retaining young people as they start to seek more casual leisure pursuits.

The evidence presented in this chapter also highlighted the relatively low uptake of organised youth activities among vulnerable young people. By contrast, detached and outreach work seems to focus very strongly on the most vulnerable young people. Comparisons with statistics from other, more representative, studies suggests that youth club participation among vulnerable young people is extremely low. Even within less advantaged areas, patterns of participation tended to be affected by the economic circumstances of the family. However, while participation in sports clubs and interest groups were significantly affected by family economics, youth club membership was unaffected. While youth clubs may be relatively under-used in less advantaged areas, our evidence suggests that they are available to a cross-section of young people in these localities.

5 What vulnerable young people think about youth work

■ Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined patterns of participation in different types of youth organisation. While we drew attention to the relatively low level of uptake among members of the sample (particularly among those at the older end of the age range), it was clear that many young people participated in some youth provision at some stage in their lives. In this chapter we look at participants' evaluation of the benefits of different types of youth work. In both the school survey, the group interviews and the individual interviews, young people were asked about some of the ways in which youth work helped them and about the qualities of youth workers: their answers are examined in this chapter.

■ Current Youth Groups

As part of the school survey, respondents were asked to provide more detailed information about the youth club they currently attended (their favourite club if they attended more than one) and of the benefits gained from attending. Interestingly, of those who were currently attending a sports club, less than half (44%) named a sports club as the group they liked most and went on to describe it in detail. Similarly, just over four in ten young people who were members of a hobby or interest club described such a group as their main club. In contrast, just over seven in ten (71%) current youth club members named a youth club as their favourite group.

The groups described in detail by young people can be broadly categorised as youth clubs, uniformed groups, sports clubs and interest groups (Table 5.1). We begin this section by making a preliminary assessment of the respective benefits of these different groups.

Table 5.1: Types of groups currently attended (%)

	Males	Females
Sports club	35	14
Youth club	38	51
Interest group	3	18
Uniformed group	24	16
(n)	(275)	(201)

As part of our assessment of the effectiveness of youth work, young people who responded to the school questionnaire were asked to evaluate

the ways in which their current group or club had helped them. Table 5.2 shows the percentage of young people attending each type of club who said that their group had 'helped a lot' in respect of the areas listed. Preliminary analysis showed that there were few differences in responses between males and females and therefore, for clarity, the two sexes have been combined in the table below.

Table 5.2: Respondents who felt that their current club or group had 'helped a lot' in the following areas, by type of organisation (%)

	Youth clubs	Uniformed	Sports clubs
Given me more confidence	34	34	55
Helped me talk to other people	46	41	46
Introduced me to new friends	58	68	77
Given me the opportunity to do different activities	72	83	47
Given me the opportunity to learn new skills	51	79	82
Helped me get on with other people	58	65	67
Given me the opportunity to go away for weekends	48	62	46
Helped me to arrive at decisions	22	28	25
Informed me of my rights	25	22	19
Helped me with personal problems	18	17	13
Helped me with practical skills	33	61	61
(n)	(184)	(94)	(117)

Note: Interest groups are omitted due to low numbers

In general, the young people who attended clubs or groups felt that their attendance helped them in a number of different ways. In particular, group membership had social benefits insofar as many said that they met new friends, improved their relationships with others and had opportunities to go away for weekends. Young people also said that they learnt new skills and took part in a different range of activities. Both the teaching of skills and learning through social contact are objectives which have been identified as central to effective youth work (SOED, 1991). In this context, youth work in the study areas can be seen as effective through an examination of young people's perspectives. Youth clubs and uniformed groups tended to be seen as particularly helpful in providing an opportunity to try out different activities and as a source of help with personal problems. In addition, uniformed groups were associated with opportunities for weekends away. Sports clubs and uniformed groups were mentioned most frequently as being useful in providing the opportunity to learn new skills, develop practical skills and in helping them to get on with other people. Sports clubs were seen as a particularly useful way to meet new friends.

Whereas on most of the above indicators youth clubs were seen as no more useful than uniformed groups or sports clubs, youth clubs were seen as an important source of information on personal and social issues

Table 5.3 shows that as providers of information on alcohol, drugs, sex, AIDS, crime and relationships, youth clubs were seen as more useful than other groups and the information was appreciated by a high proportion of participants. The imparting of knowledge and of information have also been identified as central to effective youth work (SOED, 1991) and the evidence collected through the school survey suggests that young people see these aims as being met.

Table 5.3: Percentage of respondents receiving useful information on various social issues, by type of group currently attended

	Youth clubs	**Uniformed**	**Sports clubs**
Alcohol	68	45	35
Drugs	77	47	37
Aids	47	23	18
Crime	53	45	28
Sex	52	19	25
Truancy	21	16	17
Vandalism	43	41	25
Personal hygiene	38	48	37
Bullying	55	66	34
Your rights	37	45	38
Dealing with money	28	23	25
Dealing with arguments	34	30	35
Controlling your temper	36	30	61
Relationships	51	19	34
(n)	(159)	(73)	(65)

Youth clubs and uniformed organisations also seemed to provide young people with the opportunity to develop a range of skills through involvement in the running of their organisation. Decision-making, team work and accountability are important skills which are central objectives of effective youth work (SOED, 1991). Of the respondents to the school survey, a majority of those currently attending youth clubs or uniformed organisations said that they were involved in decisions relating to planning future events, fund raising, spending money and choice of activities (Table 5.4). Young people also played a more limited role in making and enforcing rules and the appointment of leaders. By contrast, members of sports clubs tended to be less involved in decisions relating to their group. In all types of group, the vast majority of participants were happy with the amount of influence they had within their organisation (88 per cent of sports club members said that they were happy with their current level of influence, compared to 86 per cent of youth club members and 83 per cent of members of uniformed groups), although presumably some of those who were less satisfied will have 'voted with their feet'.

Table 5.4: Percentage of respondents who have some say in the running of different aspects of their organisation, by type of group currently attended

	Youth clubs	Uniformed	Sports clubs
Planning events	70 (n 191)	52 (n 94)	37 (n 113)
Fund raising	77 (n 187)	64 (n 95)	57 (n 97)
Spending money	63 (n 188)	50 (n 91)	35 (n 98)
Making rules	40 (n 184)	31 (n 92)	20 (n 103)
Enforcing rules	39 (n 186)	35 (n 92)	30 (n 100)
Appointing leaders	44 (n 175)	39 (n 90)	32 (n 95)
Banning troublemakers	27 (n 188)	29 (n 90)	36 (n 104)
Choice of activities	84 (n 190)	83 (n 91)	59 (n 103)

The issue of participation in decision making, discipline and planning future events was explored in more detail in the group interviews with young people. While there was some variation between clubs, in general young people felt that they were consulted about future activities and occasionally asked to consider the benefits and shortcomings of past activities. In some of the discussion groups, young people said that while members were consulted, their views were not always acted upon. As one respondent put it 'the leaders make the rules, although they do discuss them with you'. The amount of involvement which young people were allowed ranged from clubs in which members were able to vote on activity options, to a club (in Westport) which was run on fairly autocratic lines by parents and the local minister. While young people tended to have some say in planning events and activities, discipline and the enforcement of rules tended to be the domain of the leaders. Members tended to have some say in financial matters, although day-to-day responsibility usually rested with the leaders. In general, evidence from the group discussions also suggests that young people were happy with their level of involvement in the running of the organisation. However, there were complaints in some groups that leaders did not really listen to young people. On the other hand, in the more democratic clubs, older youths frequently complained that younger members had an equal say in the agenda.

As part of the school questionnaire, youth group participants were also presented with a list of personal qualities and asked to indicate up to five which they regarded as being important in a youth worker (Table 5.5). The main qualities listed were being friendly, trustworthy, having an interest in members and being able to accept young people's points of view. The gender and age of youth workers was seen as relatively unimportant. Males and females tended to display a broad agreement on the relative importance of these qualities and young people's age seemed to make little difference to the way young people responded.

Table 5.5: The relative importance of different personal qualities in a youth worker, by gender (%)

	Males	Females
Interest in members	55	63
Same sex as members	9	6
Good at sport	49	27
Good at dealing with trouble	49	43
Friendly	85	88
Nearer my age	22	20
Older than me	22	17
Someone you would like to be like	13	17
Someone you can trust	71	74
Enthusiastic about work	25	26
Good listener	46	54
Leaves you to work on your own	12	14
Always works with you	21	18
Accepts your point of view	53	64
(n)	(276)	(193)

The qualities of good and bad youth workers were also explored in the group discussions. For both males and females there was a broad agreement about the main characteristics of an effective youth worker. The best youth workers were seen as friendly, as having a sense of humour, as understanding an approachable. In the group interviews, young people tended to express a preference for younger youth workers to whom they felt able to relate and liked those who were tolerant, non-judgmental and met them on their own level: they felt it was important to be able to share a joke with a youth worker and expected to be allowed to swear (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: What makes a good youth worker? – young people's perspective

Understanding

Sense of humour

Don't mind if you swear

Easy-going

Good personality

Happy

Don't make you do things

Not nosey, doesn't pry

Knows who causes bother

Not strict

Listens to your point of view

Don't rage at you for nothing

Can be looked on as a friend

Doesn't judge you
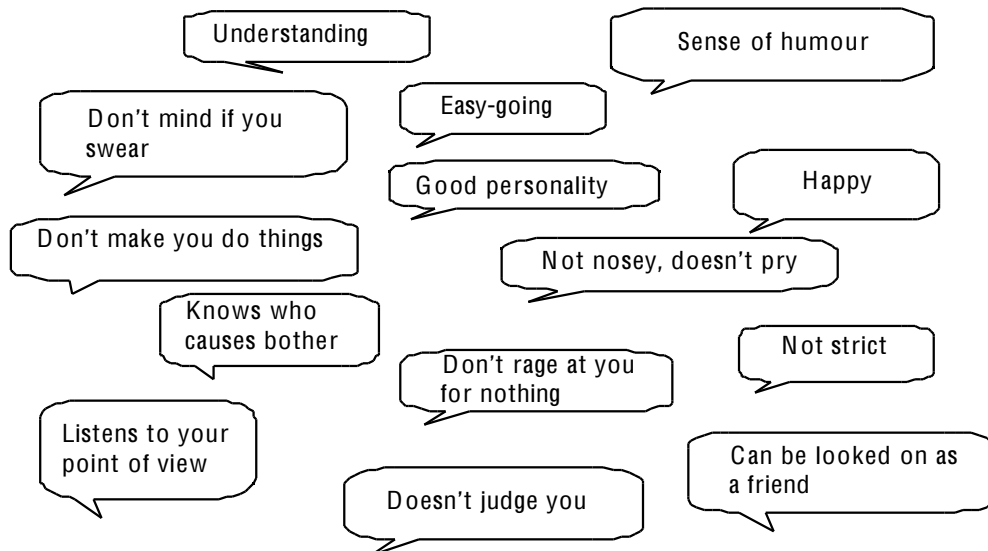
Figure 5.2: What don't you like about youth workers?

Crabbit

Biblebashers

Strict

Tell you what to do

Break promises

Treat you like a kid

Jumps down your throat

Don't want you to have fun

Lack of training

Get on to you if you swear

Nag and moan

Too old

Moody

Narrow minded

Lecture you
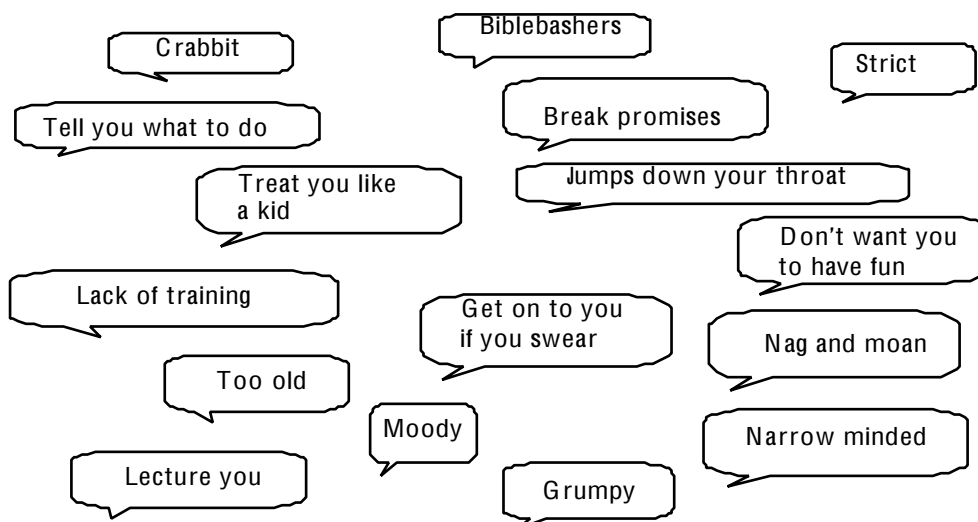
Grumpy

A consensus was also established in the group interviews quite easily about the qualities of a poor youth worker (Figure 5.2). Young people disliked strict or bossy youth workers, those who were grumpy or lacking in humour, those who were 'nosy' or pried into their personal lives as well as those who tried to impose their own standards on matters such as smoking or swearing. 'Bible-bashers' were criticised by a number of young people and in Westport many young people were critical of the involvement of the local minister and felt that the parental helpers lacked both motivation and training.

The group interviews were also used as a means of gathering additional information about young people's views regarding what they felt they gained from attending youth clubs and activity groups and about the adequacy of current provision within their local areas. A range of benefits of youth groups was mentioned during the group interviews. On a social level, youth groups were seen a place where people could gather to spend time with existing friends or to meet new people. In the winter and on wet or cold nights, youth groups were especially appreciated as places where groups could congregate in relative comfort. Participants frequently said that youth groups were fun, that they helped them pass the time and kept them off the streets. Various activities and trips which were organised by youth leaders were also valued: in particular, a number of people mentioned that activities were cheap and that they were provided with opportunities to do things which they would not normally be able to afford. Young people also highlighted a range of skills which they had developed through their participation and drew attention to the information provided by youth workers on matters like drink, drugs and safe sex (although some thought that too much emphasis was placed on such issues).

Despite making positive evaluations of many aspects of youth provision, there was no shortage of complaints about the adequacy of facilities and suggestions for improvement. Young people complained

about the limited range of facilities and activities available, about the narrow range of groups to select from (in some areas there was little choice) and about the distance which some had to travel to the clubs. Some young people were put off attending certain clubs which had a reputation for attracting 'trouble makers' and others were wary about attending clubs in other neighbourhoods. Another frequent cause for complaint was the age range of participants: many felt that clubs and groups were mainly orientated towards youngsters (the Heston youth club was open to anyone over the age of 8). The females frequently thought that uniformed organisations like the Guides were 'uncool' and preferred to be able to mix with boys, although there were complaints that activities were frequently orientated towards males rather than females. Others felt that some clubs had a bad reputation.

■ Concerns and support networks

With the recognition that the provision of guidance and counselling is a central feature of effective youth work (SOED, 1991), it was important to establish the extent to which vulnerable young people were being provided with a valuable source of social support. As part of the school survey, young people were asked about people with whom they felt able to share personal problems. Females were more likely than males (90 per cent of females compared to 80 per cent of males) to report having someone with whom they could share personal concerns and problems. Friends (63%), parents (61%) and brothers and sisters (25%) were named most frequently as confidants, while a small number also mentioned teachers (9%) or youth workers (3%). Although many youth workers regard guidance and counselling as central to their overall objectives, those who were currently attending youth clubs or activity groups were only marginally more likely than non-members to report that there was someone with whom they could discuss personal concerns or problems. Moreover, among those who were currently attending youth clubs or activity groups, just one in twenty (5 per cent of males and females) said that they would discuss personal concerns with a youth worker.

These findings are perhaps unsurprising given that many young people only come into contact with youth workers for two hours on one or two evenings per week. Moreover, youth workers are frequently busy trying to organise activities and may have little time to establish one-to-one relationships. Many youth work settings lack the physical space and the staff to fully engage in guidance and counselling, although examples were provided of youth workers who played an important role in dealing with young people's problems.

Respondents were also asked about issues which had worried them over the past year and the issues about which they were most concerned. For males, the issue which caused them most concern was getting HIV/AIDS (with 21 per cent saying that they were very worried about the prospect). More than one in ten males also said they were very worried

about drugs (14%), getting into trouble with the police (14%), finding or keeping a job (14%), being bullied or harassed (13%), their health (13%) and difficulties in school (Table 5.6). Females expressed most concern about getting HIV/AIDS (22%) getting pregnant (19%) and being sexually attacked (19%). In general, females were more likely than males to say that they were very worried about any of the issues listed and they were significantly more likely than males to express concern about sexual attack, being out alone at night in their local area, pregnancy, relationships with friends and family, difficulties at school, and about their health. There was little variation in the level of concern expressed about these issues between those who currently attend youth clubs or groups and those who were not participants.

Table 5.6: Young people's personal concerns over the last year, by gender (%)

Males	Very Worried	Slightly Worried	Not at all Worried
Difficulties in school	12	47	41
Finding or keeping a job	14	36	49
Relationships with family	6	23	70
Being sexually attacked	8	7	85
Getting someone pregnant	9	16	74
Getting HIV/AIDS	21	14	65
Trouble with police	14	29	56
Being bullied or harassed	13	26	61
Being out alone locally	7	14	79
Drug worries	14	17	68
Money problems	11	32	56
Relationships with friends	9	25	65
Worries about health	13	30	57
Worries about alcohol	6	16	78
Finding somewhere to live	9	20	70
(n=573)			

Females	Very Worried	Slightly Worried	Not at all Worried
Difficulties in school	13	60	27
Finding or keeping a job	15	36	49
Relationships with family	16	30	54
Being sexually attacked	19	22	59
Getting pregnant	19	17	64
Getting HIV/AIDS	22	17	61
Trouble with police	14	27	59
Being bullied or harassed	16	30	53
Being out alone locally	14	28	57
Drug worries	14	20	65
Money problems	12	40	48
Relationships with friends	13	38	49
Worries about health	16	38	45
Worries about alcohol	11	20	69
Finding somewhere to live	9	22	69
(n=561)			

The concerns of young people varied across age groups (Table 5.7). Difficulties in school are of most concern for all age groups. Older youths tended to be more concerned about relationships with members of their family and with future problems in finding or keeping a job. The younger respondents were more concerned with the possibility of sexual attack, getting HIV/AIDS, being out alone locally, being bullied or harassed, their health, relationships with friends, drugs and alcohol and with finding somewhere to live.

Table 5.7: Percentage of young people who were 'very' or 'slightly' worried about particular issues, by age group

	11–12	13–14	15–17
Difficulties in school	58	68	70
Finding or keeping a job	46	52	54
Relationships with family	34	38	41
Being sexually attacked	34	24	27
Getting someone/ becoming pregnant	33	27	35
Getting HIV/AIDS	46	32	36
Trouble with police	44	42	40
Being bullied or harassed	57	43	27
Being out alone locally	37	29	28
Drug worries	47	28	26
Money problems	47	49	46
Relationships with friends	47	42	38
Worries about health	54	48	44
Worries about alcohol	32	24	23
Finding somewhere to live	37	30	23
(n)	(314)	(482)	(301)

■ Outreach and detached work

Being older, those individuals contacted through outreach and detached youth work tended to experience their involvement with youth services in different ways and prioritised other aspects of their experiences. These individuals were much more active in setting the agenda, in organising activities and in raising funds for their activities. There was much more one-to-one work, individual needs were addressed and youth workers were involved in finding solutions to young people's problems. Young people talked about receiving help with job applications and with preparing CV's. Several mentioned ways in which youth workers had tried to help them find work and one said that the youth worker had even come to get them out of bed in time for an interview. One young person spoke about being accompanied to a court hearing by a youth worker, while several mentioned that legal advice was provided. In Glasgow, young people had been taken to the High Court to observe a hearing and lawyers had visited the local youth centre to provide general advice on rights. Other visits included a talk on sexual health at the local Family Planning Clinic.

All of the young people involved with outreach and detached youth workers said that they felt that they were able to talk about anything with their youth workers, saw them as friends and considered them to be on the same 'wavelength'. Many made a positive distinction between youth clubs and involvement in outreach and detached work: some suggested that in traditional clubs everything was handed to you 'on a plate' whereas they were much more responsible for the overall programme. Others said that they had plenty of opportunity to talk with youth workers on a one-to-one basis. Like more traditional modes of youth work, many young people said that involvement helped keep them 'off the streets' and some had been on residential trips to outdoor centres.

In terms of personal gains from involvement, a number of young people said that they increased their self confidence, broadened their social networks and (in the Glasgow youth initiative) had a place where they could go along to, and be accepted, on their own level. A number of young people said that they would like to become youth workers themselves.

■ Summary

The young people who were involved in this study tended to make relatively positive evaluations of youth work and there was evidence that most of the five key dimensions of effective youth work identified by the Scottish Inspectorate were being met. Young people clearly valued the opportunity for social contact provided by youth organisations and appreciated having access to a place in which they could meet with their friends or develop new circles of friends. However, there were complaints about the age range of members in many organisations with older youths feeling constrained by the presence of younger members. A number of participants felt that youth clubs attracted troublemakers.

Youth organisations also provided vulnerable young people with the chance to develop new skills and take part in different activities. Given that the young people who participated in this study were concentrated in low income families, it is perhaps significant that one of the benefits of youth work which they valued was the ability to take part in activities which would normally be outside of their reach financially.

While a range of youth organisations provide social benefits and help young people acquire new skills, youth clubs organised by community education stood out as providing a useful source of information on personal and social issues. Young people expressed concerns about a number of issues, such as AIDS and drugs, and youth club participants felt that they were being provided with valuable information in this setting.

Effective youth work provides participants with an opportunity to participate in the decision making process within their organisation and helps build team work skills. Most youth groups did make some effort to involve their members in decisions about activities and consulted them on

key issues. Members also tended to be relatively happy with their level of involvement. At the same time, involvement in the decision making process tended to be rather superficial: young people were consulted about future activities and trips, but were given little real responsibility either on a financial level or in terms of making and enforcing rules.

The one area in which youth work failed to meet its objectives was in the field of guidance and counselling. Probably as a result of the lack of opportunities for one-to-one contact, very few young people were willing to discuss personal problems with a youth worker. At the same time, in most areas young people were fairly positive about their youth workers and leaders. The best youth workers were seen as those who were friendly, approachable, had a sense of humour and were tolerant of the members. The worst were strict or bossy and tried to impose their own standards on the young people.

Outreach and detached workers tended to have different priorities and young people tended to have a very high opinion of their youth workers. This type of work tended to focus on an older age group and the limited evidence which we reviewed suggested that in this context the guidance and counselling function of youth work was extremely effective and provided vulnerable young people with an essential source of advice and support. Given that funding cuts are having a strong impact on work in this area, we suggest that further research in this area be given a high priority.

6 Youth work and the reduction of vulnerability

■ Introduction

In previous chapters we described young people's participation in youth and activity groups and examined the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people by looking at the ways in which their own evaluations of youth work relate to the indicators of effective youth work identified by the Scottish Inspectorate. In this chapter we move beyond personal evaluations and examine the association between young people's life styles and the use of youth and activity groups. In particular, we look at the relationship between self-esteem and youth group participation and look at the extent to which the most vulnerable young people make use of youth facilities.

■ Self-esteem

Regular participation in creative and social activities within a supportive environment are likely to lead to increased levels of self-confidence and can provide a basis for active citizenship. Moreover, as a form of informal education which aims to provide learning through social contact, participation in decision making and guidance and counselling, we would expect effective youth work to have a positive impact on young people's self-esteem. As noted in Chapter 2 among the school sample, males tended to have higher self-esteem than females (as measured by the Lawrence Scale). Self-esteem tended to increase with age, although it tended to be lower among those from families without a full-time wage earner.

While a full analysis of the impact of youth work on self-esteem can only be achieved through the use of a longitudinal methodology, we attempted to compare mean levels of self-esteem for young people with a range of experiences of youth work. No significant differences in self-esteem were found according to whether or not respondents were currently a member of a youth club or activity group (mean score of 6.90 on the Lawrence Scale for current members compared to 6.93 for non members). Furthermore, there were no significant differences between those with and without some experience of a uniformed group (6.82 for non-members compared to 6.98 for members). However, males and females who were currently members of a uniformed group had significantly lower self-esteem than non-members (Table 6.1). We can only speculate as to the cause of this variation, it partly reflects the younger age of participants, but it is also possible that confident young people with high self-esteem make earlier transitions from organised to casual

leisure life styles. In other words, those who are less socially mature may remain in uniformed organisations while their peers make transitions to more casual forms of leisure.

Table 6.1: Mean self-esteem of current members and non-members of uniformed groups

	Non members	**n(base)**	**Members**	**n(base)**
Males	7.43	(465)	6.87	(108)
Females	6.76	(488)	4.62	(72)

Anova p=0008

■ Youth groups and leisure-time

Aside from providing information and support, youth work can also reduce vulnerability to risk through the way in which involvement affects the use of leisure time. Respondents who were currently attending a youth club or activity group were less likely to report spending time 'hanging around' outside of their homes than those who were not attending clubs or groups (Table 6.2): around a third (33%) of those who were not attending a club or group reported 'hanging around' nearly every day, compared to just less than a quarter of those attending clubs or groups; this was true for both males and females. However, those from families without a full-time wage earner were just as likely to report 'hanging around' regularly even when they were current members of a club or group. Among those from families with a full-time wage earner, club attendance was associated with 'hanging around' on a less regular basis. Information gathered through group interviews and from our earlier description of leisure life styles suggests that for the more affluent young people, youth work is a part of a broad range of leisure activities: less advantaged young people may have restricted access to other organised leisure pursuits and access to youth groups may open doors to broader patterns of social participation.

Table 6.2: Do you and your friends ever just hang about outside or wander round doing nothing in particular? (%)

	No current club	**Current club**
No	18	22
Once in a while	32	38
Nearly every day	33	24
At weekends	16	16
(n)	(475)	(575)
X2	p=0.01	

The cross-sectional data gathered through the school interviews cannot be used to infer causality between patterns of youth work participation and anti-social or risk behaviour. However, it is important to assess the extent to which those at greatest risk are making use of the youth services. Males who reported unauthorised absences from school were less likely to be members of clubs or groups than those who had not truanted. (46 per cent compared to 66 per cent p=0.0000) however, for females the difference in truancy was not significant (34 per cent

compared to 27 per cent). Similarly males, but not females, who had been excluded from school were significantly less likely to be members of a youth or activity group than those who had not been suspended (47 per cent of excluded males attended a club or group compared to 62 per cent of those who had not been suspended p=0.0000). Males, but not females, who had been before a children's panel were also less likely to attend a youth group (42 per cent compared to 61 per cent of those who had not been before a panel p=0.0078). In sum, those most at risk were the least likely to use youth services, although involvement may well have reduced vulnerability among participants.

Respondents were also asked about their involvement in a range of illegal activities; involvement varied by gender, family background and area of residence. The general pattern of involvement in illegal activities is described in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Have you ever been involved in any of the following activities within the last year? (%)

Males	Never	Once	More than once
Sprayed or drawn graffiti	69	13	17
Deliberately damaged property	70	17	13
Stolen or ridden in stolen vehicles	95	3	2
Shoplifted	79	12	9
Broken into cars	96	2	2
Stolen personal property	92	4	4
Bought or sold stolen things	88	5	7
Broken into someone's home	96	3	2
Broken into a shop, office or school	95	2	2
Threatened, bullied or harassed someone	82	12	6
Assaulted or injured someone	71	17	11
Mugged or robbed someone	97	1	1
Sold illegal drugs	95	2	3
(n=573)			

Females	Never	Once	More than once
Sprayed or drawn graffiti	72	13	16
Deliberately damaged property	85	10	5
Stolen or ridden in stolen vehicles	97	2	1
Shoplifted	85	9	6
Broken into cars	98	1	1
Stolen personal property	97	2	1
Bought or sold stolen things	90	5	5
Broken into someone's home	99	1	0
Broken into a shop, office or school	99	1	0
Threatened, bullied or harassed someone	86	10	4
Assaulted or injured someone	89	7	4
Mugged or robbed someone	99	1	0
Sold illegal drugs	97	2	1
(n=561)			

Relatively few young people reported involvement in illegal activities and many of those who had been involved were not persistent offenders. The most common offences were relatively minor (such as graffiti and damage to property). To get a broad-brush picture of individual involvement, scores were allocated to indicate levels of self-reported offending (0 for each response of 'never', 1 for 'once' and 2 for 'more than once'). The mean criminal offences score was 1.72 for males and 1.05 for females. For males, but not females, mean criminal offence scores were significantly lower among those currently involved in youth or activity groups (Table 6.4). We suggest that this probably reflects low levels of use among the most vulnerable young people rather than a positive impact of the youth services, although for some involvement may help reduce the risk of criminality.

Table 6.4: Mean criminal offences scores, by current involvement in youth and activity groups

	Males	**Females**
Current youth group	1.35	1.03
No current group	2.26	1.06
Anova	p=.0000	n.s.

Self reported experimentation with drugs was also relatively low (Table 6.5). Around six in ten males (60%) and females (64%) had used alcohol, but only around one in three males (30%) and females (35%) had used tobacco. Less than one in five young people had used cannabis and a very small minority admitted to experimenting with other drugs such as heroin and ecstasy. Research tends to highlight the normality of experimentation with alcohol, tobacco and 'soft' drugs among young people. Balding (1993), for example, shows that only 14 per cent of today's 14 and 15 year-olds will not have tried alcohol while Fossey and colleagues (1996) suggest that around a third of boys and girls are consuming alcohol regularly by the age of 16. Among 15 and 16 year-olds, around one in three males and one in five females use cannabis at least once a week (Graham and Bowling, 1995) while among 11 to 15 year-olds 9 per cent of males and 11 per cent of females smoke tobacco regularly.

Table 6.5: Percentage of respondents who have tried various drugs, by gender

Males	**Never**	**Once/twice**	**3+ times**	**(n)**
Alcohol	40	30	30	(537)
Tobacco	70	11	19	(527)
Solvents	93	5	2	(518)
Cannabis	79	9	12	(522)
Heroin	99	1	0	(513)
Temazapam	96	2	2	(517)
Ecstasy/LSD	93	3	3	(517)

Table 6.5: Percentage of respondents who have tried various drugs, by gender

Females	Never	Once/twice	3+ times	(n)
Alcohol	36	33	31	(539)
Tobacco	65	13	21	(534)
Solvents	95	3	1	(517)
Cannabis	84	9	7	(517)
Heroin	99	0	1	(516)
Temazapam	98	1	1	(513)
Ecstasy/LSD	95	3	2	(516)

Scores were also allocated for levels of self reported drug use (0=never, 1=once/twice, 2=3 or more). Mean scores were higher for males than females (.59 compared to .42, Anova p=0.05). Males, but not females, who currently attended youth or activity groups also tended to have lower scores (Table 6.6). Again, this probably reflects lower levels of use of clubs and groups among drug users but a positive impact of youth work on drug use cannot be ruled out.

Table 6.6: Mean drug scores, by current involvement in youth and activity groups

	Male	Female
Current youth group	0.41	0.39
No current group	0.87	0.45
Anova	p=0.0003	n.s.

■ Youth at risk

In order to undertake a more detailed evaluation of the impact of youth work on vulnerable youth and to try to establish whether there is any evidence that youth work reduced vulnerability, a group of 'high risk' young people were identified. These were young people who were either involved in drug abuse (6 per cent of the sample who admitted to using at least two different drugs from the following list: solvents, cannabis, heroin, temazapam, ecstasy, LSD), had participated in criminal activities (20 per cent of males and females with the highest level of involvement in illegal activities during the last year) or those who had been excluded from school on at least one occasion (12% of the sample). Overall, 25 per cent of males and 19 per cent of females were defined as 'high risk'. Older youths were more likely to fall into the 'high risk' category, as were those from families without a full-time wage earner and those who said that they 'hang around' outside nearly everyday. More young people living in Brockley, Norward and Leyton were defined as 'high risk' than in other areas. Those who were currently members of youth clubs, activity groups or uniformed organisations were less likely to be defined as 'high risk' than non-participants (Table 6.7), although the question still remains as to whether youth clubs attract the less vulnerable or whether participation has an impact on the behaviour of those who would otherwise be 'at risk'.

Table 6.7: Characteristics of 'high risk' youth (% 'high risk')

	Males	(n)	Females	(n)
Age 11–12	18	(171)	20	(161)
Age 13–14	38	(247)	40	(244)
Age 15–17	43	(152)	40	(153)
No FT family wage	37	(163)	41	(169)
Hangs around regularly	47	(125)	49	(172)
Leyton	39	(108)	35	(112)
Brockley	42	(146)	40	(121)
Heston	19	(48)	23	(44)
Norward	42	(57)	46	(105)
Westport	23	(88)	19	(63)
Kirkness	30	(126)	31	(116)
Current club or group	30	(345)	30	(280)
No current club or group	39	(228)	39	(281)
Current uniformed group	26	(108)	25	(72)
No current uniformed group	36	(465)	36	(489)

Many of these different factors which appear to be associated with either an increase or a reduction in risk are cumulative and overlap. To examine the relative impact of involvement in youth work on risk, a logistic regression model was developed which assessed the contribution of a number of salient factors to the likelihood of a young person being defined as 'high risk' (Table 6.8). The logistic regression analysis shows that for males, 'hanging around' outside nearly every day, increasing age and (compared to Heston residents) living in Norward significantly increased vulnerability. Coming from a family without a full-time wage earner did not have a significant impact on risk. Having belonged to a uniformed organisation had no impact on vulnerability and current membership of a youth club or activity group was not associated with a significant reduction in risk. For females, regular 'hanging around' and increasing age were the only two factors significantly associated with increased risk. In sum, this analysis suggests that current youth work provision for vulnerable young people is perhaps most effective through reducing the time young people spend hanging around on the streets and at risk of greater involvement in criminal activities or vulnerability to police surveillance.

Table 6.8: Regression predicting vulnerability to 'high risk' behaviour

	Males		Females	
	Beta	*Signif.*	*Beta*	*Signif.*
Hang around	.5137	(.0214)*	1.0269	(.0000)**
No wage earners	.2756	(.1958)	.2470	(.2632)
Self-esteem	−.0355	(.1303)	−.0364	(.1405)
Age	.3153	(.0000)**	.3186	(.0000)**
Uniformed Org?	.0158	(.9398)	−.1818	(.3805)
Club now	−.3133	(.1222)	−.1465	(.4710)
Westport	−.1084	(.8162)	−.8079	(.1496)

Table 6.8 (continued): Regression predicting vulnerability to 'high risk' behaviour

Brockley	.8058	(.0550)	.7430	(.1058)
Norward	1.0045	(.0381)*	.6758	(.1577)
Leyton	.7084	(.1075)	.5730	(.2171)
Kirkness	.2547	(.5587)	.4551	(.3309)
Goodness of fit	x^2=567.9	(.0000)	x^2=550.6	(.0000)

Residual category = Heston area

■ Summary

In this chapter we have examined the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people through use of data from the school survey. We discussed the relationship between youth group participation and self-esteem and found no significant difference in levels of self-esteem between members and non-members of youth clubs and groups. One exception was the low level of self-esteem evident among current members of uniformed organisations which we associate with a lower level of social maturity and the relatively young age of members.

One of the benefits of youth work which was highlighted by this study relates to the relationship between youth group attendance and time spent 'hanging around' on the streets. Those who used youth clubs and groups tended to spend less time hanging around than non-participants and were occupied at times when they may otherwise have engaged in risky behaviour or become the focus of police attention. However, youth clubs and groups tend only to be available for a limited number of evenings per week: those who lacked the financial resources to develop broad leisure life styles involving a range of activities still spent substantial periods of time 'hanging around'.

Earlier we noted that levels of use of youth and activity groups were relatively low within our selected study areas. The further analysis provided in this chapter shows that within these areas those who are most vulnerable are least likely to use the available facilities. Low levels of participation were observed among those who truanted, those who had been excluded from school and those who had been before a children's panel.

Relatively few young people in the sample admitted involvement in illegal activities, although those most heavily involved were less likely to participate in youth groups than those whose involvement was less pronounced. Those who used illegal drugs also had a lower level of involvement in youth and activity groups.

Those most 'at risk' tended to be those from families without a full-time wage earner, those who reported spending a lot of time 'hanging around' and young people living in Brockley or Norward. Those defined as 'high risk' were less likely than their peers to be involved in youth and activity groups.

7 Managing youth work

■ Introduction

This chapter looks at the ways in which youth provision is managed and examines sources and levels of funding within a range of organisations. We look at staff backgrounds and at the sorts of training typically received by youth workers in the six areas. From the viewpoint of service providers, we also highlight some of the factors which are seen as inhibiting effective youth work with vulnerable groups and examine the prevalence of inter-agency work. Both this Chapter and Chapter 8 are based on a series of Semi-structured individual interviews carried out with a range of key youth service providers in each of the study areas (see Chapter 2 for full details of methodology). The interviews had a qualitative emphasis and the material collected facilitates an in-depth exploration of issues which are central to the management of youth work and the provision of a quality service to vulnerable young people. Through the interviews with service providers it became clear that in most of the areas there was extensive and varied provision for young people. At the same time, it was difficult to establish exactly how much youth work existed within a particular locality, the main obstacle being the sheer variety of provision, its funding and the lack of central co-ordination at the local level.

In all of the study areas, community education and uniformed organisations have a presence but each locality had a different mix of 'traditional' youth work, sports groups, interest groups and uniformed organisations. There was also a diverse range of initiatives which have been developed by individuals or groups of people to meet what they see as the particular needs of young people in the locality. In some cases this provision was developed with the aim of tackling specific issues which are a cause for concern among adults in an area.

Lists of local providers are kept by the respective uniformed organisations, by Youth Link Scotland (formerly the Scottish Standing Council for Voluntary Youth Organisations), by local authorities as well as by the government and other charity initiatives. If new unitary authorities are unaware of the full range of services currently available, it makes effective targeting of resources difficult. Our experiences suggest there was overlap, and we also suspect gaps, in the information available to local authorities. Moreover in considering the facilities and activities provided for young people, we have to take into account that use may depend not on local authority boundaries so much as transport costs and the personal preferences of the individual young people concerned.

Funding of youth work in the study areas came from many sources including: community education funded by unitary authorities; health board and social work funding; special initiatives such as urban aid funding; national organisations such as the Scouts, Guides, Boys and Girls Brigades; churches; charities such as Save the Children. Moreover, there is often joint funding. For example, community education and social work may share resources; charities often match funding raised through other sources; local authorities work in conjunction with urban aid.

A number of relevant issues were explored in interviews with youth work providers. In particular, we were interested in whether provision was targeted at particular groups of young people (disadvantaged young people, for example, or those identified as being 'at risk'); whether provision is designed as a short term or a continuing service; and whether the service is part of a centralised national or area network. We also wanted to establish the priorities of the service providers and to learn about the sorts of difficulties which they encountered in their efforts to deliver high quality, effective youth work.

In this chapter we first describe the range of provision in the areas and highlight the characteristics of the target client groups of the different organisations. The training and recruitment of staff is described and we examine levels and sources of funding within the different organisations. Finally, we discuss working methods, interagency work and providers' assessments of the needs and demands of young people within their localities.

■ Youth work services in the six localities

The six areas studied in this research varied a great deal in their socio-economic and demographic profiles and range from inner city locations to relatively remote rural areas. As mentioned earlier, there are some common provisions and unique features in each location. Only two of the areas studied had a form of detached/outreach work. The brief summaries which follow suggest the kinds of areas under scrutiny and the youth provision with which the researchers had contact.

Location 1: Leyton

This town lies in the central belt of Scotland. The town, like most in the locality, was previously dependent on the iron and steel and mining industries. While there has been some investment in the area, by for example, the new electronics industries unemployment remains above the national average.

Youth services

Community Education provided a number of youth groups and peer information groups in and around the town.

Girls groups were being run in the area with some support from a health worker.

A number of uniformed groups operated in the area.

The area is well served with sports and leisure centre facilities, although many young people commented that these were expensive.

Location 2: Brockley
This town is located in a rural area in the South West of the country. Historically, the town was dependent on the mining industry and has not recovered from the loss of the industry in this area. Unemployment remains high and many of the young people accept they will have to leave the area on completion of schooling to find employment. Many of the young people attending the local secondary schools travel from outlying villages. There are very few leisure facilities in the town and young people had travel to other towns in the district in pursuit of activities. Such travel is hindered by the high cost of such travel and the poor bus services which stop at 6.30pm.

Youth services
Community Education provided a number of youth groups and information services in Brockley.

In addition, social work supports a harm reduction drugs outreach project.

There was a voluntary sector presence in the form of a young persons detached information project.

A number of uniformed groups operated in the town.

Two youth groups were run by the Baptist Union.

There is a swimming pool but it is open air and only opens during the summer period.

Location 3: Heston
Heston is a town in the Borders of Scotland. The town was traditionally dependent on textiles, farming and related industries. While the area is relatively prosperous in comparison with the other areas in this study there exists an area of deprivation in the town. Many of the young people from this area are perceived by some of the towns populace as troublesome. Local youth services have noted that young people from this neighbourhood were less willing than other young people in the town to leave their home neighbourhood to attend groups and events.

Youth services
Community Education operates a purpose built youth centre in the town. This centre runs youth clubs, activity groups and weekend discos.

The health board set up a community flat in the poorest neighbourhood to try to involve the local young people in relevant issue based work.

One local minister had been active in supporting young peoples issues for a number of years and had set up a 'dry bar' in the town for young people as well as supporting an information initiative.

Social workers developed a transition to secondary school group which identified and supports young people from the poorest neighbourhood with some extra support for their first year in secondary school.

A number of uniformed groups operated in the town as well as a branch of the army cadets.

There are a large number of sports groups (football, rugby etc.) operating in the town.

Location 4: Kirkness

This town lies on the east coast of Scotland. It has a rather mixed economy based historically on textiles, like other towns and cities of the east. The town has several pockets of multiple deprivation. Several providers reported that young people from these areas were generally unwilling to travel outwith their own neighbourhood.

Youth services

Community education provided a number of youth groups in the town and runs a number of activity clubs for sport and music.

In addition community education manages a detached youth project funded through urban aid. This project was also involved in a local initiative with the school in working with young people experiencing difficulties.

Several of the uniformed organisations run groups in the town.

The YMCA is also involved in supporting services for young people including, providing a drop-in club, a programme of outdoor activities, foreign exchange trips, video making groups and drug education programmes in addition to an independent living project aimed at young people leaving home.

The town also has sports and leisure facilities.

Location 5: Norward

Norward is a large housing estate on the periphery of a city in the east of Scotland. The estate is an area of multiple deprivation with higher than average incidences of unemployment, crime etc. In the school sample over half of the young people lived in households without a full time wage earner. As an area of substantial urban deprivation Norward qualifies for urban aid funding. This allows for additional resources to be channelled into the area. Local services in the area can and do seek funding from this budget for developing new or existing work.

Youth services

Community education provided a number of youth groups and information services in Norward and support a variety of inter agency schemes aimed at providing services for young people. Some of the youth groups are specifically aimed at young females. Additionally community education support exchange schemes for young people in the area.

There are several urban funded ventures in the area. One of these ventures funds a community centre which houses a number of services for young people including the Brook Advisory Clinic as well as running a number of Duke of Edinburgh award groups.

A major charity is responsible for funding a local playgroup scheme and developing self help groups for local young people.

A community policing initiative involves the running of an outdoor education programme for young people in the area during school holidays. This initiative is supported by many of the other youth providers in the area.

A number of uniformed groups operated in the area.

Location 6: Westport
This is the main town on a geographically isolated island. The town was historically dependent on fishing and related industries. However the relative collapse in fishing has meant diversification of the island's industries with tourism becoming increasingly important. Unemployment is a problem, especially for the young, with many of them resigned to leaving the island on completion of school. The island's secondary schools are located in the town and young people daily travel to them from the smaller villages on the island. Thus to some extent Westport provides a focus for the leisure activities on the island. There is a tradition for large numbers (several hundred) of young people to congregate in the town centre on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Youth services
Community education provided a small number of youth groups and information services in Westport and supports parent-run youth groups in many of the outlying communities. These parent run youth clubs operates for a few hours on one night per week. The local church in collaboration with community education provides a drop-in cafe for young people in the town centre.

A number of uniformed groups including the campaigners operate on the island. There is also a branch of the air cadets in Westport.

There is a community hall/drop-in centre for young people in the town.

Duke of Edinburgh award groups are located in a number of localities on the island.

Community education

Community education services organised provision for young people in all of the six areas studied. The nature of this provision varied from area to area. In all the areas, groups recognisable as 'traditional' youth clubs (with their emphasis on recreation and free choice activities) were evident. However, they were not always run directly by community education and in one rural area youth clubs were run by parent volunteers with the support of the community education service. In addition to youth clubs, community education operated issue-based groups in several of the areas. Issue-based work generally involved a focus on particular topics or problems (sex, health, unemployment) faced by young people and in some cases was targeted at particular groups of young people. However, the distinction between traditional youth clubs, with their emphasis on free choice activities, and issue-based groups, can be less distinct when participants decide to focus on particular topics for exploration. In many cases, issue-based and discussion groups were born out of such youth club developments. For example, in one area a girls' group developed out of youth groups which were seen to be male dominated. These groups focused on activities and areas of interest from a female perspective.

> We recently focused on crime and aggression and staged a comedy play set in the 1920s with the local police playing the police roles.
>
> *Community education worker*

In some instances, groups had been set up with an emphasis on particular activities and events, for example, arts and drama groups take place in several areas.

> *In the summer we involve 13 year olds in the trash music programme.*
>
> *Community education worker*

In some instances, community education put on instruction/coaching classes for young people in, for example, playing musical instruments or sports. Community education is often involved in supporting residential trips and weekends for young people and in one area in particular, residential and exchange schemes were reported as fairly common practice.

Community education is also sometimes involved in running information services for young people. Generally these information services were seen as a response to perceived needs or problems in particular areas. For example, drugs and sexual health issues had been identified by providers as a concern and had actively developed information services on these topics.

There are surprisingly few detached or outreach services. In one locality, community education ran a detached/outreach programme (see special funding initiatives below) and like other such programmes engaged young people on the streets and attempted to respond to their interest agenda and foster continued involvement. The other detached initiative contacted young people on the streets and gave out information on a variety of topics. The original justification for such services remain; some of the most vulnerable young people do not attend youth clubs or organised activities and the lack of outreach and detached provision leaves a serious gap in services for those most 'at risk'.

Other local authority providers

While community education has a specific remit for working with young people in informal education settings, other departments are also involved in these activities. Statutory agencies such as social work departments, health boards and even police forces may work with young people, either as single agency ventures or in partnership with other agencies. In several of the study areas, the project encountered just such initiatives. In two localities, social work departments were involved in specific initiatives to support certain groups of young people. One of these was set up by social work and involved the local school: its aim was to aid a particular group of less confident young people through the transition from primary to secondary school and support them in the early years of secondary schooling. In another instance, social work intermediate treatment workers ran issue-based groups and befriending services to support young people facing particular problems. In the case of the issue groups, young people experiencing similar problems were brought together to tackle their mutual problems.

> *We do a statistics trawl, which is about looking at the social workers case loads and identifying the need and we will then put groups of young people together with similar needs. We don't have predetermined groups.* *IT worker*

In the befriending initiative, individuals spent 'quality' interaction time with an interested adult. In all three of these initiatives the approach involved focused programmes of work over a limited period. In another situation, social work was jointly involved with the health board in supporting a drugs awareness project for young people. In each of these initiatives, young people's involvement was on a voluntary basis rather than the conventional situation where young people's involvement with social work or intermediate treatment services is of a compulsory nature.

In one neighbourhood with a large community police presence, the officers had taken the lead in organising a 'challenge' initiative with other local groups and professionals. Over the last four years, this had developed into a programme of activities for young people over holiday periods – a time when many traditional youth services are closed. Many of the activities involve outdoor events not normally available to young people from this inner city area, such as rafting and hill walking.

> *The scheme was started four years ago by the police to provide a diversionary scheme for young people during the holidays. It originally started as an Easter scheme then took in the summer period and now some activities are ongoing throughout the year.*
>
> *Community police officer*

In another locality the health board has been involved in a consultative health needs assessment of the neighbourhood with the local community. As a result the health board set up a community flat and has attempted to develop work with a focus on health (particularly mental health) with the local community: a number of young people were involved.

Uniformed organisations

Although there was some uniformed organisation presence for both males and females, e.g. Scouts/Guides, Boys/Girls Brigades, in each of the localities studied, not all branches of these services were present in all areas. In some areas only one or two types of the more common groups were represented while in a few instances smaller organisations – such as the campaigners – had a presence.

Voluntary initiatives

Voluntary initiatives include those types of provision funded by national charities such as Save the Children Fund, the YMCA and the Voluntary Youth Clubs Association. In one neighbourhood, Save the Children had funded a project which engaged young people in issue-based groups as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. In another neighbourhood the local church minister had been instrumental in setting up a 'dry bar' in the town to give young people a place to go at night to socialise. While this initiative has closed down, the work resulted in the development of a young person's information service which is still running.

Special funding initiatives

Some services and activities for young people can be supported through special initiatives and projects with Local Authority and Government funding and grants made available for local community initiatives in the form of, for example, urban aid and rural challenge funding. However only particular areas – generally those which rank high on indicators of deprivation – will qualify for such special funding which can be used to supplement existing work or develop new initiatives. In three areas, the researchers encountered provision for young people funded through such sources.

In one area, a community centre had been established, largely funded through urban aid. Although aimed at the community in general, the project also ran specific youth groups based on Duke of Edinburgh schemes. The centre also houses other groups of interest to young people – for example, the Brook Advisory Service had a base in the building as did the voluntary tutors organisation. In another neighbourhood, special funding had allowed the setting up of a young persons information service. In the third area, urban aid funding had been utilised by the local community education service to set up a detached youth project.

■ Staff backgrounds, training and recruitment

Variety in provision was paralleled in staff experience, training and qualifications among both paid and voluntary staff. Overall youth workers have more diverse qualifications than other related occupations – such as, teaching. Among those interviewed, staff had social work qualifications, computer science or management qualifications as well as the more traditional Youth and Community Diploma or BA in community education. By no means do all staff have formal qualifications and among those without qualifications there are some with many years of experience with young people as well as others who are comparatively inexperienced.

A few case studies are presented here to give a flavour of the qualifications and routes people had taken in getting into their present position.

> *'I went to Moray House in Edinburgh straight from school ….did a three year diploma in Youth and Community, qualifying in 1976. I went into mainstream youth work but only lasted 18 months because I got fed up barring all the most vulnerable youngsters who actually needed the service. In 1979 I went into intermediate treatment and have been here ever since.'*
>
> *IT worker*

> *'I trained in institutional management getting into the community field through welfare rights. I didn't study community education. My present employers (management committee) did not want a community education person for the job. I think it was about bringing a fresh perspective to the job.'*
>
> *Urban aid funded centre manager*

'Got involved in an MSC funded position in a community centre doing 20 hours per week. I went to college and did the Youth and Community Diploma. Did several years as an outdoor instructor in Scotland, Wales and New Zealand. Did seven years attached to a New Zealand psychiatric hospital leisure facility before returning to Scotland.'

Community education worker

'Did a degree in computing before going on to do the PGCE in Youth and Community work. This is my first job in the field since graduating.'

Voluntary sector community worker

'I started in the Girls Brigade when I was young and have stayed with them ever since.'

Girls Brigade leader

Experience of youth provision as a child/young person is influential in attracting some people to remain in the organisation as they become adults or to move on to other kinds of youth work. By deploying older members to work with the younger people attending the group, uniformed organisations in particular encourage these adolescents to take on responsibility which, in turn, results in some becoming leaders. We also found examples of volunteers or sessional workers who went on to train as community education workers. Others made a deliberate career move to youth work from professions as varied as nursing, school teaching and as highlighted above, institutional management and computing.

There was therefore a rich pool of expertise and experience among youth workers, some of which had been gained primarily through working in the field but in other cases enhanced by broader interests. Some youth workers have the opportunity to specialise or to change from one type of youth work to another. Examples are diverse, but included moves from general youth work to intermediate treatment as well as a member of the police who was drafted into youth work without having demonstrated any previous interest in this type of work. While youth workers are drawn from a variety of backgrounds and experience different training routes, many, especially in local government employment, are provided with opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge. The following list of training courses/opportunities is compiled from interviews with providers in one neighbourhood and is fairly typical of the range of courses attended by at least one person from the provision:

Training in outdoor pursuits (Scotvec Modules)
Child protection
Behavioural issues
Organising residentials
Safety
Children's Act
Equal opportunities and staff selection procedures
Staff appraisal courses
Guide leader training.

Several providers said that they had been on numerous courses over the last two years. For example, one community health worker in a NHS trust

attended courses on, sexual health, creating a thinking environment, confidence and assertiveness, HIV and AIDS. Providers generally noted that there had been an increasing emphasis on child safety and courses developed on child protection.

Uniformed organisations are required by the Children's Act (1989) to train staff and they have both initial and in-service training programmes although in practice the latter may be restricted to one or two days per year.

Although leaders and managers of youth work services tended to be qualified for working with young people and have attended extra in-service courses, the position of many of the sessional and volunteer helpers is rather different. Sessional workers are employed for specific group sessions and training can be limited. Helpers, often parents deployed in uniformed organisations and in supporting other voluntary groups and community education, are not usually trained for the work and probably do not expect to be. They were unlikely to have access even to courses pertinent to issues in their work. As some youth work is initiated by people in the community in response to a local need or problem, the people who establish these new voluntary projects may not have undertaken any specific training for working with young people. Significantly, in many contexts we encountered, untrained support workers often had the most direct and sustained contact with young people. For example,

> We have a pool of volunteers who become 'befrienders' if they want to. Some of those relationships have gone on for a couple of years.
> > IT worker

> The girls' group has continued to run with the support of a couple of volunteers.
> > Community education worker

However, we also encountered situations where voluntary workers were not encouraged. In one situation the community education officer was not keen on volunteers since they were to some extent more 'autonomous' than paid sessional staff.

Differences in qualified and voluntary or sessional staff were also evident in selection procedures. Local authorities, for example, tend to conduct interviews for paid employees with a common set of structured questions possibly with supplementary discussion on local issues. The method of selection is partly designed to ensure the safety of young people as well as the apposite qualities in the youth worker. For volunteers and sessional workers, the choice may be not so much who to select but rather to check whether there are any grounds for rejection. This relates to the minimum qualities expected of a youth worker and the kind of control that can be, or is exercised, over volunteers. From the point of view of one uniformed organisation, helpers just needed to be 'patient, keen, enthusiastic and committed Christians'. This group reported no difficulty in recruiting helpers but did find a shortage both of those willing to train as officers and of regular parental supporters.

In sum, the research highlights the variety in the nature and levels of qualifications among paid staff and volunteers working in the various organisations involved in youth work. While this may provide some advantages for the groups concerned, especially in relation to inter-agency working, there are important implications in relation to providing effective youth services. With such diversity in qualifications and training, it is difficult to envisage the development of general and systematic evaluative mechanisms. For example, sessional staff and volunteers may lack training and an in-depth knowledge of the aims of youth work. The problem of effectiveness on this level relates to the extent to which a quality service can be developed while volunteer labour remains central to the day-to-day running of an organisation.

■ Resources

Resourcing is a key concern for providing effective youth services. Resourcing affects all dimensions of service provision, influencing the scale of operation, the methods of working, duration of provision and the opportunities for staff training.

Basic funding

The range of funding for youth work was considerable but the common component, especially among some of the professional providers, seems to be uncertainty about future funding. Furthermore in attempting to relate costs to 'success', it is difficult to make comparisons of expenditure and costs between providers or localities since there are no common accounting procedures. Expenditure on staffing and accommodation differed according to the services offered. Community education projects tended to have a core of full-time staff while at the other extreme, some projects were fully staffed by volunteer labour. For example, one small project run by a NHS trust had no identifiable budget as maintenance, running costs and the worker's salary was covered by the health promotion department. Another factor is – accommodation which varied from purpose built centres to village or church halls shared with other users for which there may, or may not, be a charge.

Income likewise varies and it was quite common for providers to raise extra money – for example, through attendance fees and running snack bars. Charges for attendance seemed quite low (i.e. between 20p and 50p per week) and providers (and young people who attend) did not see the amount of money involved as a deterrent.

In mainstream youth work, full time youth workers are usually paid by the parent body – community education, social work, the police service and so on. Responsibility for the employment of sessional staff is often delegated to the youth leader who is given a budget largely designated for this purpose. There may for example, be a budget, of £20,000, three quarters of which is for staff and the remaining £5,000 to cover activities in the locality. In this case, the providers generated extra cash for the

purchase of equipment by levying charges on young people, special fund raising and by applying for grants.

To highlight some of the differences and variations in budgets, what was taken into account and how budgets were arranged, here are three accounts from community education officers who had responsibility for staff and centres.

> *There are three sides to the budget, there is the local authority budget, which pays the rent, heating, lighting, telephone. There is a devolved budget......to each of the area teams which is to pay for things like stationery, mileages and within that budget there is also a training budget as well which we can bid into, a maintenance budget which we can bid into, equipment budget which we can bid into, all these are held locally. Then on the third level there is the income that the youth centre itself brings in..... there are charges for using the centre itself and it's about £4 per session. Groups who are primarily or wholly under-18 get one free let per week. The health board group pays £120 per quarter because that is what they pay for using commercial premises. There is also a membership charge for the centre, this is £4 per year for seniors and only £2 for juniors. In addition they pay 30p per night to come in, £1 on Friday and 80p on Saturday because there is a disco on. The other way we raise money is through the coffee bar, it makes a good profit, we took in £5000 over the year. All that money is then spent by the committee but the local authority monitor how the money is being spent.*
>
> *Youth centre manager*

> *The budgets were just confirmed. My youth work budget for the year for this area for part-time staffing is £26,000. That includes a certain amount of money from ex-urban aid projects that is really targeted in after-school care. About £6,000 of that is slightly outwith what we would normally aim for, after-school care is a slightly younger age group than we would normally deal with.*

> *At the beginning of a year I produce a paper........detailing all the situations, clubs, appointments we can envisage.......I think I am presently running at about £28,000 spending so I'll need to find a saving of about £2,000 someplace.*
>
> *Community education officer*

> *We have £17801 part-time youth leaders' budget for the whole of the area. This takes in three establishments. Two field workers have access to this budget. There is also a 'ghost budget' following the disturbances of a few years ago. (This budget is also around £20000)'*
>
> *Community education officer*

Additional funds

Urban areas of multiple deprivation have been able to secure additional funding through special initiatives such as urban aid for a considerable period. Thus, in one of our inner city areas, access to extra resources was reflected in increased youth provision and in greater variety in provision. Equally, charitable organisations such as Save the Children tend to identify with the problems of urban deprivation and are prepared to invest in such areas. While many rural areas have pockets of deprivation they do not generally have the scale or concentration of problems to match urban areas of deprivation so are less likely to qualify for extra funding. However, in one of the rural areas extra funding had been secured through a rural challenge fund.

Additional funding and resourcing has allowed both existing services to extend provision and other new schemes to be initiated. For example,

in one area, urban aid funding had allowed the community education department to set up two detached youth projects (one of which was located in a neighbourhood included in this research). In another area, additional resources had allowed for increased numbers of residential opportunities for young people. This area had also secured an urban aid funded community centre project with a total expenditure of around £160,000 per annum which covered four full time staff and 32 sessional workers. In addition, this project had about 5,000 hours of voluntary support available, equivalent to at least an additional £25,000 of paid staffing. At the other extreme, a local branch of a uniformed organisation had an annual budget of about £400 and charged girls who attended, fifty pence each week plus £9.45 annual membership. The local branch also contributed to the expenses of the organisation's headquarters. This branch leader counts herself as fortunate in having friends who make donations to the group.

However, even apparently generous funding was not regarded as dependable and the major difficulties reported by providers were the overall shortage of funds and the uncertainty of future funding. In one neighbourhood a community education worker, faced with the prospect of closing down some youth groups due to financial shortcomings, was considering the prospect of asking paid workers to work voluntarily to the end of the financial year to allow the groups to continue.

> *We might well end up saying to youth leaders in February that there's not going to be any pay in March and leave it up to them whether they want to work that last month voluntary, or not.......I think most of them would do it.*
>
> *Community education officer*

Youth work providers predicted that basic allocations in community education and social work were likely to be reduced in the cut-backs being imposed by the new unitary authorities in Scotland. Urban aid can provide an important boost to provision which is sometimes made as a response to crisis, but such funding is allocated for a defined period and is subject to regular monitoring of satisfactory outcomes to ensure access to the resources throughout the lifetime of the project. Several providers spoke of the vulnerability of urban aid funding at times of financial constraint and the detrimental effect on staff moral and commitment arising from short fixed-term funding.

Sometimes funding is provided in a series of 'one-off' grants which is excellent from the point of view of enabling providers to enhance provision, for example, at the weekends. However, without guarantees of long term funding, it is not possible for providers to make long term commitments.

Funding therefore pre-occupied most providers who found a variety of ways to raise extra support including targeting local business. Fund raising was important for particular events and this was perceived as becoming increasingly important if funds for community education were to decrease. Sometimes providers saw the experience of fund raising as an

important part of the process of empowering young people. However fund-raising appeared to be taking on a more central and important role for providers with several revealing that support for youth work was being sought from the National Lottery (none reported success so far) and other sources. In one instance, youth workers involved in an adventure playground project funded by a voluntary organisation faced imminent closure. Workers were actively seeking alternative funding from other sources including the local authority. However, funding was, as yet, not forthcoming and the expectation was that the project would have to close for at least a period. Again, workers here were prepared to provide some voluntary unpaid cover to keep a presence in the establishment.

There is no doubt that without volunteers, the current pattern of youth work is not sustainable. Not only are voluntary groups important providers of youth work, but also volunteers, as we have seen, make significant contributions to most projects. This raises issues about management, responsibility and accountability where voluntary rather than paid workers are deployed. Community education workers have more control over paid sessional workers compared with voluntary workers. There are also issues about whether volunteers will continue to come forward. Whereas there seemed to be plenty of volunteers available for some of the urban aid projects, some uniformed organisations were finding it difficult to attract lay support. No one raised problems of survival but this could become an issue if participation by young people in voluntary groups declines and with it the number of potential leaders to sustain the movement.

This research took place at a time of local government reorganisation in Scotland. With the setting up of the new unitary authorities there was much speculation on the implications for local authority services. To this end, we thought it would be useful to ask providers about current and/or projected effects on services and resources arising from local government reorganisation. Although providers indicated some anxieties about the possible outcomes of local government reorganisation, there was, at the time, insufficient evidence about whether or not there will be positive or negative consequences. The national uniformed organisations are unlikely to be affected but other voluntary groups, dependent on at least some – if not all – local authority funding, are more vulnerable. The closure of a detached youth project in one of the neighbourhoods, on the grounds of economy rather than need for this kind of work, was also reflected in other groups such as community health where proposed cuts were feared, in one instance, to result in loss of some colleagues and even the closure of the local swimming pool. In some cases, while reorganisation may have no direct impact on particular services or agencies, it was thought there might be an indirect impact through affecting partner agencies. For example, while community police officers did not expect local government reorganisation to affect their service, they suggested that reduced

community education budgets could have an impact on the support they receive for particular initiatives.

As a result of uncertainty over current funding, increasing time and resources on the part of youth workers was being invested in attempts to secure alternative or additional funding, and with the closure of some urban aid funded initiatives there were obvious implications for service provision. Having to spend increased amounts of time fund-raising is likely to result in pressure on other activities such as face-to-face work with young people. Further, if it is hoped to encourage youth workers and their managers to consider developing new practices including evaluation and 'measuring success' (as discussed in the next chapter) the debate could be in the context of financial insecurity, lowering morale and increasing pressure on existing activities. It is interesting that among those attending a workshop organised as part of the research, few providers saw the positive outcomes or potential of evaluation as a means of demonstrating how youth work can make a difference.

■ Methods of working

The methods which providers adopt in working with young people is another key area for consideration in exploring the effectiveness of youth work. As discussed in Chapter 1, most groups and services for young people recognised the importance of empowerment as a central aim of the provision. Methods of working are also bound up with perceived outcomes and are further explored in other chapters of this report. Many providers adopted centre–based group work involving young people in identifying particular issues and problems and developing strategies and plans for overcoming this. One community worker's response was fairly typical in this respect,

> *Young people are given the opportunity to meet collectively and discuss issues that are important to them. They come to see that they can influence what is going on.*

In addition to groups and services which aimed overtly to 'empower' young people, there were those which acknowledged this aim but adopted a less direct route. Information-giving services sought to empower young people through providing details of the availability of agencies, services and information concerning particular issues – for example, HIV and AIDS leaflets. Such services could be said to support the empowering process through providing young people with the factual and relevant information on which they could make positive decisions concerning their lives. Again the response of one information worker indicated the purposes of such services when she said,

> *We provide information to allow young people to come to informed decisions and increase their responsibility for their own lives.*

Other groups were encountered in the areas which provided activities with the direct aim of improving the young person's skills in particular areas – such as teaching musical instruments or coaching in games and sports. In such groups, providers again mentioned how the development

of such skills helped to increase the confidence and self image of the young people. In relation to one community arts project, a youth worker said,

> They (young people) get an educational input and positive community experiences. It increases their confidence and furthers their personal development. Some of the young people have gone on to further education.

This example also highlights an indirect benefit which providers saw as accruing from increased confidence among young people: going on into other activities or pursuits – in this case going on to college. In this context, empowerment is seen as a way of helping young people to improve their own situation.

When asked about the kind of activities young people using the services would experience, many providers highlighted access to developing new skills, specifically through physical activities. Many of these activities could be pursued through residential experiences or on day excursions and include outdoor pursuits such as canoeing, climbing, and hill walking. Mention was also made of the use of Duke of Edinburgh award schemes. In one particular area, exchange visits with young people from other countries was a possibility and in another, groups concentrated on community arts projects, role play and video making as their vehicle for development. The local community environment is viewed by some providers as limited in provision for young people and stressful in its nature. Thus, giving young people the opportunity to go on trips to other areas and pursue activities outwith the area were seen as important dimensions of the work, helping to reduce stress and widen young people's experiences and horizons.

There was a degree of overlap in the methods of working adopted by community education/voluntary youth service providers and social work service providers. Those social work employees who were interviewed described their methods of working in terms of minimal intervention and supporting young people to help themselves. Being able to help themselves was seen as important for developing the young person's confidence and improving their self image.

One key element of provision often identified by providers from all backgrounds was enjoyment. Providers stressed that young people need to feel positive about the experiences they engage in and since youth work is of a voluntary nature then if young people do not enjoy the activities and experiences on offer then they will cease to attend.

■ Models of provision

It is clear that much of today's youth work draws on several models to some extent. There are elements of control, socialisation, informal education, empowerment, and citizenship in almost all kinds of organised provision.

Other than the detached and outreach schemes, control of all provision is retained by the youth work leaders/providers. Control is subtle however and even the uniformed organisations have rejected

authoritarian approaches in favour of more negotiated positions where young people contribute their ideas for the curriculum and activities.

As indicated in Chapter 5, young people may make some contribution to decision making but this tends to be tokenistic other than on fairly minor matters. It is the opportunities for socialising which are clearly valued by young people and which the providers try to structure through various activities. While providers do not describe these as 'socialisation strategies', those individuals who do not conform, the 'trouble makers', are likely to be excluded from the group often with the agreement of the rest of the young participants.

Informal education is common to all kinds of youth work including detached and outreach work which is primarily concerned with helping some of the most vulnerable to take control of their own lives. Providers set out to have 'purposeful interaction between adults and young people' but as was clear from the young people's perspectives this is most successful where the providers are perceived as friendly, trustworthy and with a sense of humour.

Citizenship is, as indicated in the opening chapter of this report, a more slippery concept. At one level, providers generally try to improve individual's access to information and therefore access to services. However the most vulnerable young people live in areas where opportunities to participate fully in society are constrained by the limited budgets of individuals and local services. For example, car ownership and public transport facilities are simultaneously at low levels in the rural and urban areas studied and yet mobility is an assumed right in contemporary society. As Williamson (1997) suggests, youth work can support those young people who participate but we have to recognise that these are relatively few people overall and, as is clear in this study, provision covers a minute proportion of a young person's week. If youth work makes a difference to vulnerable young people, it is against the odds.

■ What are the main issues confronting provision for young people today?

Providers were asked what they thought were the major issues confronting provision for young people in their localities. A majority of responses indicated that predominant concerns were funding and resources. If providers are to respond effectively to the needs of young people then they have to be aware of societal changes taking place. Many providers demonstrated an awareness of such demographic changes taking place over recent years – for example, large increases in single and lone parent households. There was also mention of the worsening socio-economic positions of many young people. With little employment, poor training opportunities, and increasing concerns over social cohesion and crime, providers recognised that services have to account for, and keep pace with, the reality of young peoples' lives. However, this awareness was set against a background of uncertainty over the funding of provision.

Several providers noted concerns about maintaining the present levels of provision, far less expand it. As mentioned earlier, providers in community education and the voluntary sector reported that they are having to spend increasing amounts of time seeking and applying for alternative sources of funding. Such pursuits mean less time was available for working with young people or developing new areas of provision. The net outcome of such a situation may well be marked by economic uncertainty for organisations and more contact time with young people being pursued by voluntary and seasonally paid staff. In the case of uniformed organisations, there was some concern over the lack of volunteer workers coming into the service.

Several providers mentioned the need to keep abreast of new technology, the perceived need to familiarise themselves with computers and new technology, developing them as a resource for young people's use. However, in some cases, new technology was also seen in a negative light by a few providers, noting that it is increasingly difficult to attract young people who are enticed by competing new commercial leisure pursuits (e.g. Laser Quest, Flumes and Astroturf). With the increasing availability and range of such activities, local youth clubs with their pool table or table tennis were perceived as less attractive to young people. At the same time young people are less affluent due to protracted transitions from school to work. As young people become more aware of new leisure activities, which they may or may not be able to afford, they are increasingly likely to draw unfavourable comparisons with what is available in the local youth groups leading to dissatisfaction and lower rates of attendance.

Taking account of the number and complexity of problems faced by many young people, the increased sophistication of leisure pursuits and the financial restrictions placed on providers, means that many providers were aware that on their own they were unable to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable young people. Many providers spoke of becoming involved in collaborating and supporting work with other agencies.

■ Interagency work

There has been much debate and discussion in recent years concerning the nature and extent of inter-agency co-operation and the benefits which may accrue from such work. In relation to youth work, with so many different agencies and services involved, it is clear that any discussion of research which explores the management of youth services should address itself to inter-agency working.

Providers were asked about the extent and nature of their involvement with any inter-agency work, about the benefits of such work and whether, on balance, the benefits outweigh the disadvantages. As already mentioned above, many providers saw the necessity of becoming involved with other agencies as a result of financial difficulties and/or

recognition of the multi-faceted nature of the problems that young people face.

The majority of providers indicated having some contact and involvement with other agencies and saw such contacts as generally beneficial for themselves or for the young people they worked with.

At the end of the day we are working in the same area (as other providers) this gives young people an understanding and insight into the bigger picture and what is available to get involved in. For us we get access to resources and other ways of working.

Community education worker

Types and levels of interagency work

While most youth work providers reported contact with other groups, agencies or organisations, the nature and extent of such contact varied quite considerably. At its simplest, providers were aware of the work of other practitioners and this was elaborated in some instances in terms of sharing information with other services and groups in an area. For example, many providers' offices displayed leaflets and posters containing information about other services and provision for young people in the area. In all community education offices, there were displays of leaflets about, for example: colleges, welfare rights, citizens advice services, health clinics, employment and training opportunities, and sports clubs. Many providers thus saw the dissemination of information to other providers and to their young clients as an important and mutually beneficial dimension of their work. However, there were other levels of inter-agency work beyond information exchanges.

There was certainly some recognition of the need to capitalise on other agencies and individuals skills when faced with particular issues or areas of work. For example,

Youth workers are jacks of all trades so you need to bring in others for specific areas, for example, sex education.

Community education worker

It was evident from the research that there is likely to be a demand for support and expertise to be made available for youth workers from other agencies and services. Relevant factors identified includes the variety and levels of qualifications among youth workers, coupled with the dynamic nature of youth culture and the speed with which issues, concerns and problems of a multi-faceted nature arise and the concerns experienced over financial restrictions. A more developed model of inter-agency collaboration is where several providers have contributed to the planning and running of a specially funded initiative. Whereas information sharing and drawing on other people's skills are fairly common, collaborative programmes are rarer.

Benefits and disadvantages of interagency working

Providers were asked about the benefits and disadvantages that accrued from inter-agency working. Providers again highlighted issues concerning

resources. Most commonly they stressed the extra resources that could be accessed through working with other agencies. For example,

> *It spreads the load, drawing on different skills and experiences. Economies of scale can be made and you avoid unnecessary duplication of work.*
>
> *Community centre manager*

> *It gives the opportunity to divide the work and spread the load.*
>
> *Community police officer*

In addition to direct resource gains made through working with other agencies, providers highlighted the training opportunities of working with other agencies and obtaining a greater insight into how other agencies approach working with young people.

Some providers were specific about the benefits which could accrue to young people through their experience of involvement with other groups and services. For example,

> *Such co-operation may help reduce the dependency of young people on a single agency. We can encourage them to access other agencies and are happy to see them move on.*
>
> *Community education worker*

Another community education interviewee spoke of the need to increase the co-operation between detached/outreach programmes and centre-based work and the resultant benefits for young people:

> *Centre based workers can spend periods where the centre is quiet, time which could be spent with detached workers finding out more about young people in the area and telling them about the services available.*

However not all responses indicated positive attitudes and experiences of inter-agency working; some providers identified disadvantages. Two community education workers suggested that the collaborative workload had fallen disproportionately on their shoulders in past projects and were thus cautious of future joint ventures. Perhaps more importantly some providers highlighted the differing aims and methods of working of the various services as potential areas of difficulty. One community worker suggested that it was important for agencies to share a similar ethos although,

> *The financial constraints make this less of an issue.*

This quote reinforces the point made earlier that many providers saw the drive to co-operation and collaboration being as much about accessing and securing resources at a time of uncertainty as about improving the services available to young people.

Several providers were specific about difficulties of inter-agency working with agencies with different agenda and methods of working. For example,

> *We have difficulties working with schools because we come from such different backgrounds. We treat kids as individuals while teachers deal with classes of thirty. They will sacrifice the one for the many.*
>
> *Social worker*

One or two providers spoke of the initial caution that they felt in relation to working with police forces. For example,

We have a good relationship with the police. We provide the community police with training on drugs and alcohol but we have to be careful so as not to be seen as to closely allied to them (by the young people).

Drugs information worker

In working with the police, I had some initial hesitation but they were keen to see our ways of working.

Community education worker

Generally those providers who were attempting to work with young people who had been identified as particularly vulnerable, or who were likely to have negative perceptions of the police, were generally more cautious of involvement with the police. However, where work had developed between the police and other providers, responses were generally positive about the experience. In one instance a community education worker remarked,

Its amazing how requests for assistance and support on police headed note paper gets results.

Community education worker

The needs of young people and especially those deemed most at risk are to some degree dynamic in nature and vary to some extent from one geographical locality to another. To respond to such needs effectively, youth workers need to have access to training. However, at a time of increasing financial uncertainty such access becomes less likely. With some organisations in the voluntary and uniformed sectors such training has never been common. Thus the research suggests that in the absence of sufficient training being available, those involved in youth work are increasingly likely to rely on other youth workers and services to provide training/input functions on a reciprocal basis.

■ Summary

It is clear from descriptions from those who are engaged in youth work that the nature and extent of youth services defy simple categorisation. In Chapter 1, we outlined some principal conceptual models but these are not neatly confirmed by practice in Scotland. There is clearly the range of services developed under the umbrella of community education, responsive to local needs and with considerable autonomy for each youth club leader employed to determine the most appropriate service to offer. Uniformed organisations are more likely to have a nationally established curriculum with only minor local adjustments determined by the local voluntary leader. In addition, Scotland has a multitude of other voluntary groups and special initiatives. The latter are often funded under an urban aid programme and are required to account closely for their activities. In the localities studied in some detail, there were remarkably few cases of detached or outreach work to deal with the most vulnerable young people in our society.

All providers report that their major aim was to empower young people, to help them take control over their lives. However the means of achieving this differs considerably. For example, some providers prioritise making up-to-date, accurate information available to young people whereas others offer activities to enhance young people's confidence and self esteem. Detached work, and where there was a focus on special issues, entails responding to the needs and problems identified by young people and helping them to recognise that they can influence what is going on.

Whether providers' goals are control, socialisation, informal education or promoting citizenship, an important issue concerns the development of mechanisms of evaluation which are currently too underdeveloped to secure confirmation of success or failure.

As a whole, youth work is dependent on voluntary workers and providers report that whereas youth leaders are fully trained, the voluntary staff and untrained sessional workers have least qualifications but the most direct and sustained contact with young people. In practice qualified youth workers find themselves spending less time with young people and more on administration and fund raising.

A difficulty faced by providers is being able to respond to changes in society and to the challenges presented by the high-tech culture of the young generation. Traditional youth clubs and voluntary groups have few modern facilities using new technology and their image tends to be dominated by ping pong tables which are rather unglamorous compared with commercial leisure attractions such as Astroturf, Laser Quest or flumes which may be available locally. While young people may be unable to afford these attractions, their presence makes the limited facilities of traditional youth clubs unattractive by comparison.

It is shortage of funds and uncertainty of future funding which are the major concerns for providers although they were all managing at the time this study took place – the year of transition to new unitary authorities in Scotland. At this stage, urban funding budgets had enabled extra initiatives to be implemented in the most severely disadvantaged areas and these providers expected that adequate funds would continue to be secured as a result of having priority status. Other providers are less sanguine about the new unitary authorities' policies and capabilities to sustain the same level of youth work provision as now. What is clear is that the continuation of the bulk of youth work is dependent on voluntary workers who see this as their contribution to the community and to young people in particular. The main issue facing youth workers providing for vulnerable young people is economic survival and reliance on untrained workers in key roles which together result in methodological conservatism reflecting low resources and uncertainty.

8 Working with young people and measuring success

■ Introduction

It is apparent that for youth services to meet the needs of vulnerable young they have to be aware of the problems young people face, know which young people utilise their services and which young people do not. Only through identifying the users and the non-users of services and related characteristics can providers ultimately say if they are reaching those deemed most vulnerable. Equally, reaching those who are most vulnerable is only part of the answer; providers need also to be aware of the impact and success of their contact with all young people. As such, providers have to recognise the need to evaluate their work in some fashion. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, the evaluation strategies used to 'measure' success rarely went beyond keeping track of numbers attending groups. Indeed some providers harboured a degree of hostility to the idea of evaluation and its ability to 'measure' some of their central objectives, such as levels of empowerment or growth in confidence.

■ Background problems faced by young people

The problems young people face do not occur in isolation; problems tend be clustered to some extent with others. Drug taking, for example, may be linked with crime. Clearly such relationships are recognised by local authorities who have for many years identified areas of multiple deprivation. These areas tend to be characterised by many inter-related problems and have received increased levels of funding in an attempt to tackle problems on a wide front. Some of our study areas had higher than average rates of unemployment, crime, more teenage pregnancies, greater incidence of morbidity, lower than average attainment at school, and poorer housing. In general, areas of socio-economic deprivation have higher mortality. (Woodroffe *et al*, 1993). Such problems can create cycles of deprivation (Rutter and Madge, 1976; Coffield, 1982). Unemployed people may be less able to provide their children with a suitably balanced diet and coupled with poor/damp housing, children may be more likely to succumb to illness and disease requiring more time to be spent away from school. This can have a negative result on school attainment and thus on job opportunities, life chances and thus reduce the life chances of their offspring (Wedge and Prosser, 1973). Poorer areas tend also to be unable to support commercial enterprises and facilities which in turn means fewer opportunities and choices available for

residents. Thus areas of multiple deprivation are often areas where people are marginalised and in which they may be inhibited from taking a full and active participation in mainstream society. However, as already discussed in chapter 2, this research looked beyond areas of multiple deprivation and included a range of geographical areas with distinct problems, some isolated rural areas and some with more recognisable multiple deprivation. The common thread linking all six neighbourhoods is that they contribute in some way to the vulnerability of the young people resident in them.

Environmental factors associated with poverty and isolation means that young people are less able to use commercial facilities such as the cinema (where present) on a regular basis. Such financial difficulties are exacerbated by isolation. In one of the rural neighbourhoods lack of public transport after 6.30 pm is seen as a specific problem for young people who wanted to take advantage of the more extensive choice of commercial facilities available in the neighbouring towns. In Westport, a rural island community, the isolation problem is felt to be more acute since there is no other town or city in the vicinity.

While hanging around the streets is often seen as a normal part of adolescent activity and socialising, some young people spend time on the street due to a lack of attractive alternatives. On the streets, young people can become vulnerable to other influences, attracted to drinking alcohol and using drugs. Some providers saw this as a normal feature of contemporary adolescence:

> *Young people don't see these (drugs and alcohol) as a problem. They are a norm; getting the money for them is the problem.*
>
> *Community education worker*

■ Providers' perspectives on problems

Providers were asked to identify the main problems faced by young people in their areas. There is some, not unexpected, evidence to suggest that the role of providers and the nature of their employment means that they highlight particular problems. While community education staff often talked of the problems faced by young people in general, (disenfranchisement, low expectations), police and social work staff mere more likely to highlight higher rates of child abuse, dysfunctional families, teenage pregnancies, drug taking and petty crime in their area. In several instances, providers identified young male behaviour as presenting particular problems. Characteristics of such behaviour included aggressiveness and an inability to develop supportive relationships with peer group members – typically,

> *Young males can have difficulties in coping with other people in a non hostile fashion.*
> *Community education worker*

The influence of the peer group is seen by some providers as crucial in preventing meaningful relationships and acceptable behaviour developing among some adolescent groups. Equally such male behaviours have been

identified by some providers as playing a role in discouraging females from taking an active part in groups. In some instances, providers also identify elements of 'territorialism' as a particular problem for young people. This generally means an unwillingness to travel around areas outwith the immediate surroundings for fear of being attacked.

> *The young people we work with are unwilling to come out of their own areas, you have to go to them.*
>
> *Detached youth worker*

If providers are attempting to develop a knowledge and understanding of the problems faced by young people in their area, questions have to be raised concerning the sources of information that they use. How reliable and valid are the sources? Can providers be sure that the picture they build up of the young people in an area is accurate and representative?

In becoming aware of the problems faced by young people in their areas, providers drew on several sources. By far the most frequently quoted was personal experience of the area and talking with the young people they came into contact with. In some instances providers live in the areas in which they work and are aware of the 'local scene.'

> *You just have to go down the street on a Friday night – going into the pubs, you know them, and see them there, fifteen, in the pub.*
>
> *Community education worker*

In other cases, official statistics and survey results were used by the community education worker. For example, local crime figures and deprivation data have been utilised by some providers to build up profiles of the area and identify particular problems.

> *You can see the amount of unemployment and we have read reports on it. We have statistics available on the rates and incidences of crime. Last year we had four drugs related deaths in the area.*
>
> *Community police officer*

In some instances providers were aware of information supplied by other agencies, in one or two areas community education workers demonstrated awareness of social work statistics. In another area, social workers and IT workers had used local area statistics to foster and develop work with the local community education team.

> *We have statistics, ours as well as the health boards....(the rise in) teenage pregnancies has been an area where social work and community education have been trying to provide a service.*
>
> *IT worker*

Three providers had been involved with young people in carrying out surveys of the area to ascertain what young people thought of existing services and how they could improve the service. Often such surveys also asked about the problems faced by young people in an area.

> *There have been several surveys of young people in the area which asked them what they would like to see in the area.*
>
> *Community education worker*

In the main, providers show a willingness to draw on several sources of information: their own experiences and observations, those reported to them by young people, and official sources of statistical data in assessing and gauging the problems experienced by young people. Generally providers conveyed caution about building up their knowledge concerning young people's problems based on the collection of anecdotal incidents and stories. Instead, such information is often used to complement statistical information youth workers had gleaned from other sources such as local authority reports.

■ Who are the participants in organised youth work?

A crucial area of concern for the research revolved around which young people participate in youth work and which ones do not. Are providers of youth services reaching those deemed most vulnerable? Providers were asked about the young people who participated in their services and those who did not, about priority groups and about gaps in the service.

In relation to prioritising work, most providers felt that services, activities and provision should be made available to as many young people as possible without targeting particular groups.

> *We took a conscious decision not to concentrate on groups who have particular problems. We operate a first come first serve basis.*
>
> *Community centre manager*

> *Don't like targeting. We don't work like that. We prefer things to be open to everybody.*
>
> *Community education worker*

The general exception to this is social work where the vast majority of work was targeted on specific individuals and groups. Those providers of youth clubs, activity groups, Duke of Edinburgh schemes and uniformed services generally made provision available to all young people. This was also the case with the police-led 'challenge' initiative which started out as an attempt to work only with those young people who had been in trouble but after the first year opened the programme to all young people resident in the area.

In a few cases, community education workers pointed out that all the young people in their neighbourhood were vulnerable to some extent and should be seen as a priority.

> *All groups here are at risk in some way.*
>
> *Community education worker*

Further, one or two community education workers identified dangers in prioritising particular young people. By labelling certain groups as most vulnerable, those involved may be stigmatised. However, there was also some acceptance of the idea that individual young people referred to their groups by other agencies, such as social work, should be accommodated if possible.

While there were some misgivings, community education workers generally recognised that there was a place for targeted work in their service. In two areas there was an acknowledgement of the fact that the majority of involvement was with young males at the expense of females. In both of these situations the outcomes of the questionnaire survey reported in Chapter 3 shows that females are twice as likely to 'hang about' the streets as their male counterparts. In one area workers had been attempted to increase the numbers of females involved in their groups by developing single sex issue groups for girls.

> *All our work was with young men, now we are getting at girls through providing single sex groups.*
> *Community education worker*

Additionally issue based work can involve targeting particular vulnerable groups – for example, in one locality a detached youth project was working with young people excluded from school.

Targeted work tends to be a priority for social work departments who run Intensive Group Work (Intermediate Treatment) services. This is certainly the case with most of the social work programmes encountered in the neighbourhoods which tended to focus on groups and individuals pre-identified by other professionals as being in need of support.

Two information projects acknowledged the need to target certain groups in the population. One, a drugs awareness project, sought to work specifically with people who had problems as a result of drug use while the second, a youth information project, saw smoking and women on low incomes as particular priorities. However both projects have attempted to spread their message as widely as possible and have conducted presentations to classes of young people in local schools.

■ Who are the young people who do not participate?

Providers were asked whether they thought that some groups of young people were either missed or would be rejected by them on the grounds of, for example, disability. While providers in different areas gave specific examples of non-participating young people, there was a broad indication on the part of providers that it is often very difficult to engage with those deemed most at risk. For example,

> *We are not engaging with people who have long-term health and mental health problems, those heavily involved in crime, young women who are parents and young men on the periphery of crime.*
> *Community education worker*

> *There is a lack of support for young people moving out of care and back into society.*
> *IT worker*

> *We have a large number of travelling families in the area and would like to attract them in. However existing client groups tend to be hostile and aggressive and scare them away.*
> *Community education worker*

I think we miss a lot of girls in the area. One of the major problems in the area is poverty and the cost of a uniform puts girls off from joining.

<div align="right">*Guide leader*</div>

The above quotes are typical of the responses made by providers. As already mentioned there was some general concern over the lack of females involved in groups and providers also highlighted vulnerable groups who were under-represented. Providers generally agreed that they attracted those young people who were relatively less vulnerable than others in the locality. Several of the providers said it was difficult to envisage young people with drug and alcohol dependant habits coming along to youth clubs and activities. While one may conclude then that youth services have to 'reach out' to such young people, there may be difficulties in doing so. For example, one detached youth project worker said that they would not engage with young people who were obviously under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Several of the providers said that they were aware of the presence of young people in their groups whom they had identified as 'delinquent' or who exhibited anti-social behaviours. In one case, the youth worker said that these 'delinquents' were generally 'carried' to some extent by the other members of the group. There was clearly a degree of acceptance of this situation emerging from the hope that continued engagement will result in the young people increasing their level of involvement in the group over time. However, in another instance the youth worker said that a club had been closed down due to the violent and threatening behaviour of the males in the group towards the youth worker and other group members.

If one of the major aims of youth work is in supporting young people's social adjustment then both of these examples highlight an important issue in relation to working with more vulnerable groups of young people. As a result of having particular problems, some young people are less able to participate in youth groups and services in a co-operative fashion. When providers do engage such young people are they able and equipped to meet the demands of these young people? Often such young people will have had unfavourable experiences of adults in the past, whether in education or in relation to other official organisations. If such experiences have potentially contributed to young people's drift from the influences of responsible adults then it is very important that attempts to contact and work with them are based on more than good intentions. Clearly there are implications for the resourcing of provision, the methods of working, and the training of staff.

■ Young people's level of involvement in youth work

Much of the youth provision identified is primarily directed towards supporting young people's independence and taking responsibility for their own decisions. Providers discussed the various strategies adopted to

empower young people, increase the control of their own lives, and help them develop as 'good' citizens.

Commitment to the principles of empowerment and citizenship requires a recognition of the need for young people to be active participants in decision making. Being able to negotiate in the planning and operating of activities and events was recognised by many of the youth workers and providers as an important dimension of their work. However, they also expect levels of participation to be related to the ages and abilities of the young people. Most providers suggest that control and responsibility for youth work groups and activities should increase with the age of the young people.

Providers generally encouraged young people's participation in the groups activities and services. Most commonly young people were involved in suggesting activities and ventures for the group to pursue and some providers spoke of joint planning sessions with young people. However, providers recognised that the extent to which they can respond to young people's ideas are often determined by available resources or local authority policy. For example,

> *Young people can say what they want to do. However, this can be constrained by local authority policy. Here we are not allowed to take young people abseiling.*
> *Community education worker*

Many of the providers welcomed the more 'exotic' suggestions made by young people as an indicator of growing confidence and ambition. However, this was often tempered by a degree of frustration at having to regularly point out to young people that budgetary constraints made such ventures unlikely. Several providers suggested that resource constraints and local authority/organisation policy, which meant having to 'say no', can result in reduced credibility among the young people they are working with and consequently a reduction in their potential influence on the young people.

Recognising the necessary skills and confidence that decision making requires, some providers point out that young people may be less willing to make decisions when they first join a group. Thus, for example,

> *The programme has an element of choice but within a pre-structured whole. They often prefer a degree of structure when they first come to the group. As they progress they take more control of the group.*
> *Community education worker*

In the main, engagement (beyond attendance) on the part of young people was viewed as something which required a longer term strategy and had to be worked at.

> *Social action means (young people) taking more and more responsibility.*
> *Community development worker*

Involvement in activity choice also means young people being encouraged by youth workers to take responsibility for organising events and activities. This often entailed young people being involved in deciding the tasks and steps necessary to secure such activities and events, negotiating

with other agencies, and fund raising. Providers saw young people's requests for activities as an opportunity to encourage the development of practical and life skills including negotiating with each other and outsiders, practising telephone manners, letter writing, and form filling.

In the main, participation on the part of young people did not involve them in making decisions regarding the job description and selection of future staff. However, they could be involved in setting group and club rules for behaviour, determining charges, and, in one or two cases, they might become members of committees overseeing the service, although the democratic scenario described below was not typical.

> *The young people manage the administration of the centre: they decide when the money is going to be spent; they decide where their trips are going to be; they decide how much membership is going to be for the next year; they decide what is in the coffee bar and what isn't, when the disco is going to be on and what records they want. We have a main committee called the house committee, which is nine senior young people aged between 12 and 21 and that includes the treasurer, chair, secretary and two junior members in addition to those. I attend the meetings and there is a volunteer who comes and takes the minutes... Also in attendance is a representative from the council and the community council. They are in an advisory capacity.....The only people who have voting rights on the committee are the young people, so if there is a decision to be made about anything the adults have to sit on their hands and just take it as it comes, which is fun sometimes, I have the power because I have to keep the centre within policy guidelines, but I have never had to use it, which says a lot about the responsibility – that the young people take it seriously.*
>
> *Community education centre manager*

There was also recognition among some providers that while young people may be reluctant to take decisions themselves, youth workers still had to provide opportunities for the youngsters to make decisions if they chose to do so.

> *While we may want them to enter into negotiations with us they do not always show willing. They can be happy to settle for our suggestions.*
>
> *Community education worker*

Clearly the level of young people's participation and decision making is related to the nature and role of the youth worker: this is discussed in the next section.

■ The role and characteristics of the youth worker

One fundamental aspect of youth work concerns the role and characteristics of the youth worker. The influence that a responsible adult can bring to bear on young people was seen as important in preventing vulnerability (Maychell *et al* 1996; HMI, 1991). Certainly for those young people deemed most at risk, who may be outwith the influence of a responsible adult or who may have had negative experiences of adults, the relationship that can develop with youth workers may be very important. In fact it may well be that the relationship between the youth worker and the young person may be the only quality relationship with an adult that they have. If each relationship that youth workers form with young people is potentially on this basis, then the youth workers' role becomes of prime importance. To gain some

insight into this area, the research sought to explore with providers what the characteristics and skills of a good youth worker were.

Generally there was broad agreement across the different types of provision about the characteristics of a good youth worker (see Figure 8.1). Among the most commonly recognised qualities are enthusiasm and commitment to the work and a sense of humour. An ability to engage young people, avoiding being judgmental and always being honest were also popular responses. Many of these responses mirrored those received from young people when asked what the qualities of a good youth worker were (Chapter 5). From these responses, it was evident that providers put great importance on their relationships with young people.

Figure 8.1: Characteristics of a good youth worker

Have to be able to treat young people as equals rather than just people you can order about ... in the end you have to be non judgmental.

you need to be approachable ... have to be somebody who can encourage cajole and promote them and their feelings of self worth ...consistency and honesty is really important.you need a basic genuine respect for young people.

ability to talk to the kids would be top of my agenda

patience ... a good listener!

sense of humour is essential

listening with empathy and through time a willingness to share power.

a belief in young people and what they can achieve

The amount of influence that a youth worker can have over young people can be enormous. This is positive in the sense that you know that young people listen to what you are saying and take it on board.
                                                                Community education worker

Not unexpectedly, providers generally agreed that they should be supportive of young peoples ideas, providing guidance and stimulus when required but this has to be tempered with the aim of allowing young people to participate in decision making and controlling certain dimensions of the work.

Giving them opportunities to do what they want. Be dynamic and have ideas.
                                                                Community development worker

Less commonly, providers highlighted other important dimensions of their work. One or two interviewees mentioned the need to be knowledgeable and well trained; others stressed the multi-dimensional nature of the job, having to manage part-time workers, provide training, and complete evaluations.

The results suggest that providers identify personal attributes and personality as being of prime importance rather than training or possessing specific skills. Crucially they feel that workers should be able to engage young people, develop relationships with them and foster involvement. These findings bear out recommendations in the HMI report, *Youth Work in Scotland* (1991) which highlights the central role of the youth worker in influencing the young people with whom they work.

■ Measuring success – keeping records

A central aim of this research has been to investigate how providers evaluate the success or otherwise of their work and outcomes for young people. If providers are to be able to say how their provision helps to reduce vulnerability among young people then they have to consider outcomes in relation to stated aims and objectives.

In ascertaining how providers gauge success and the effectiveness of their work with young people, the interview schedule included questions which asked about several interrelated areas including the keeping and use of records, evaluation activities and monitoring of outcomes. In addition evaluation was also discussed during the seminar and workshop run by the project in spring 1997. At this workshop, practitioners and professionals involved with youth work shared their experiences, reservations and ideas for evaluating youth work.

Group activities and events were more likely to be recorded than the experiences and development of individual participants in youth work; therefore monitoring and evaluation can only be undertaken in relation to general outcomes rather than to the effects on individuals. A major exception to these practices was in the records of individual cases supported through social work actions.

Group records and monitoring

Routinely, providers usually maintained records of activities engaged in during group sessions; these records often included numbers attending and any decisions taken by the group. Access was usually open to the staff and the young people concerned.

> *We keep sessional logs of the groups and what happened and the decisions taken. The groups themselves often also keep their own logs. These are open to staff and group members.*
>
> *Community development worker*

These group records served to keep the group on track and to reflect on possible improvements. They were not designed to monitor individuals' interests, problems and opportunities but may well comprise an

important component of monitoring the service provided. For example, some community education workers carried out group evaluations which were used in the provider's own annual work evaluations.

Individual records kept on young people who use the service

In general youth work, records were not kept on individuals who used services, other than in terms of contact names, addresses, attendance and sometimes medical and dietary information. Such routine records may be discarded at the end of the year. This example is fairly typical of providers:

> *On the membership application there is a section for names, address, school and year, telephone number, are they allergic to anything or should they be taking something that we should know about.*
>
> *Community centre manager*

In some instances community education services also spoke of keeping records of disclosure of sexual abuse which they would then pass on to other relevant organisations. Providers seemed wary about keeping records, partly as this has the flavour of 'a social work pathology mode' and there was mention of the danger of 'labelling' although we are uncertain whether this was potentially a real difficulty or a reflection of the culture of community education. It could be seen that keeping records would be perceived by young people as aligning with other authorities and may therefore result in a loss of trust between the young people and youth work providers.

However, very detailed records were held by social work departments working with vulnerable young people. One social worker explained that the team kept records (of telephone conversations, notification of hearings, contacts, discussions with schools) in master files for each individual. The intensive support worker went into detail about all contacts with each young client including what the young person says and how they are feeling, and the focus of the support work. Group workers kept both a group session record of those who attended, the activities and the plans, issues and outcomes arising and also an individual record for young people. Records were shared with other members of the team and the client and parents had access to these records.

Other examples of providers maintaining individual record schemes include: an urban aid project where young people noted their own progress and the activities they had engaged in. In another situation a community education worker spoke of keeping records of violent incidents.

> *We keep records of violent incidents. This is largely a record for the staff on the situation. We have used such records only once. Many of the young people here are aggressive. They would be given a copy of the report if we ever had to use them.*
>
> *Community education worker*

A charity providing activities for young people reported that if young people identified themselves as having a problem, the youth worker(s) would, with the young person's permission, keep a confidential record of

the problem, the action decided on and progress towards its resolution. Access to this record was controlled by the young person and when the situation had reached a satisfactory conclusion then the record was destroyed.

■ Measuring success – evaluation

Faced with the question 'How do you know that it works?', youth work providers often referred initially to numbers in attendance and, as with most enterprises, it is tempting to assume that high attendance is indicative of success. Other than numerical indicators, there was a lack of a national, systematic approach (to evaluation) across Scotland of youth work with vulnerable young people. There was also concern among providers about the sensitivity, complexity and dangers of evaluation in this area.

Certainly, 'voting with their feet' was one way that young people made it clear that the provision did not suit them.

> *If they came once and never came back then obviously we would assume that we did something wrong so regular consistent attendance would be a pointer.*
>
> *Community education worker*

This is not necessarily any indictment of the quality of provision as young people may move on to other activities or choose not to attend for other reasons. For example, uniformed organisations noticed that as young people get older they are less likely to remain in the group:

> *Older girls stop coming because of peer pressure; the Girls' Brigade is not the done thing.*
>
> *Girls' Brigade leader*

In another situation a community worker pointed out that while numbers attending are important, the through-flow of individuals in a group could be equally significant. By this he meant that if young people are to avoid becoming over dependent on particular services, they should be encouraged to look forward and move on as they grow in confidence.

By listening to immediate feedback, providers were able to make adjustments, to make provision better match the expectations and wishes of the young people and to retain their attendance and participation. However, numbers alone do not provide evidence of successful youth work:

> *People see measurement as bums on seats. We could run disco raves every weekend if we wanted to achieve that.*
>
> *Community education worker*

Those in youth work appreciated that it was difficult to gauge what young people get out of activities. Outcomes can vary enormously and were not necessarily reflected in quantitative measures.

Moving beyond the numbers

Going beyond the numbers game is challenging and even, as one provider said, 'discouragingly difficult'. Evaluation of youth work is likely to start

with the providers' aims and objectives and to see whether or not the programme offered was likely to have outcomes consistent with those aims. Many providers reviewed formally, or informally, how each session had gone. Fewer have a clear strategy for longer term evaluations although they articulated desirable outcomes for their work.

Examples of such diverse outcomes are listed in figure 8.2:

Figure 8.2: Examples of diverse outcomes expected by youth work providers

- What the young people have got out of the youth work
- Raised awareness among other people of the issues facing young people
- The number of young people on the streets
- Increase in young people's confidence
- A drop in petty crime in the area.

Even these few examples draw attention to some of the problems of evaluation. What have young people got out of the youth work? This could be a whole range of outcomes, some visible and accessible, others not. The number of young people on the street may have been reduced, but two new cafés may have opened in the area. Young people may be participating in groups more frequently and seem more confident, but perhaps this is just a feature of growing up.

It is certainly difficult to attribute a causal relationship between an individual's behaviour and the services provided by youth workers which are only some of the factors in that person's life. In evaluating youth work, few providers would claim to be more than a contributory factor for any change in an individual's behaviour, attitudes or knowledge – although as we show later these can be significant effects for vulnerable young people.

We do see a drop in petty crime in the area but it is difficult to say this is a result of the programme.

Community police officer

To summarise, for most youth workers, the problems of evaluation are:
- Effects accrue slowly and may not be manifest until later in life
- Measures of success vary with the political agenda: fun? getting a job? being off the streets? being more skilful? saying no to drugs? using drugs safely?
- Measures of success have to be related to young people's own agenda
- Young people volunteer to participate in community education and there are not always clear criteria for 'progress' as there are for aspects of compulsory education
- Providers do not always keep records which will help track their influence on individual's behaviour.

Indicators that providers use

There is certainly some resistance to forms of evaluation which are seen to gauge success through specific, imposed outcomes. The HMI report, *Youth Work in Scotland* (1991) was described by one community

education worker as promoting this kind of evaluation agenda and undoubtedly there are youth workers in different fields who think that if the young people are happy and enjoying what they are doing then that is the strongest indicator of success.

At the same time, there are providers who also believe in 'accountability and quality' in a more formal sense. Despite the difficulties of evaluating their work, providers used diverse means to establish their effectiveness. Projects with special funding were required to make regular formal evaluations during the lifetime of the project and may have external assessors to contribute a disinterested view. As one project manager replied when asked how he knew that the service on offer to young people was effective,

> *because our local authority assessors say so!*

Young people's increasing confidence may be shown by taking responsibility for some aspect of their own lives which previously they had seen as beyond their control. At one end of the scale, this might be taking a job, setting up in a flat, going on to higher education, starting a new relationship, beginning to improve themselves. At the other end of the scale, but also significant, is when Girl Guides who have brought their uniforms in a plastic bag to change in the hall, develop the confidence to wear their uniform in the street. Young people getting out of a group who are in trouble, or not re-engaging in crime, are other examples of the 'empowerment' which underlies much youth work. Social work support tends to be individually based and therefore indicators of success include young people coming off supervision orders, not committing new offences, enjoying improved family relationships, and overall increased self esteem.

Other methods of evaluation include feedback from individuals and groups including self assessment of workers and youngsters returning in future projects and sessions. Some providers used sessional record sheets to compare with the group's objectives and have review meetings to consider progress and perhaps refocus the group's direction.

Although wary of formal evaluation, a rather defensive strain was apparent in some of the interviews with providers and in the evaluation workshop and this is inevitably linked with the shortage and/or the uncertainty of future funding. The uniformed organisations were less concerned than community education and specially funded projects who saw themselves as more vulnerable to cuts and losing resources.

Most providers appeared to discuss evaluation as though it was an externally imposed and operated procedure focusing on simple quantitative and easily observable measures. Providers were less aware of other dimensions and approaches to evaluation such as, case study, ethnography, and other qualitative approaches. Equally, there was little indication that evaluations could be part of the youth workers routine daily working environment rather than an externally initiated operation. If evaluation is seen as an increasingly important element in developing youth services then service funders, managers, and workers may have to

be more involved in the development of suitable and acceptable methodologies.

■ Reducing vulnerability among young people

Despite difficulties of formal evaluation, providers considered their work worthwhile. One of the key areas identified for the present research was in exploring how providers and services for young people contributed to reducing their vulnerability. To this end, providers were asked in what ways their work contributed to reducing vulnerability among young people.

Several areas readily emerge from the responses. Providers talked of the importance of supporting the development of self confidence and self esteem in young people. With an increase in young people's confidence, providers felt that young people will be more able to take positive control of their own lives and be less influenced by negative experiences. Adult influence was also seen to be important. Through working with adults, young people experience relationships which give them positive role models. For example,

> *The work gives them (young people) closer ties with responsible adults. It helps to build feelings of their own self worth and confidence and, through this, leads to improvements in behaviour.*
>
> *Community police officer*

Several providers developed this theme by suggesting that through providing 'safe' environments and developing trusting relationships between young people and adults, young people will be more likely to discuss problems and issues which impinge on their lives. Through these processes, young people's problems can be identified and support provided.

> *We take time to listen to them so this gives them an outlet to talk over their problems.*
>
> *Girls Brigade leader*

> *Gives young people a sense of belonging and they can open up. They can raise issues which concern them.*
>
> *Church Minister*

Providers whose work involved distributing information to young people on topics such as, drugs, sex, and crime, saw such services as facilitating young people in the development of critical decision making skills.

> *It allows young people to make informed choices.*
>
> *Information worker*

While this was seen to contribute to fostering young people's confidence and empowerment, a few providers mentioned the wider benefits accruing to young people through their participation in particular activities, for example,

> *On the exchanges and residentials young people get the experience of living away from home and being responsible for themselves. It helps to develop their organisational skills and gives them experience of living with a group of people.'*
>
> *Community education worker*

In addition to asking how their work helped reduce vulnerability, providers were asked to provide specific examples which demonstrated such outcomes. The following examples give a flavour of these responses,

> *'I worked with one boy who had spent three years away from school. When we first met him he was pissing against a wall and had been in trouble with the police. His prospects were poor. Now, after four years he is holding down a job; he has said, 'you did this for me'.'*
>
> *Community education worker*

> *'We encourage young people to put their experiences and residentials on their CV. In one instance a young person who had been involved in the Ocean Youth Club secured employment as a result of the employer having an interest in sailing. It gives them a wider repertoire.'*
>
> *Community education worker*

> *'One young person got keen on the photography course through the challenge. She has gone on to photograph local events for the Festival newspaper and is aiming to make a career out of it.'*
>
> *Community police officer*

In several interviews providers raised cautionary notes. In one instance, a community education worker said he did not know if the work had reduced vulnerability since no one had conducted any research into ascertaining if the local petty crime figures had dropped. In another interview, the community education worker pointed out that in most instances they only work with particular young people for a few hours each week and,

> *it is hard to challenge the cultural and home experiences in such a period of time.*

While it is possible to say young people in particular neighbourhoods are relatively more vulnerable than the population at large in some respects, within these neighbourhoods there are clearly degrees of vulnerability. From the interviews conducted with providers in these areas and the information contained in the questionnaire survey (Chapters 3–6) it would be reasonable to conclude that potential reductions in vulnerability were more likely to take place in sections of the population that were, relatively speaking, not the most vulnerable.

■ Summary

Some young people live in circumstances of multiple deprivation which prevent them from taking a full and active participation in mainstream society. Youth work providers in these areas identified the problems faced by vulnerable young people as including disenfranchisement, low expectations and behaviours associated with having experienced higher than average rates of child abuse, dysfunctional families, teenage pregnancies, drug taking and petty crime.

Although providers may find it difficulty in managing groups where there are disruptive individuals, the majority of providers subscribed to the view that youth work should be as inclusive as possible. Sometimes this meant that it was necessary to target particular groups such as

females or drug users but there was still the desire to 'spread the message' as widely as possible.

Providers tried to support young people in making their own decisions and in their social adjustment. The extent to which they were able to do this depended in part on the available resources but also on the relationships they were able to develop with young people. It was recognised that some young people might not have any other quality relationship with an adult and it was therefore important that youth workers were enthusiastic and committed to their work, non-judgmental and with a sense of humour. Providers, like the young people themselves tended to identify personal attributes and personality as being of prime importance rather than training or possession of specific skills.

Measuring the success of youth work has not been systematic and few providers would claim to be more than one contributory factor responsible for any change in an individual's behaviour, attitudes or knowledge. Promoting self-confidence and self-esteem were seen as important in encouraging young people to take control of their lives and be less influenced by negative experiences. As detached/outreach workers keep individual records of their clients, they can probably evaluate their work more easily than those working in youth clubs and other organised activities where record keeping tends to be restricted largely to basic identity information, dietary needs and attendance. Moreover it may be necessary to acknowledge the need for more subtle evaluations than those based largely on attendance and for service funders, managers and workers to develop more thorough approaches to evaluating their work with vulnerable young people.

Providers highlighted the contributions that their work made to reducing vulnerability among young people but some also recognised that without systematic evaluation it was difficult to demonstrate this. Many also acknowledged that while general youth work is unlikely to affect the most vulnerable young people in society, detached and outreach work is more likely and able to engage these vulnerable young people.

9   Conclusions and policy implications

In this report, we have examined the effectiveness of youth work with vulnerable young people in Scotland through a study of young people and providers in six contrasting localities each of which is characterised by multiple disadvantage. While youth work in these localities takes a range of forms, many of the predominant types of provision have roots which stretch back to the immediate post-war era. In the modern world, effective youth work can help equip young people with useful skills and information and may help them develop as responsible citizens. However, we are concerned that there has been an increase in sources of risk and vulnerability partly related to the extension of youth as a life stage, (with youth beginning earlier and ending later), together with a shortage of resources to meet adequately the growing range of problems faced by young people. Although the experiences of young people have changed rapidly over the last two or so decades, and while youth as a stage in the life-cycle has become increasingly protracted, mainstream youth work provision has largely failed to evolve into a service which meets the needs of all young people. With prolonged and complex transitions, it is no longer appropriate to regard youth as representing a short and unsettled phase in which young people can be 'policed' and protected from external risks, many of which are a normal part of their experiences.

The failure of youth work in areas of multiple disadvantage to keep up with the complexity of modern youth transitions must be regarded as a major shortcoming of the service and is reflected in the age-related decline in participation among young people. Mainstream youth provision tends to centre on young people who are in the organised leisure phase: as they begin to favour more casual leisure pursuits there is a noticeable drop in the uptake of youth services. Indeed, as a form of organised leisure, mainstream youth work tends to have greatest the appeal to males below the age of 15 and females below the age of 13. The male bias in provision, together with a tendency to go out with older boyfriends, was a factor associated with a relatively low uptake among females in their mid-teens. The preference of older teenagers for 'passive but sociable' activities (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 1995: 357) frequently leads to a mismatch between the demands of the young people and the priorities of service providers. One of the reasons for this short-coming is because the main models of youth work were developed at a time when the clients fell within a much more clearly defined age group and one indicator of its limited effectiveness relates to the extent to which youth work fails to attract or meet the needs of young people today who face complex

decisions and challenging economic circumstances. The main exception to this was found in relation to detached and outreach youth workers who frequently managed to make effective contact with young people who found more traditional forms of youth work inappropriate. At the same time, we were struck by the low priority given to the maintenance of this type of provision which can provide the most vulnerable young people with an essential source of support.

The evidence which we have highlighted points clearly towards the need for new forms of provision with a strong emphasis on safe and supportive environments in which young people are free to associate on a casual basis (such as youth cafes). Although 'hanging around' with friends is a normal form of association for young people, there are frequently associated risks and it is clear that, due to a shortage of alternatives, many young people spend more time on the streets than they would do in ideal circumstances.

One of the benefits of youth work which was highlighted by this study relates to the relationship between youth group attendance and a reduction in time spent 'hanging around' on the streets. Those who used youth clubs and groups tended to spend less time 'hanging around' than non-participants and were occupied at times when they may otherwise have engaged in risky behaviour or become the focus of police attention. However, youth clubs and groups tend only to be available for a limited number of evenings each week: those who lack the financial resources to develop broad leisure life styles involving a range of activities still spend substantial periods of time 'hanging around' even when they participated in organised youth activities.

The evidence presented in this report also highlights the relatively low uptake of organised youth activities among vulnerable young people for whom participation rates tend to be rather low (although detached and outreach youth workers tend to concentrate on those perceived as most vulnerable). Indeed, the economic circumstances of the family had a notable impact on participation and therefore those who are most vulnerable are least likely to gain from youth provision. Low levels of participation in youth activities were noted among those from low income families as well as among regular truants, those who had been excluded from school and those who had been before a children's panel. Furthermore, those who used drugs or participated in illegal activities tended to have a low level of involvement in youth and activity groups. Although we are not able to demonstrate a causal link between youth work and a reduced involvement in 'risky' or unsocial forms of behaviour, it is evident that by reducing the time spent hanging around on the streets, youth work helped minimise vulnerability to some extent. We also noted that fulfilling use of leisure time has positive social and psychological benefits and therefore policies which help promote active leisure life styles may ultimately reduce vulnerability and risk.

Despite our criticisms of youth provision, it is important to note that youth organisations are an important part of the social worlds of young people and that participants tend to make relatively positive evaluations of youth work. (Our main criticism relates to the middle class bias in uptake and the lack of participation among older youths.) Moreover, there is evidence that most of the five key dimensions of effective youth work identified by the Scottish Inspectorate are being met. Young people are provided with opportunities for social contact and tend to appreciate having access to places in which they could meet with their friends. Youth organisations also provide young people with the chance to develop new skills and take part in different activities, some of which are normally outside of the financial reach of the most vulnerable young people. Youth clubs can also provide a useful source of information on personal and social issues.

Youth work provides participants with an opportunity to enter into the decision making process within their organisation and can help build team work skills. Most youth groups do make some effort to involve their members in decisions about activities and consult them on key issues. At the same time, involvement in the decision making process was frequently superficial: young people were consulted about future activities and trips, but were given little real responsibility either on a financial level or in terms of making and enforcing rules.

One area in which youth work failed to meet its objectives was in the field of guidance and counselling. Probably as a result of the lack of opportunities for one-to-one contact, very few young people were willing to discuss personal problems with a youth worker. At the same time, young people were fairly positive about their youth workers and leaders. The best youth workers were seen as those who were friendly, approachable, had a sense of humour and were tolerant of the members. The worst were strict or bossy and tried to impose their own standards on the young people.

In sum, although working within tight financial constraints, youth work has a positive benefit on the lives of many young people and it is likely that any further reduction of resources would have negative consequences. In particular, young people would spend more time hanging around the streets, would lack opportunities for constructive social interaction, information on important social issues and the chance to become involved in decision-making within a structured organisation. For the most vulnerable young people, youth work offers opportunities to participate in a range of activities which would not otherwise be open to them. There is also some evidence that involvement can reduce participation in illegal activities and therefore it may be worthwhile to consider a shift of resources from crime control to prevention via an enhancement of youth work provision, especially when targeted towards the older age range and at those who are most vulnerable. It is also important to note that a reduction of existing services could well be

reflected by an increase in crime and drug and alcohol abuse and that skills developed in a youth work setting may help smooth the entry into employment among those otherwise at risk of economic marginalisation.

While it is easy to criticise youth work providers for a lack of imagination, we suggest that much of this conservatism arises from the lack of resources to fund alternatives or to experiment with new models. The employment of a detached youth worker, for example, may use the equivalent resources to those needed to fund a mainstream youth club. Moreover, while a detached worker will work with a small group of young people, the club is likely to reach far greater numbers. At the same time, the detached worker is likely to be dealing with a group of young people who are much more vulnerable and the social and economic benefits can be substantial. As we have shown, youth work is heavily reliant on (largely untrained) volunteer labour and volunteers may find it more demanding or less attractive to work with older youths in non-traditional settings; as such a shift towards these modes of working is likely to have substantial resource implications.

To conclude, we return to a set of central questions which were posed in our original research proposal and draw on the evidence presented in this report to provide a concise set of answers.

■ Is there sufficient, appropriate provision to meet the needs of young people?

Youth work provision in Scotland covers a wide range of programmes designed to meet the needs of young people and provide them with interesting and useful leisure pursuits, although in some areas the range is limited. Yet youth clubs, uniformed organisations and various voluntary agencies tend to offer activities which attract young teenagers. Although there is variety in services and facilities provided for young people, individuals are likely to have relatively little choice of accessible youth work provision and services for older teenagers tend to be poor.

Youth workers find it difficult to make contact and provide for the most vulnerable young people and older youths. Given that older youths encounter a greater range of risks (such as those associated with use of drugs and alcohol and involvement in illegal activities), this is a serious short-coming of the service.

■ Are the outcomes clearly monitored and evaluated?

There are many positive outcomes from youth clubs which provide opportunities for safe social contact at the same time as imparting new skills and sometimes making available a range of activities which would not be accessible for individual youngsters. Young people are able to help set an agenda, an opportunity which perhaps they are not able to get in other contexts. The intended outcomes of the providers are therefore being met in terms of enhancing skills and helping to empower young people via programmes of informal education. However, the least trained

workers probably have most direct contact with young people and the diversity in qualifications and training suggests that it is likely to be difficult to develop general and systematic evaluation strategies.

Current evaluation and priorities focus largely on levels of usage and specific issues are rarely targeted until youth workers or other officials in an area regard a particular issue or trend as problematic. Accountability is often limited to an assessment of resource deployment rather than representing an attempt to measure outcomes, evaluate effectiveness or explore alternative models. There is therefore a lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the ways in which youth work meets the needs of vulnerable young people.

■ Are there ways in which resources could be targeted more effectively?

As is to be expected from the diverse provision of services for young people in Scotland, there is a such a wide range in the scale of budgets, voluntary support and what comprises direct and indirect costs that it is impossible to make direct comparisons on the costs of services. Such costs have to take into account the immense contribution from volunteers without whom much provision would collapse.

One common theme which emerged relates to the lack of certainty about funding especially in community education. The result of this uncertainty is reflected in:
- too much time being spent on chasing additional funds which bites into the time of qualified staff and reduces direct contact with young people
- conservatism in provision as youth workers become reluctant to experiment and prefer to prioritise the maintenance of existing provision.

Most funding is fixed term in nature which means that even when grant applications are successful, the youth workers remain on the treadmill of close accountability in the short term to sustain the grant and formulating new grant proposals to guarantee the maintenance of the service.

■ Does youth work provision make a difference to vulnerable young people?

Vulnerable young people are under-represented in the uptake of youth work provision. Cost is not necessarily the major factor in the failure to attract the most vulnerable; cultural factors as well as local environmental issues can deter young people from attending youth groups. Moreover, there is no doubt that there is insufficient detached and outreach work to make a difference to the circumstances of the most vulnerable young people. Detached and outreach youth workers by necessity operate on the borderline between social work and youth work. They have to be flexible, responsive to the demands of individual and

small groups of clients, many of whom are being brought up in very difficult circumstances. It takes time for outreach workers to build up mutual trust with their clients and this kind of provision is not only expensive but it is difficult to demonstrate success other than through individual success stories or through predicted costs arising from individuals who are unable to adjust to the responsibilities and demands of adulthood.

There is also a tension in trying to support the most vulnerable young people alongside others who may feel threatened and uncomfortable in sharing facilities and activities. Providers of mainstream youth work themselves value constructive activity and may find the confused or anarchic values and behaviour of some of the most vulnerable difficult to cope with. Detached youth workers have different priorities and can largely work with their clients in very responsive situations which only involve individuals or a small group. Detached/outreach work is therefore more flexible and can be tailored to an individual's needs

Participation in youth clubs and groups provides opportunities for young people and helps them use free time in a constructive manner. Youth work involvement is also significant in reducing the amount of time young people spend hanging around outside and in this way clearly has some impact on the reduction of vulnerability. On the other hand, young people can only spend a very limited amount of time at youth clubs so the overall impact of youth groups may be diluted.

■ What are the policy implications of the findings?

There is no imperative for unitary authorities to provide any form of youth work; they are only empowered to provide it as part of the service to the community. Consequently, in times of financial restraint, youth work provision can be a soft target and the needs of vulnerable young people may be ignored which will, in the long term, be to the detriment to society as well as young people themselves.

The following suggestions for future developments in youth work arise from the research findings:

Meeting the needs of young people today and tomorrow

- a comprehensive review of the ways in which 'old' models of youth work can evolve in ways which help meet the needs of young people in a rapidly changing world
- the monitored development of a range of new models of youth work which are appropriate to the distinct needs of different age groups
- priority given to the role of guidance and counselling within all forms of youth work
- a reconsideration of ways in which the 'casual leisure' activities and information needs of young people can be met within attractive informal settings which are available throughout the week.

Supporting the most vulnerable

- a comprehensive review of detached and outreach work and an assessment of the ways it meets the needs of the most vulnerable young people
- a longitudinal study of the impact of youth work which will establish the extent to which involvement reduces risk and vulnerability.

Funding

- greater stability in long term funding which will encourage providers of youth work to be more innovative and encourage experimentation with new models of youth work
- consideration of the transfer of resources from criminal justice to youth work as a means of reducing the long-term economic and social costs associated with crime
- additional training opportunities for voluntary and sessional workers
- a review of the implications of funding cuts which are having a strong impact on detached and outreach work for vulnerable young people.

Monitoring and evaluation

- the enhancement of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as part of a strategy to provide evidence of effectiveness and thereby encourage more stability in funding arrangements for youth work
- if evaluation is seen as an increasingly important element in developing youth services, then service funders, managers, and workers may have to be more involved in the development of suitable and acceptable methodologies.

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Youth Work Provision in Scotland Questionnaire

All answers you give will be treated in confidence and will only be seen by the researchers.

Personal Characteristics

1   Are you? *(please tick one box)*   Male ☐   Female ☐

2   What age are you? *(please tick one box)*   12 ☐   13 ☐   14 ☐   15 ☐   16 ☐

3   Who do you live with? *(Please tick one box)*
    Father and mother ☐
    Mother only ☐
    Father only ☐
    Father and stepmother ☐
    Mother and stepfather ☐
    Grandparents ☐
    Mother part-time and father part-time ☐
    Foster parents ☐
    Somebody else (*please write in*) _____

4   How would you describe your ethnic origin eg, white Scottish, black Scottish, Asian, etc? (*please write in below*)
    _____

5   How would you describe your religious background? *(please tick one box)*

    Roman Catholic ☐
    Protestant ☐
    Hindu ☐
    Moslem ☐
    Jewish ☐
    Not Religious ☐
    Other (*please write in*) _____

Your Family
(If you are in local authority care or live with grandparents please leave this section and go straight to question 12)

The next few questions are about your parents or step parents jobs.

6   Are your mother or father working at the moment? *(Please tick for EACH parent)*

	Father	Mother
Yes full-time	☐	☐
Yes part-time	☐	☐
No	☐	☐
Don't know	☐	☐

	Father	Mother	For office use only

7   What is the name of their job?
(eg shop assistant, teacher) also
give any qualifications or rank
that either parent holds

....

....

....

8   In what type of business do
they work?

....

9   Please describe briefly what
kind of work they do in
their jobs

....

....

10   How old were your parents when they left school? (*please tick for each parent*)

	Father	Mother
15 or under	☐	☐
16	☐	☐
17	☐	☐
18 or over	☐	☐
Don't Know	☐	☐

11   What is the **highest** qualifications that your parents have? (*please tick for each parent*)

	Father	Mother
No qualifications	☐	☐
O Grades	☐	☐
Highers	☐	☐
Degree	☐	☐
Don't Know	☐	☐
Other (*please write in*)	_____	

Where you live

12   How many bedrooms are there in your home? (*please write in*)   _____

13   Do you have a bedroom to yourself?
(*please tick one box*)   Yes   ☐   No   ☐

14   Including yourself how many people live in your home? (*please write in*)   _____

15   Do you have a room where you can go to if you want to be on your own?
(*please tick one box*)   Yes   ☐   No   ☐

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Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

About yourself

16 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
*(please tick **one box** for each statement)*

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
My parents usually like to hear about my ideas	☐	☐	☐
I often feel lonely at school	☐	☐	☐
Other young people often break friends or fall out with me	☐	☐	☐
Other young people often say nasty things about me	☐	☐	☐
When I say things in front of the teachers, I usually feel shy	☐	☐	☐
I often feel sad because I have nobody to hang about with at school	☐	☐	☐
There are lots of things about myself I would like to change	☐	☐	☐
When I say things in front of other young people, I usually feel very daft	☐	☐	☐
When I want to tell a teacher something, I usually feel very daft	☐	☐	☐
I often have to find new friends because my old friends are with someone else	☐	☐	☐
I usually feel stupid when I talk to my parents	☐	☐	☐
Other people think I often tell lies	☐	☐	☐

17 At what stage are you expecting to leave school? *(please tick one box)*

As soon as possible	☐
After finishing fifth year	☐
After finishing sixth year	☐
Don't Know	☐

18 On leaving school, what do you want to do? *(please tick one box on each line)*

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Continue in full time education (College, University)	☐	☐	☐
Find a job as soon as I can	☐	☐	☐
Get training for a skilled job	☐	☐	☐
Have a worthwhile career	☐	☐	☐
Set up my own home (with or without a partner)	☐	☐	☐
Start a family (have children)	☐	☐	☐
Stay in the neighbourhood where I live	☐	☐	☐
Stay in the town or place where I live	☐	☐	☐
Move to another town or city	☐	☐	☐

19 What sort of job have you thought about doing when you leave school?
(please give details of any job you have considered doing)

Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

Youth Work Activities

20 Which of the following uniformed organisations do you currently attend?
(please tick all the ones you attend)

Scouts	☐
Guides	☐
Boys Brigade	☐
Girls Brigade	☐
Army Cadets	☐
Air Training Corps	☐
None	☐

21 If you were **ever** a member of a uniformed organisation, but have now left, please tell us which group you attended and why you left.

_____

_____

_____

22 Do you attend any of the following youth groups? *(Please tick **all** the ones you attend and say **how often** you go)*

Youth group activity		How often you attend
Group A	☐	_____
Group B	☐	_____
Group C	☐	_____
Group D	☐	_____
Group E	☐	_____

23 If you were **ever** a member of one of the groups in Q22 but have now left, please tell us which group you attended and why you left.

_____

_____

_____

24 Are you involved in any other youth work activities? eg. with a detached youth worker, intensive group work, intermediate treatment group etc *(Please tell us which group you attend)*

_____

_____

_____

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The next few questions are about your youth group. If you attend more than one group choose the one group you like the most, write the group name below and answer the questions about that group.

Group Name: _____

If you are not attending any youth organisations - Go straight to question Question 30

25   Has attending the youth group helped you in any of the following ways?
(please tick one box in each line)

	Helped a lot	Helped a little	No real help
Given me more confidence	☐	☐	☐
Helped me to talk to other people	☐	☐	☐
Introduced me to new friends	☐	☐	☐
Given me the opportunity to do different activities	☐	☐	☐
Given me the opportunity to learn new skills	☐	☐	☐
Helped me to get on with other people	☐	☐	☐
Given me the opportunity to go away for weekends	☐	☐	☐
Helped me to arrive at decisions	☐	☐	☐
Informed me of my rights	☐	☐	☐
Helped me with personal problems	☐	☐	☐
Helped me with practical skills	☐	☐	☐
Other help *(please write in below)*			

26   Have you ever received information on any of the following issues in the youth group/club you attend most often? *(please indicate how useful this information was)*

	Useful	Not Useful	Never Covered
Alcohol	☐	☐	☐
Drugs	☐	☐	☐
Aids	☐	☐	☐
Crime	☐	☐	☐
Sex	☐	☐	☐
Truancy	☐	☐	☐
Vandalism	☐	☐	☐
Personal hygiene	☐	☐	☐
Bullying	☐	☐	☐
Your rights	☐	☐	☐
Dealing with money	☐	☐	☐
Dealing with arguments	☐	☐	☐
Controlling your temper	☐	☐	☐
Relationships	☐	☐	☐

Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

27 How are decisions on the following made in your organisation/group?
(Please tick one box on each line)

	By Leaders	By Members	Jointly
Planning events	☐	☐	☐
Fund raising	☐	☐	☐
Spending money	☐	☐	☐
Making rules	☐	☐	☐
Enforcing rules	☐	☐	☐
Appointment of leaders	☐	☐	☐
Banning troublemakers	☐	☐	☐
Choice of activities	☐	☐	☐

28 Are you happy with the amount of influence you have in running the youth group?
(please tick one box)

Would like more influence	☐
Would like less influence	☐
Happy with things as they are	☐

29 From the following list, what do you think are the **five** most important things for a good youth worker? *(please tick **five** boxes only)*

Interested in members	☐
Same sex as myself	☐
Good at sport	☐
Good at dealing with trouble	☐
Friendly	☐
Nearer my age	☐
Older than me	☐
Someone you would like to be like	☐
Someone you can trust	☐
Enthusiastic about work	☐
Good listener	☐
Leaves you to work on your own	☐
Always works with you	☐
Accepts your point of view	☐

Your Local Area

30 Thinking about things available in your local area, are there? *(please tick one box for each line)*

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Places for young people to meet (eg cafes, arcades)	☐	☐	☐
Sports facilities	☐	☐	☐
Public transport	☐	☐	☐
Jobs available when leaving school	☐	☐	☐
Opportunities for further and higher education	☐	☐	☐
Places for young people to live when they leave home	☐	☐	☐
Help/advice for young people	☐	☐	☐
Entertainment facilities	☐	☐	☐
Libraries	☐	☐	☐
Other *please write in below*			

Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

Personal Concerns

31 Over the past year, have you been worried about any of the following?
    please tick one box for each line

	Very worried	Slightly worried	Not at all worried
Difficulties in school	☐	☐	☐
Finding or keeping a job	☐	☐	☐
Relationships with your family	☐	☐	☐
Being sexually attacked	☐	☐	☐
Getting pregnant/getting someone pregnant	☐	☐	☐
Getting HIV/AIDS	☐	☐	☐
Getting into trouble with the police	☐	☐	☐
Being bullied/harassed	☐	☐	☐
Being out alone at night near where you live	☐	☐	☐
Worries about using drugs	☐	☐	☐
Dealing with money problems	☐	☐	☐
Making/keeping relationships with friends	☐	☐	☐
Worries about health	☐	☐	☐
Worries about drinking alcohol	☐	☐	☐
Finding somewhere to live	☐	☐	☐
Other concerns *please write in below*			

32 If you have a concern or problem, is there someone you can talk things over with?
    please tick one box

    Yes ☐   No ☐

33 Who do you talk over your concerns with?
    (please tick all that apply)

    Friend   ☐
    Parent or guardian   ☐
    Brother or sister   ☐
    Teacher   ☐
    Youth worker/leader   ☐
    Other *(please write in below)*

34 Which issue or issues are you most concerned about in your life?

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Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

Leisure Time

35 How much of your time at home do you spend doing any of the following activities?
(please tick one box for each statement)

	A lot of time	A little time	No time
Watching videos	☐	☐	☐
Reading books for fun	☐	☐	☐
Talking with friends	☐	☐	☐
Talking on the telephone	☐	☐	☐
Playing with card/board games	☐	☐	☐
Playing with SEGA/Nintendo	☐	☐	☐
Using a computer	☐	☐	☐
Reading magazines/comics	☐	☐	☐
Doing homework	☐	☐	☐
Helping with jobs around the house	☐	☐	☐
Daydreaming	☐	☐	☐
Hobby, eg model making, sewing	☐	☐	☐
Watching TV	☐	☐	☐
Listening to the radio	☐	☐	☐
Listening to music	☐	☐	☐
Caring for pets	☐	☐	☐
Playing a musical instrument	☐	☐	☐
Other *please write in below*			

36 Do you spend a lot of your spare time with the following people?
(please tick one box for each line)

	Yes	No
Your family	☐	☐
On your own	☐	☐
Your best friend of same sex	☐	☐
A boy/girl friend (of opposite sex)	☐	☐
A group of boys	☐	☐
A group of girls	☐	☐
A group of boys and girls	☐	☐
Adults outside the family	☐	☐

37 How many times have you taken part in the following activities in the last **month**?
*(**Do not** count activities which take place during the normal school day)*

	Five or more	Three/four	Once/twice	Never
Cinema	☐	☐	☐	☐
Disco	☐	☐	☐	☐
Swimming	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gym	☐	☐	☐	☐
Football/netball/hockey/shinty	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cycling	☐	☐	☐	☐
Badminton/table/tennis	☐	☐	☐	☐
Martial arts/boxing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Skating	☐	☐	☐	☐
Karting	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arts and crafts	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dancing	☐	☐	☐	☐

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If there are any other clubs or activites you regularly attend please write them in below and say **how often** you attend.

_____

_____

_____

38 Do you and your friends ever just hang about outside or wander round doing nothing in particular? *(please tick one box)*

No   **If no go to Q41**   ☐

Yes, once in a while   ☐

Yes, nearly every day   ☐

Yes, at weekends   ☐

39 Where do you usually hang about? *(please tick all that apply)*

Public parks   ☐

In the street   ☐

Shopping centres   ☐

Sports centres   ☐

Housing estate   ☐

School grounds   ☐

Amusement arcade   ☐

Cafe/chip shop   ☐

Others *please write in below*

40 What are your main reasons for hanging around? *(please tick all that apply)*

To talk to friends   ☐

It's a way to meet up   ☐

There's nothing better to do   ☐

To get out of the house   ☐

To see if anything exciting turns up   ☐

41 Have you ever stayed away from school without permission from your parents or the teacher? *(please tick one box)*

Yes   ☐   No   **If no go to Q43**   ☐

42 Why did you stay away from school? *(please tick all that apply)*

I was fed up with school   ☐

I felt too down/depressed to face school   ☐

I was too frightened to go to school   ☐

I dislike one or more of the teachers   ☐

I had to help at home   ☐

I wanted to do something special away from school ☐

I had other reasons *please write reasons in below*

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Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

43 Have you ever been suspended or excluded from school?   *(please tick one box)*

Never ☐
Once or twice ☐
Three or more times ☐

You and Drugs

44 How often you have tried each of these drugs in the last month?
(Please tick one box on each line)

	Never	Once or twice	Three or more times
Alcohol	☐	☐	☐
Tobacco	☐	☐	☐
Solvents (glue, gas)	☐	☐	☐
Cannabis (dope, blow)	☐	☐	☐
Heroin/Cocaine/Crack	☐	☐	☐
Temazepam (jellies, eggs)	☐	☐	☐
Ecstasy (e)/LSD (speed)	☐	☐	☐

You and Crime

45 Have you ever been involved in any of the following activities within the last year?
(please tick one box on each line)

	Never	Once	More than once
Sprayed or drawn graffiti	☐	☐	☐
Deliberately damaging other people's property	☐	☐	☐
Stolen vehicles/ridden in stolen vehicles	☐	☐	☐
Shoplifted	☐	☐	☐
Broken into cars (to steal things)	☐	☐	☐
Stolen personal property from someone (not their home)	☐	☐	☐
Bought or sold stolen things	☐	☐	☐
Broken into someone's home	☐	☐	☐
Broken into a shop, school or office	☐	☐	☐
Threatened, bullied or harassed someone	☐	☐	☐
Assaulted or injured someone	☐	☐	☐
Mugged or robbed someone	☐	☐	☐
Sold illegal drugs	☐	☐	☐

Other *please write in below*

_____

46 Have you ever been stopped or questioned by the police? *(please tick one box)*

Yes ☐   No ☐

47 Have you ever been searched by the police? *(please tick one box)*

Yes ☐   No ☐

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Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

48 Have you ever been in court or in front of the children's panel? *(please tick one box)*

                Yes ☐   No ☐

If Yes, what for? *please write in below*

_____

_____

49 Are there any other facilities or activities or groups that you would like to see available in your local area?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now please make a final check to see if you have answered all the questions and have not missed out any by accident.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Remember, your answers will be treated as confidential

Appendix II – Schedule for Youth Work individual interviews

Schedule for Youth Work individual interviews

Worker/Contact/Group name ....

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
:       Use the group name or contact persons name in place of ************below.       :
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

1)   How did you become involved with ********* ?
        (if referred, by whom, why?)
        (how contacted, outreach worker, detached worker etc?)

2)   How long have you been involved with **********?

3)   What do you do when at/with***********?

4)   Who decides what you when at/with *************?
        (you, youth worker)

5) Do you get the chance to say what you want to do?
(what do you want to do?)

6) What do you get out of being involved with *************?
(how does it help you?)

7) What do you enjoy/dislike most about **************?

8) Do you get the chance to talk alone with your youth worker or does conversation usually take place in groups?

9) Do you feel that you can talk about anything?
(check out with a few examples, sex, problem at home)
(if no, what do you would find difficult to discuss?)

10) Are you involved with other groups or services for young people? (Which?, why?, how often?, where?)

Your Youth Worker
11) What do you think of your youth worker? (helpful, friendly, approachable etc.)

12) Can you give me a couple of examples of how youth worker helped you?

Your Future Plans
13) In what ways do you think being involved with *********** might help you in the future?

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

Thank you for your help

Appendix III – Youth Service Group Involvement Grid

Youth service/group involvement

Area..   ID...

*Type of service/contact person	How long running?	Numbers M F	Expected length attendance?	Ages aimed for vs attend?	% Face to face time?	Charges (for what)

Appendix IV – Schedule for Youth Work Providers

Schedule for Youth Work Providers

1   Name: Organisation:

2   How did you get into present position,
     career path, college employment etc.?

Youth Work Policy

3   What are the principles of policy in relation to youth work in this area?
     How is policy arrived at?

4   What does this mean in relation to individual groups and services? How
     much autonomy do they have in implementing policy and doing their own
     thing?

5   What kind of budget do you have?
        How is spending monitored?
        Generally people have to make decisions in spending, what kind of
        choices do you have to make in allocating resources, why these?

Young people in the area
I'm interested in the area and the young people whom you are involved with
or who use the services and the types of problems they face.

6   What are the main problems faced by young people in the area?
        (need to prompt on how the problem manifest themselves, crime, drugs etc.)

7   How are you able to identify these problems?
        If surveyed, what did you do, results and use of results?

Youth Work Involvement
We would like to ask you a few basic questions about the services and groups you
are involved with. (may have returned grid)
8   Type of work/group involved in at present

i   Having spent a bit of time filling in the boxes can you tell me a bit
about the aims of each of the groups/services you are involved in and what
your job involves?

What kinds of activities and experiences would the young person
participate?

What do the young people get out of participation?

How do you know that?

Who decides the activities that young people participate in?

How do you think this youth work programme helps reduce vulnerability
among young people?

Could you give us a specific example of how the programme has benefited
young people

ii   Are their particular problems or groups of young people or issues that are priorities for you? How do these relate to policy?

How do these relate to policy?

iii   Level of young peoples involvement in providing services/running groups, involvement in decision making, organisational control?
please give examples

iv   Are records kept on young people who use the services?
If yes what information do these records contain?
Are they compiled by/with/in conjunction with the young people?
What are the records used for?
Who has access to the records?
What is the purpose of the records?
Do you monitor individual young peoples progress through a programme?
Are records used to monitor the effect of an activity on individuals?

v   Given the information in 8 above, how do you measure and evaluate the success of the work?
How do you know that it works?

vi   Are there issues or particular young people in the area you feel are missed?
Are there some people you would reject or some you can't help?
(sex, age, disability, other)

General Questions

9   I've got a few more general questions about youth work and provision which I'd like to ask you now.

What do you think are the key variables on which success should be measured?

10   What do you feel is the role of a youth worker? What do you see as the most important characteristics for being a good youth worker?

11   What are the major issues confronting provision for young people today? Is there anything you feel is lacking in present provision

Training and Selection
12   Could you tell me about any in service and training that you have involved in either as a leader or as a participant over the last 2 years and how it may have contributed to what you do now?
        Satisfaction?
        Are there specific training areas which you would like for yourself or for your staff?

Senior staff only

13   Going back to what you said were the characteristics of a good youth worker do you have some kind of criteria for selecting staff?
Does this apply to voluntary and sessional staff?

Working with other agencies and groups

14   Can you tell me about any other agencies, groups or services (statutory or voluntary) that you have contact with. What does this contact involve?
Are there advantages in working with others?
Disadvantages?
On balance do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages

Local Government Re-organisation
The final question concerns the recent local government reorganisation and the main issues confronting youth work today.

15   Has Local Government reorganisation already resulted in changes in your working situation or practices? Expectation of changes? positive/negative

Any other comments