Overture Network Meeting – Jambville 2014

Session: Outreaching and detached youth-work in Scouting context

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What is outreaching and detached youth-work?

From Wikipedia "Youth work"

Detached youth work
In its purest form, detached youth work is a form of street-based youth work provision, which operates without the use of a centre and takes place where young people "are at" both geographically and developmentally . Often confused with outreach work, because of the similar principles i.e. making contact on the streets with those "hard to reach" or "unattached" young people. Detached work is seen as more than trying to encourage young people to utilise existing provision (which is the often used definition of Outreach work) and is used as a method of delivering informal and social education and is concerned with addressing whatever needs are presented to or perceived by the youth worker.
> "Detached youth work is a model of youth work practice, targeted at vulnerable young people, which takes place on young people's own territory such as streets, cafes, parks and pubs at times that are appropriate to them and on their terms. It begins from where young people are in terms of their values, attitudes, issues and ambitions and is concerned with their personal and social development. It is characterised by purposeful interaction between youth workers and young people and utilises a range of youth and community work methods". (The Princes Trust - 1998)

Outreach youth work
Similar to detached youth work, outreach is a form of youth work that takes place on young people's own territory [6] and is a method of work that supports and compliments new and existing centre/project based youth work. Primarily used to inform young people of services that exist in their locality and to encourage them to use such services, Outreach can also seek to identify, through consultation with young people, any gaps that exist in services aimed at meeting their needs.As opposed to Detached Youth Work, Outreach is seen as an extension to centre-based work , Outreach work takes place when workers who are usually centre based go onto the streets with an agenda of their own to pursue, usually to encourage young people to attend their club.

Links between Outreach and Detached youth-work

As highlighted above there are few definitions available to clearly distinguish the differences between Outreach and Detached work and according to The Princes Trust's research for the Scottish Executive, the reason for this may be partly due to the similarities in the places where the work is carried out (on the streets, in parks and cafes) and the fact that both models work with the same target groups of young people (those who are disaffected or alienated). Furthermore the research points out that "There is even some evidence from fieldwork that there can be an occasional overlap in practice between the two modes of work. For these and other reasons, definitions have received less emphasis in the literature than the principles and intentions of each of these modes of work".

Some basic concepts of "outreaching" work

Goals of Outreaching work

- Building bridges: creating a link to classic organizations (Not always in the form of "active recruitment")
- Building trust: create a relationship of trust with participants (and parents)
- Free-time-activities only: we're not professional social workers, we're NOT changing the world
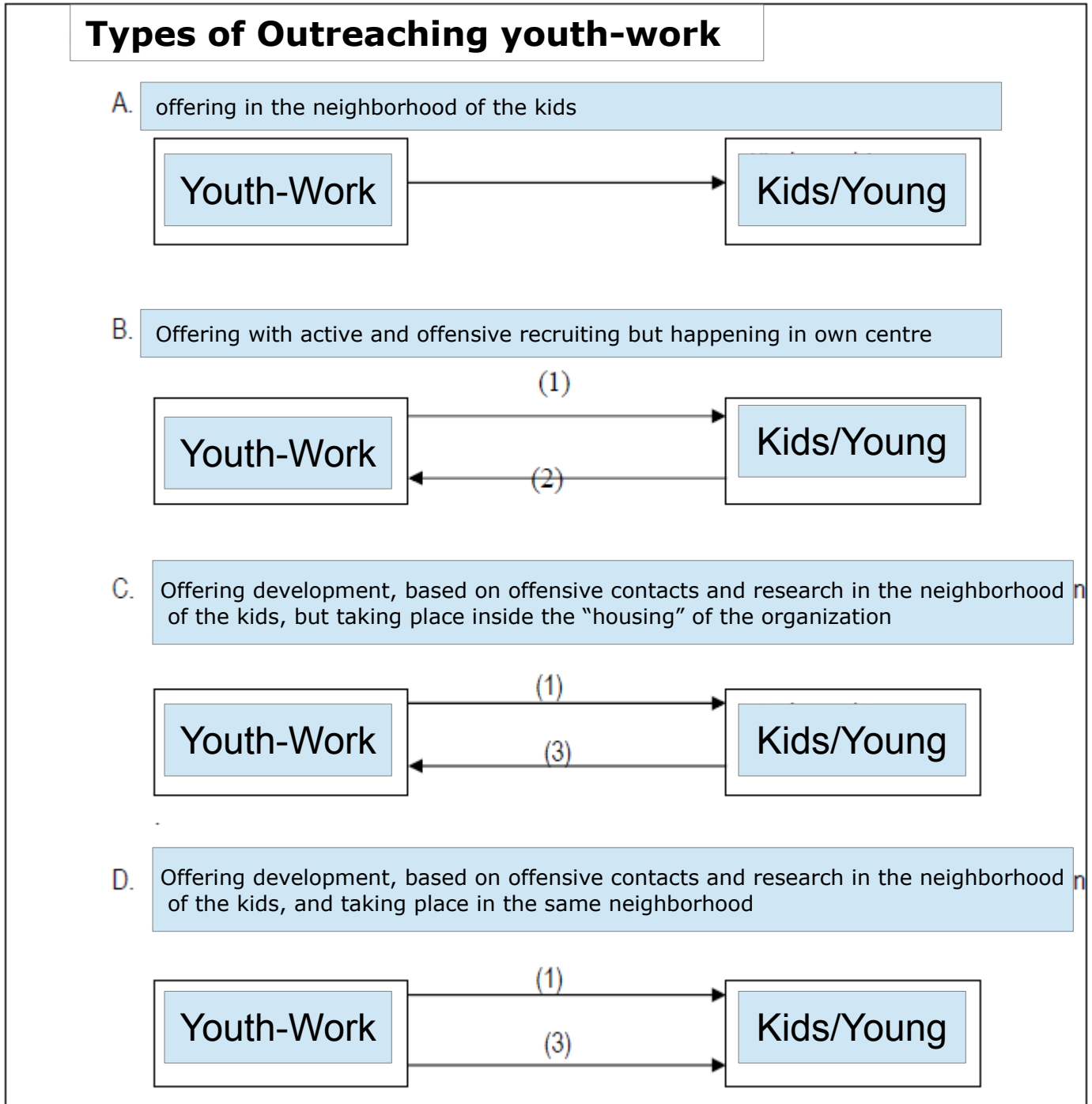- Learning by doing: Enlarge your own knowledge of the world you live in

Characteristics of outreaching work

- Active recruitment: you don't expect the people to just show up, but you actively go out looking in their neighborhoods
- Unstructured presence of participants
- Activities based on the demands and needs of the participants. Work inside their safety-zone
- Keep in account and learn to coop with strange and "unacceptable" behavior
- Roll of parents: Parents and social surroundings have an important roll in the lives of kids. Keep in account differences in pedagogical views.

Hints for doing "outreaching" work

- Active: step into their world
- Positive: accept differences
- Integral: engage with participants in all their aspects, improvise,...
- Structural: don't do it alone, make use of the network around the kids (existing youth work, school, ...)

Methods of outreaching

Types of Outreaching youth-work

A. offering in the neighborhood of the kids

| Youth-Work | → | Kids/Young |

B. Offering with active and offensive recruiting but happening in own centre

Youth-Work (1) → Kids/Young
Youth-Work ← (2) Kids/Young

C. Offering development, based on offensive contacts and research in the neighborhood of the kids, but taking place inside the "housing" of the organization

Youth-Work (1) → Kids/Young
Youth-Work ← (3) Kids/Young

D. Offering development, based on offensive contacts and research in the neighborhood of the kids, and taking place in the same neighborhood

Youth-Work (1) → Kids/Young
Youth-Work (3) → Kids/Young

Resources

Outreach work with young people, young drug users and young people at risk – emphasis on secondary prevention; njål petter svensson (council of europe); https://wcd.coe.int/viewdoc.jsp?id=1302697&Site=DG3-Pomhpidou

Wikipedia "Youthwork"
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youth_work

encyclopaedia of informal education
http://www.infed.org