

Y Services for Young People



EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

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Introduction

Youth workers utilise a range of youth work methods to develop contact and establish relationships with target groups. Dependent on the target group, workers provide a varied degree of services to young people from a general befriending contact to providing specific information on drug education. The overall aim is to empower young people to effectively participate and contribute, within their own communities and to make their own informed decisions with the support of the workers.

Youth workers are often in contact with young people considered to be 'at risk' or 'in need' and therefore part of the role is that of challenging behaviours and engaging and diverting young people at risk of or already involved in behaviours and activities that are anti-social or possibly harmful. As such both to protect their own and the organisations reputation, all youth workers and related staff within the *Y Services* will need to ensure they comply with the Code of Conduct and specific professional codes of conduct relating to community and youth work.

Staff will be in full public view when out working as youth workers. It is therefore important that *Y Services* identification badges are worn at all times and that staff conduct themselves in a professional manner. These should be visible at all times. There must be no smoking or drinking of alcohol on duty, in line with the *Y Services* policies. These areas are also more fully outlined in the section on professional ethics and boundaries. Staff should also be aware of *Y Services* policies relating to other areas of professional conduct and working with young people.

All workers should familiarise themselves with the content and requirements of this document and undertake any necessary steps and /or training to enable them to effectively comply and adhere to the

1. Professional Ethics and Boundaries.

This list is not exhaustive but serves to highlight a number of main areas relating to the professional conduct and boundaries a worker is expected to adhere to whilst undertaking their professional duties. In line with statutory and service determined policies it will be reviewed, updated and amended.

1a. Threatening behaviour, violence and crime.

Workers may at some stage during their work be witness to and/or encounter acts of violence, threatening behaviour and crime. *Y Services* has a policy, which supports and assists workers who experience this treatment to ensure concerns are dealt with as soon as possible. In relation to work with young people all workers should consider the boundaries of legal and ethical responsibilities of

bearing witness to these situations involving young people and reporting to the relevant statutory bodies.

Workers should at all times challenge and address issues in an appropriate manner that concern the use of discriminatory language, behaviour and violence. *Y Services* has a policy on the reporting and recording of **racist incidents and occurrences** and all incidents should be completed on the appropriate recording sheet, which is available from their line manager.

1b. Smoking, alcohol and drugs.

Y Services operates a non-smoking policy in all of its facilities, buildings and places it operates from. Workers are not permitted to smoke during their work periods except whilst on an official break and pertaining the full requirements of the Policy. Whilst detached youth workers do not operate within buildings they should also adhere to the aspects of the Policy and in accordance with policies whilst **carrying out their duties.**

Y Services operates a policy relating to the use of alcohol and drugs by employees. This policy states that employees **should in no circumstances be under the influence of alcohol and /or drugs** whilst carrying out their duties. Therefore workers should consider the impact of using alcohol/drugs prior to attending and delivering work which could impede on their capability and render them liable in terms of being deemed under the influence. Failure to abide by this policy will result in disciplinary action as a result of misconduct.

Y Services No **Smoking Policy** incorporates the **Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006, Smoke Free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007 and the Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007.** In effect this means that staff are not allowed to smoke in any buildings and must comply with relevant signage, smoking is not permitted within the boundaries of buildings, staff are not permitted to smoke whilst deemed to be on duty and all breaks taken can only be outside core hours of delivery and unpaid.

Youth workers are required to ensure they do not permit any staff or themselves to smoke around any area of a youth and community facility and act in accordance with the regulations of any other establishments they may use or visit in the course of their duties. Youth workers must also ensure those young people they are working with also adhere to the regulations. These regulations apply to everyone and are not solely restricted to *Y Services* employees. Therefore all contractors/partners and visitors involved with *Y Services* will be required to comply with these regulations. All buildings should have signage and guidance displayed in an appropriate and visible area. All groups using the facilities as part of a lettings agreement should also be briefed on this aspect. Support is available for those employees who wish to seek help to quit smoking.

Youth workers **should not at anytime or under any circumstance** either give or purchase cigarettes, alcohol and/or drugs to or for young people. They should ensure they do not condone or support anything that could affect the well-being and health of young people.

Y Services has a policy on working with young people and drugs and also has an incident report form relating to incidents and encounters involving alcohol and drugs. There are also available a range of training courses relating to working with young people and drugs through a range of agencies. *Y Services* will ensure workers will be briefed and made aware of this policy especially in relation to legal implications. At all times workers must be responsible for their own and co-workers health and safety. In situations, where issues of drug and alcohol use by young people occurs workers must adhere to their own planned **risk assessments, withdrawal strategy and emergency planning procedures.** These areas are further explored within risk assessment frameworks and emergency planning section and training.

1. C Relationships

At **all times** workers should maintain professional boundaries with the young people they work with. All youth workers due to the nature of the work are in a position of trust and as such owe a duty of care to those they work with or assume responsibility for. Workers relationships with young people should at all times be within a professional boundary and appropriateness relating to age, gender and general level of maturity.

At **no time** should a worker use this position to deliberately influence or seek to engage young people in activities, which meet their own gratification in terms of physical, emotional or sexual needs. Workers should also ensure their own behaviour and actions are not misinterpreted and as such should be aware in terms of their use of language and interaction with young people.

There are also specific guidelines into other relationships and their limitations which are contained in the Code of Conduct for Employees at the end of this document.

1.d Standard of Appearance

It is recognised that youth workers would not necessarily be expected to comply to the standards of an office based environment when working with young people. However the charity does have a standard that requires workers to dress professionally, in a suitable manner and appropriately for the job they undertake.

As such whilst carrying out their roles outside of delivery times with young people workers are expected to comply with these standards. As part of the role is directly working in contact with members of the public, workers should ensure they maintain a high standard of appearance. Unless an activity demands and permission is sort from their line manager workers are not permitted to wear extremely casual items of clothes including shorts.

Workers also need to apply these standards when working with young people and are not permitted to wear clothing that would be deemed to be extremely revealing and may also cause offence to particular groups including different cultural groups. This should also apply to the wearing of items of clothing that display messages and statements that could be deemed as inappropriate and offensive. Workers must ensure they comply with *Y Services* policies and not allude to and personal or political preferences whilst carrying out their duties.

It is also necessary for this dress code to be expanded to include footwear and as such staff must ensure they wear appropriate footwear to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe manner which conforms to Health and Safety regulations. If specific footwear is required them it must be used. Specialist items required to carry out duties will be supplied on assessment of the need and necessity.

Notwithstanding workers are permitted to wear clothing that is necessary to undertake duties and activities and should be in accordance with the activity guidelines, e.g. football kits and bathing costumes are appropriate to wear in the specific activity and environment.

1.e. Mobile Phones

Whilst it may be necessary for staff to have use of a designated works phone for emergency use during sessions all private phones should be stored in a safe and secure environment for the duration of the session. Staff are not permitted to use or respond to any private calls during sessions as they could be detrimental to the delivery and safety of the session. If there is a personal situation which requires the use of a private mobile in the session this should be discussed and agreed with your line manager prior to the session and should not be seen as a normal course of action. If there is a need for anyone to contact in case of the emergency designated works mobile number and contact can be given.

1.f. Confidentiality and Child Protection

All workers must attend a child protection training course at the level applicable to their post and role. All workers must also read, acknowledge and abide by the *Y Services*. This will be undertaken as part of the induction process and enable workers to carry out their duty in accordance with the **Children's Act 1989 Section 47**. It will also ensure workers are able to understand the multi agency referral process and relevant paperwork. In accordance with the Children's Act *Y Services* maintains the **"child's and young person's welfare is paramount and Youth and Community workers must listen to and work in partnership with children and young people"**.

All workers must therefore ensure that they do not offer young people complete confidentiality, stressing that whilst workers do maintain a level of confidentiality, in the following circumstances it will not be possible to do so:

"Where a worker considers that the young person may be at risk of significant harm or that they are a significant risk to themselves and/ or others"

In the case of 18+ young people workers need to consider the individual disclosures in terms of the nature of the disclosure and whether the above statement would apply in terms of younger siblings.

Where records of young people are kept and maintained young people's consent should be sought and they should be made aware of why these are kept.

At times workers may be in contact with young people involved in criminal activities and /or witness criminal events. At no times should workers condone these activities and whenever possible, at a safe distance inform the relevant police authority. The local police number for Hampshire Police is 08450 454545, as always in emergencies workers should always dial **999**.

3. Press Contact/Emergency Situations

At all times in an emergency situation workers should call their Line manager or a *Y Services* Trustee.

Due to the nature of detached work it may be that workers are present in events / situations that the press and media are in attendance. At no point should workers communicate with the media/press without the express consent of the Trustees. Therefore all press enquiries need to be directed to the Trustees and in all circumstances workers must ensure they inform the most relevant and available line manager immediately.

This Policy and its contents are part of an overall documentation of policies, guidelines and information relating to the governance of safe working practices as adopted and applied by *Y Services* in its duty as an employer. They should not therefore be seen in isolation or acted upon in such a manner. This Policy serves a purpose of relating to this documentation at a local level of practice. As such it will be updated as and when deemed necessary and/or relevant and does not purport to be a definitive guide nor is the information contained therein exhaustive.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THIS AND THE ATTACHED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES AND COMPLETE AND RETURN THE ELECTRONIC AGREEMENT.

4. Useful Unit Contacts

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Tel. No</u>
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5. Appendix 1. Code of Conduct for Employees.

Y Services for Young People

Code of Conduct for Employees

1. Introduction

1. The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all staff who work for Y Services. The role of all employees is to serve the public and partners by providing advice, implementing policies and delivering services to the local community. In performing these duties all our staff are required to act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.

2. Accountability

2.1 Employees must be accountable to *Y Services* for their actions. Therefore, you are required to act in accordance with this code and any other relevant policies, procedures, guidelines, regulations etc, in recognition of your responsibility as an employee in undertaking and delivering your public duties.

2.2 The aim of this code is to:

- Promote the highest standards in public life and engender confidence in the Council and our employees
- Promote good and effective working relationships
- Protect our employees from misunderstanding or criticism.

3. Although this code cannot be exhaustive, its intention is to provide sufficient information to make you aware of what is required of you. Therefore, if in any doubt, you should consult your line manager.

4. This code applies to all *Y Services* employees.

2.5 Any breach of this code will be investigated under *Y Services* Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and appropriate action taken if required.

3. Political Neutrality

3.1 All employees must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

4. Relationships

4.1 The Local Community and Service Users

You must remember your responsibilities to the community you serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all individuals and groups as defined by *Y Services* policies, procedures etc.

4.2 Contractors

Contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against others tenders and no special favours shown in the tendering process to businesses run by, for example friends, relatives, partners etc. You are required to comply with the Business Dealings with Personal Associates and Declarations of Interest policy when dealing with any potential or actual contractors.

4.3 Members

Mutual respect between employees and Members is essential to good working relationships and should be kept on a professional basis. Close personal familiarity between employees and individual Members can damage that relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and Members. Therefore, close personal friendships should be avoided.

5. Equality

5.1. All employees are required to ensure that *Y Services* policies relating to equality issues are complied with in addition to the requirements of relevant legislation. All members of the local community, customers and other employees have a right to be treated with fairness and

equality. We expect each member of staff to create a positive climate in the workplace where individual differences are respected and valued.

6. Use of Resources

- 6.1. All staff must ensure that they use public funds and/or resources entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner.
- 6.2. The personal use of *Y Services* property, resources, vehicles or other facilities is not permitted unless authorised to do so by your line manager and with the authorisation of the Trustees.
- 6.3. Employees must strive to achieve value for money for the local community.

7. Avoiding Fraud and Corruption

- 7.1. In addition to Section 6, it must be understood that it is a criminal offence for you, in your capacity as an employee of *Y Services*, to receive or bestow any personal advantage as part of your day to day role and responsibilities.
- 7.2. Whilst the private lives of employees are their own concern, we cannot allow private interests to conflict with your and our public duty. You must therefore ensure that you inform your line manager and Trustees of any areas relating to Business Dealings with Personal Associates and Declarations of Interest.

8. Raising Concerns at Work (Whistle blowing)

- 8.1. Should you become aware of activities you believe to be fraudulent, not in accordance with *Y Services* policy or inconsistent with this code, you should use the *Y Services* Raising Concerns at Work (Whistle blowing Policy) to raise your concerns.

9. Treatment of Information

- 9.1. The law requires that certain types of information must be made available to Members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. *Y Services* itself may decide to be open about other types of information. Staff will be advised through the publication of policies and communications what information is, or is not open, and must act accordingly.
- 9.2. You must not use any information obtained in the course of your employment for personal gain or benefit, nor must it be passed to others who may use it in such a way.
- 9.3. *Y Services* policy on the disclosure of personal information is contained in the Use and Disclosure of Personal Information policy.
- 9.4. When using information you must be mindful of the requirements of the Data Protection Act. Advice on which is contained in the Data Protection Guidance for Employees.
- 9.5. This also applies to the use of other media and the use of E mail.
- 9.6. Nothing in this section should be seen to conflict with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

10. Appointment of Staff

10.1 Employees involved in appointments should ensure compliance with *Y Services* Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice and ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit. To avoid any possible accusation of bias, you should not be involved in an appointment where you are related to an applicant, or have a personal relationship outside work.

2. Similarly, there should be no involvement with decisions relating to discipline, grievance, promotions or pay adjustments for other employees who are relatives, partners or with whom you have a personal relationship outside work.

11. Safety and Security

11.2. As your employer, *Y Services* has a legal responsibility to safeguard as far as reasonably practicable, your health, safety and welfare whilst at work. Similarly, you too have a responsibility for your own safety and that of others. For further information refer to the HSE Health and Safety Policy and any local Health and Safety Policies produced within the localities/facilities you are working in .

11.3. You are required to adhere to *Y Services* security policy and to wear your identification badges whilst on Council premises or whilst performing your duties.

11.4. You are required to comply with the *Y Services* Care and Use of Equipment Policy.

12. Standard of Appearance

12.2. *Y Services* expects high standards of appearance from you whilst undertaking your duties. You are expected to dress professionally, in a suitable manner and appropriately for the job you undertake.

12.3. Uniforms or other branded items of clothing, if issued, must be worn and maintained appropriately.

13. Further Information

13.2. All the documents referred to in this Code of Conduct are available on the website and you must familiarise yourself with these documents. The list below does not necessarily represent a full and complete list of relevant documents. It will be reviewed and updated as required, but employees are required to consider any relevant policies and procedures that may impact on this Code of Conduct.

13.3. Should you have any queries regarding these documents, please refer them to your line manager in the first instance. Further clarification can then be sought from the relevant service area:

Document	Contact	Access to document via
Complaints policy for young people and parents	Trustees	
Equality and Diversity Policy	Trustees/Line manager	
Company/HSE Health and Safety Policy	Trustees/Line manager	
Data Protection	Trustees/Line manager	

Dignity at Work	Trustees/Line manager	
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	Trustees/Line manager	
Expenses Policy	Trustees/Line manager	
Environmental policy	Trustees/Line manager	
Grievance policy	Trustees/Line manager	
Raising Concerns at Work (Whistle Blowing policy)	Trustees/Line manager	
Race relations policy	Trustee/Line manager	
Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice	Trustees/Line manager	
Use of Mobile 'Phone Policy	Trustees/Line manager	

Should you have any queries regarding this Code, again refer them to your Line Manager in the first instance and any further clarification, if needed can be sought from the Trustees.

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