

# Youth work and violence prevention

## Summary of recommendations

### Right focus

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#### Target support where violence risk is highest

**Why?** Support should follow need.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Identify vulnerable children and young people and high-risk contexts.
- B. Work with local partners to identify gaps.
- C. Commission in partnership with children and young people.



### Approaches that work

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#### Close the most urgent gaps in youth club access

**Why?** Youth club deserts can make children and young people less safe.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Map existing youth clubs and identify deserts.
- B. Open new youth clubs to improve access for the most vulnerable.
- C. Increase funding for existing youth clubs.
- D. Actively publicise the full local youth offer.

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#### Raise the standard and reach of mentoring

**Why?** Vulnerable children and young people need trained adults who stay long enough to earn their trust.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Map mentoring provision and identify gaps.
- B. Offer vulnerable children and young people at least six months of weekly, one-to-one mentoring by safe, trained adults.

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#### Maximise the protective power of positive activities

**Why?** The best activities do not just keep vulnerable children and young people busy – they build skills and relationships.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Fund a range of structured positive activities, including sports.
- B. Offer vulnerable children and young people at least six months of weekly positive activity sessions by safe, trained adults.
- C. Fund provision that builds social and emotional skills and trusting relationships.

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### Embed sustained support in high-need A&E departments

**Why?** Vulnerable children and young people need ongoing follow-up support, not brief signposting.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Target support to the children and young people who need it most.
- B. Make caseworkers available in the right places and times.
- C. Combine sustained direct support with access to evidence-based interventions.
- D. Equip caseworkers for the demands of the role.



## Strong foundations

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### Make multi-year core funding the default

**Why?** Short-term, restricted funding can weaken the quality of youth provision.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Offer funding that lasts 3–5 years.
- B. Fund everyday core operating costs.
- C. Fund providers to collect and use data to improve quality and inclusion.

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### Equip youth workers to safeguard children and young people

**Why?** Youth workers already safeguard vulnerable children and young people from violence – often without the necessary support.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Fund regular supervision and specialist training for youth workers.
- B. Involve youth workers in local safeguarding and/or community safety systems.

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### Prioritise evidence-based strategies and avoid harmful approaches

**Why?** Limited resources are best spent on violence prevention strategies that are supported by evidence.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- A. Use robust evidence to inform decision-making.
- B. Be aware that many violence prevention strategies have limited evidence.
- C. Avoid approaches that have been proven to cause harm.