

**YIACS** AN INTEGRATED HEALTH  
AND WELLBEING MODEL

Youth Information, Advice and Counselling Services

# ANOTHER WAY: DEFINING THE FUNCTIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF YIACS



**YOUTH ACCESS  
YIACS MODEL**





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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT ARE YIACS?

This guide will help answer this very question.

The Youth Access YIACS model has been variously described as an:

- ▶ **'Under one roof' model**
- ▶ **One stop shop**
- ▶ **Open door, drop-in service**
- ▶ **Integrated health and wellbeing model**

While YIACS are primarily voluntary sector services responding to local need and differing in the range of interventions offered to young people, they share some common service characteristics. These include:

- Dedicated services for young people, often up to age 25
- Available to young people without the need to meet entry thresholds for support
- A focus on what matters to each young person
- Services combining youth work skills with the expertise of advice workers and psychological therapists
- A voluntary relationship directed by young people

Yet there has never been any prescription regarding what constitutes a YIACS. The services currently in Youth Access' membership are diverse in nature and have been bound together through a relatively loose affiliation to a common set of values and principles. (See 'Purpose, Values and Principles' of YIACS.)

Historically, and in the absence of any specific national policy directive, YIACS have grown out of a 'bottom up', rather than a 'top down' process of development. As a result, the shape and size of services has been largely determined by local leadership, funding patterns and opportunities. The strength of these providers has been their high degree of responsiveness to local young people's needs.

## POLICY CONTEXT

There is currently unprecedented interest amongst policy makers, providers and commissioners in the Youth Access YIACS model as a potential solution to young people's frequently unmet health, wellbeing and social needs.

The publication in 2015 of the report of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce has brought YIACS to the forefront of policy and provision. *Future in Mind* called for:

**"A key role for the voluntary and community sector to encourage an increase in the number of one-stop-shop services based in the community. They should be a key part of any universal local offer, building on the existing network of YIACS (Youth Information, Advice, and Counselling Services). Building up such a network would be an excellent use of any identified early additional investment."**

This prominent role for YIACS in the transformation of mental health and wellbeing services for young people requires confidence in a robust model. Policy-makers expect YIACS to meet nationally agreed standards. Young people deserve access to high quality services. Commissioners want to know exactly what kind of service they should be commissioning.






## PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide to the functions of YIACS is part of Youth Access' wider work to develop a coherent and consistent approach to service delivery and commissioning of nationally recognised models of integrated provision. It is the direct result of national consultation with providers and young people.


The guide sets out the range of functions that are **'Core'** to the delivery of the YIACS model.


It also sets out some **'Additional'** functions that may be incorporated into the model to increase its responsiveness to young people's needs.


**The guide is intended as a basic tool for planning the delivery of services based on the YIACS model. Its purpose is to:**

-  Enable current providers to assess their existing provision against the model and address any gaps
-  Support potential providers to plan the delivery of new YIACS services
-  Guide funders wishing to support or commission integrated health and wellbeing services for young people up to the age of 25.

**This guide does not**

-  Prescribe a single delivery model, but recognises the need for local responsiveness. This may be via a single organisation or a range of organisations working in partnership to offer the functions.

-  Create a new set of quality standards. The intention is that this guide should work with a range of existing frameworks for organisations and professional groups.

-  Set minimum standards for Youth Access membership. The Youth Access network has always been a broad church and we wish it to remain that way.

## COMPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

In addition to this guide, our consultations with young people, providers and commissioners have also informed the development of a range of complementary resources, including:

- Altogether Better: a charter created by young people for person-centred mental health and wellbeing services
- Purpose, Values and Principles of YIACS
- Delivering Better – a competency framework for YIACS
- Young person-centred: a guide to commissioning YIACS

A wide range of other good practice guides and reports have been produced by Youth Access to inform and champion the development of YIACS over a number of years. For example, Youth Access' *Quality Standards for YIACS* are a resource that may be particularly helpful to consider in relation to the functions set out in this document.



Youth Access' resources are freely available at:  
[www.youthaccess.org.uk](http://www.youthaccess.org.uk)



## YIACS' FUNCTIONS

### OVERVIEW

YIACS deliver a range of organisational functions underpinned by the agreed Purpose, Values and Principles of YIACS.

There are a number of 'Core Functions', with others defined as 'Additional Functions':

- **Core Functions:** These are the functions that are the priority for the YIACS model. These Core Functions may be delivered through a range of delivery structures. (See Appendix: Note on Delivery Structures, p.22)
- **Additional Functions:** These bring additional value to young people. They are not essential to the model (though they may be for young people) and those Additional Functions listed here are not an exhaustive list; while some YIACS may deliver the Additional Functions listed, others may deliver alternative functions.

# CORE FUNCTIONS



## ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS

13. Opportunities for young people to share and learn together
14. Integrating specialist provision
15. Telephone and online help and support
16. Intensive/specialist housing support
17. Outreach services and activities



## CORE FUNCTION:

# INITIAL CONTACT POINT FOR ANY YOUNG PERSON

## Functional Statements

- 1.1** Offer options to young people to enable them to make contact, e.g.:
  - Timed drop in sessions
  - Informal “drop by” access
  - Telephone access
  - Access via digital media
  - Outreach provision in schools or other settings
- 1.2** At initial contact, listen and support young people to identify and clarify their needs and concerns.
- 1.3** Assist young people to recognise and/or prioritise any urgent or crisis needs and agree with them any immediate action.
- 1.4** Offer clear information about the support available within the service and how it may meet young people’s needs and interests.
- 1.5** Where the service is not relevant to the young person’s presenting needs, work with them to look at alternative sources of help and support.
- 1.6** Agree with the young person the next steps in addressing their needs, concerns or interests and take appropriate action as agreed, unless there are overriding safeguarding or other concerns.







**CORE FUNCTION:**

## **ACCESS TO YOUNG PERSON-FRIENDLY INFORMATION**

### **Functional Statements**

- 2.1** Provide young people with clear information about:
  - The organisation and its services
  - Their rights and responsibilities in using the service, including confidentiality and safeguarding
  - How to provide feedback and/or suggestions about any gaps or problems in the help offered
- 2.2** Maintain access to a range of up to date, reliable online and paper-based information relevant to young people's lives.
- 2.3** Identify sources of information relevant to individual young people's needs.
- 2.4** Identify and offer information on other local and national services that may be relevant to young people's needs and concerns.
- 2.5** Support young people to access, use and critically evaluate information relevant to their needs and interests.
- 2.6** Where appropriate, enable young people to access information that may help them to self-manage their needs or difficulties.
- 2.7** Work with young people to inform and/or co-create information for use with their peers.

CORE FUNCTION:



## YOUNG PERSON-CENTRED ASSESSMENTS

### Functional Statements

**3.1** Offer young people collaborative assessments relevant to their concerns via appropriately competent professionals. This includes assessments focused on any or all of the following:

- Mental and emotional health
- Social welfare needs, e.g. any housing and income difficulties
- Education and employment
- Other social, health or wellbeing needs, including family-related issues

**3.2** Enable young people to explore their concerns and the impact on their lives, and where relevant and with consent, draw on information from other individuals and/or agencies to aid understanding of their concerns.

**3.3** Support young people to identify their strengths, current support and coping strategies.

**3.4** Identify and support young people to understand any significant risks to them and, where identified, either:

(i) Agree appropriate action to support a young person to self-manage or get the help they need;

or

(ii) Where agreement is not possible, take action to promote the safety and wellbeing of the young person and/or others at risk of serious harm.

**3.5** Support young people to identify their goals and/or aspirations.

**3.6** Review and evaluate with young people their options and requirements for:

- Ongoing psychotherapeutic help and support
- Ongoing help and support and/or actions for resolving any social welfare, education, employment or other social, health or wellbeing needs

**3.7** As part of any agreed ongoing interventions offered, conduct regular assessments and reviews with a young person to ensure changing and emerging needs and goals are monitored and appropriately addressed.

**3.8** Maintain records of assessments and any actions agreed.





**CORE FUNCTION:**

# EVIDENCE-INFORMED ONE TO ONE PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES

## Functional Statements

- 4.1** Offer regular and consistent one to one therapeutic relationships through practitioners competent in the modality/therapy provided.
- 4.2** Work with young people to focus on the issues relevant to them and their goals.
- 4.3** Regularly review and evaluate with young people the therapeutic relationship and the intervention offered, including sharing collected outcome data.
- 4.4** Where issues are identified within the therapeutic relationship that are beyond the range and competence of a therapist and/or the service, work with young people to consider their options.
- 4.5** Where a therapist (within the service) changes, young people affected by the change are offered support and alternatives to reduce the potential of early disengagement from the service.
- 4.6** When referral to another professional or service (internal or external) is agreed, keep young people informed about progress and, while awaiting successful completion of the referral, implement any agreed plan for continued support.
- 4.7** Encourage positive endings to the therapeutic relationship so that, where needed, young people feel able to move onto other support, or are able to get on with their lives whilst remaining clear about their options for re-contacting the service if needed.



CORE FUNCTION:



5

# INFORMATION, ADVICE AND/OR ADVOCACY ON RIGHTS-RELATED MATTERS

## Functional Statements

- 5.1** Provide young people with up to date information on social welfare problems, e.g. housing, welfare benefits, debt, employment and education difficulties.
- 5.2** Enable young people to understand their legal rights, responsibilities and the choices available to them.
- 5.3** Support access to effective and empowering advice and casework relevant to the range and complexity of young people's social welfare needs.
- 5.4** Where issues are identified beyond the range and competence of the service, work with young people to consider their options, including referrals to specialist legal advice where relevant.
- 5.5** Gather evidence about poor, unequal and unjust treatment towards young people and work towards tackling system failures and poor treatment.
- 5.6** Advocate on behalf of young people by challenging poor practice and/or failures and gaps in respecting and responding to young people's rights and needs.



# 6

## CORE FUNCTION:

# ADVICE, SUPPORT AND/ OR ADVOCACY ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING



### Functional Statements

- 6.1** Support young people to maintain their own and others' safety and wellbeing by providing trustworthy and young person-friendly information and advice.
- 6.2** Offer emotional/personal/practical support, through either regular structured or non-formal one to one interventions, to enable young people to:
- Explore difficulties and dilemmas
  - Recognise their strengths and assets, including existing support networks
  - Identify options, solutions and actions that can respond to their identified needs and goals
  - Make plans and take action where relevant
- 6.3** Provide structured or non-formal one to one interventions to support young people to explore their life choices, particularly in relation to education, training and/or employment and to consider their options and goals.
- 6.4** Encourage young people to be aware of potential risks to their safety and wellbeing, e.g. relating to substance misuse, their own and others' behaviours (either online or face to face).
- 6.5** Provide support to young people who are identified as at risk of, or already experiencing, harm (as a result of, e.g. substance misuse, CSE, domestic abuse or gangs) and respond appropriately to the identified issues.



CORE FUNCTION:



# SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE'S FEEDBACK, INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

## Functional Statements

- 7.1** Equip young people with the information and support they need to be informed users of the organisation's services.
- 7.2** Ensure young people have access to information and support to enable them to offer both positive and negative feedback on the help offered to them.
- 7.3** Provide a prompt and clear response when an individual young person makes suggestions or raises any concerns about the service and ensure they are kept informed about the progress and outcome of the issues raised.
- 7.4** Offer young people a variety of opportunities and different means by which they can comment on, and/or get involved in, the design and delivery of the service.
- 7.5** Respond within an agreed timescale to young people's feedback and consultations by:
- Demonstrating understanding of their views
  - Offering clear information about any steps the service will take in response to their views
  - Offering clear information about the reasons the service cannot respond to young people's views and/or demands
- 7.6** Support individuals and groups of young people to have a voice in local service planning and commissioning.
- 7.7** Promote opportunities for young people to get involved in wider local and national activities of relevance to them and their lives.





**CORE FUNCTION:**

# PROMOTE AND SAFEGUARD YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELFARE

## Functional Statements

- 8.1** Work with young people and/or their parents or carers, where relevant, to ensure appropriate consent to using the organisation's services and sharing information.
- 8.2** Offer parents, carers, other professionals and services clear information about young people's rights to consent to the help offered by the organisation, including its policy on confidentiality and safeguarding.
- 8.3** Ensure relevant risk assessments are undertaken with young people across the range of interventions and in the different settings offered by the organisation and ensure appropriate levels of safety for all.
- 8.4** Where there is an assessed risk to young people's safety and wellbeing, make timely contact with, and referral to, Health and/or Social Care services.
- 8.5** Ensure young people who may pose a potential risk to others are able to receive services by maintaining effective boundaries and safe working practices.





**CORE FUNCTION:**

# SIGNPOST AND REFER YOUNG PEOPLE

## Functional Statements

- 9.1** Where the service is unable to meet young people's specific or additional needs, offer help to identify other sources of information or relevant services.
- 9.2** Assess with young people the level of help and support they need to access relevant information or external services.
- 9.3** Offer practical assistance to young people who require additional support to enable their referral to other services they need.
- 9.4** Where young people want a referral to an external provider, obtain their informed consent regarding the range and level of information to be shared with any external professional or service.
- 9.5** Agree with young people the level of ongoing help and support they need while they wait for any external referral process to conclude.
- 9.6** Undertake follow-up of young people, particularly the most vulnerable offered a supported referral, to check on progress.
- 9.7** Where a supported referral does not result in a young person engaging with the receiving provider, offer further help and support, as appropriate.







**CORE FUNCTION:**

# BUILD LOCAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

## Functional Statements

- 10.1** Collate information about the availability, range and referral routes of other local and national services relevant to young people's needs and concerns.
- 10.2** Collaborate with other local services and professionals to develop multi-agency approaches in response to the identified needs and interests of young people.
- 10.3** Set up cross-referral and appropriate information sharing protocols with relevant local services to enable young people to experience timely and seamless services.
- 10.4** Contribute evidence of young people's use of the organisation's services to local strategic groups and other service planning activities impacting on young people.
- 10.5** Promote the value of the service to local agencies, service planners and commissioners so that its contribution to the wider local service offer to young people is recognised and understood.
- 10.6** Forge relationships with other YIACS to share practice and experience and contribute to a better understanding of YIACS' role locally and nationally.




CORE FUNCTION:



# MONITOR, REVIEW AND EVALUATE THE SERVICE

## Functional Statements

- 
- 11.1** Provide information and support to enable young people to understand, consent to and complete outcome measures and other data collection tools, including supporting them to understand how the data may be helpful in their individual engagement with the service as well as its wider value in supporting the service's development.
- 11.2** Collect demographic and other data about the profile and use of the services made by young people.
- 11.3** Collect data on young people's outcomes through the implementation of age/intervention-appropriate tools, including, where relevant, nationally validated tools.
- 11.4** Use evidence from young people's feedback and engagement with the service to inform them of the findings and how and what the service is able to do in response.
- 11.5** Involve young people as appropriate in the evaluation of the service.
- 11.6** Analyse all collected qualitative and quantitative evidence and data to enable the organisation to:
- Manage and appropriately communicate its performance to relevant stakeholders, including funders
  - Inform its business planning
  - Improve its access and services to young people
  - Alert external bodies to any findings relevant to their operation and, where appropriate, encourage them to respond and change
- 11.7** Maintain good financial and other records to support the agency to understand its cost effectiveness and efficiency.





**CORE FUNCTION:**

# A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY, COMPETENT WORKFORCE

## Functional Statements

- 12.1** Promote the value of the service to attract and retain competent and skilled staff.
- 12.2** Ensure all staff are safe and competent to perform their appointed roles. This includes:
- Undertaking vetting procedures at appointment and on a regular basis throughout staff's employment
  - Providing a structured probation period to ensure effective performance in appointed job roles
- 12.3** Establish regular and competent clinical and/or casework supervision appropriate to the professional role and requirements of all frontline staff.
- 12.4** Provide regular line management to all staff to offer support and monitor performance.
- 12.5** Analyse the needs of young people using the service and assess other emerging issues for the target population against staff competencies and, where required, seek to meet any identified gaps.
- 12.6** Offer a range of training and development opportunities to ensure staff update their skills and knowledge and meet any professional CPD requirements.
- 12.7** Seek and promote opportunities for staff to take up inter-agency and multi-disciplinary training.



# ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS

As previously stated, the following Additional Functions **DO NOT** form an exhaustive list and YIACS may offer other functions beyond those listed here. While the Core Functions are more readily delivered via a single organisation, a number of the Additional Functions listed here require delivery through a partnership arrangement with another, often specialist, provider.

## ADDITIONAL FUNCTION 13:

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO SHARE AND LEARN TOGETHER

#### Functional Statements

- 13.1** Offer opportunities for young people to come together in non-formal groups to:
- Share experiences
  - Strengthen their capacity to manage their lives and support each other
  - Socialise and have fun with their peers
- 13.2** Deliver structured groupwork programmes focused on a particular topic or shared concern amongst young people.
- 13.3** Offer structured therapeutic groups where young people have opportunities to share mental health and/or emotional concerns to promote shared understanding of their difficulties and to strengthen their support networks and coping strategies.
- 13.4** Design and run training workshops to enable young people to acquire new skills and knowledge.
- 13.5** Support young people to lead individual or group-based sessions to support their peers to improve their skills and/or knowledge.

## ADDITIONAL FUNCTION 14:

### INTEGRATING SPECIALIST PROVISION

#### Functional Statements

- 14.1** Set up onsite access to GP and/or nurse-led interventions for general physical health checks.
- 14.2** Combine NHS-led sexual health services as part of the organisation's general information and advice offer on sexual health matters.
- 14.3** Provide onsite access to more specialist mental health interventions, e.g. Early Intervention in Psychosis Services.
- 14.4** Provide access to specialist drug and alcohol misuse services onsite.
- 14.5** Work with lawyers and other legal advice services to enable young people with more complex rights-based advice needs to have access to justice.





#### ADDITIONAL FUNCTION 15:



### TELEPHONE AND ONLINE HELP AND SUPPORT

#### Functional Statements

- 15.1** Offer a dedicated telephone helpline to respond to young people's emotional and wellbeing concerns and any access needs.
- 15.2** Provide an online counselling service for young people, e.g. through email, discussion boards, webchat or video/voice call apps.
- 15.3** Provide online information, advice, facilitated groups and peer support on issues of concern to a wide group of young people or to particular communities who find it challenging to access face to face help.

#### ADDITIONAL FUNCTION 16:

### INTENSIVE/SPECIALIST HOUSING SUPPORT



#### Functional Statements

- 16.1** Offer mediation to young people and their parents/carers in disputes, particularly where the young person is currently homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- 16.2** Provide individual key or casework support to young people in new tenancies to offer both practical and emotional support and to enable them to develop skills and knowledge to manage independent living.

#### ADDITIONAL FUNCTION 17:

### OUTREACH SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES



#### Functional Statements

- 17.1** Offer services (e.g. counselling, other psychological therapies, information, advice, group work) to young people in education and other appropriate external settings.
- 17.2** Offer outreach support to young people presenting at Emergency Departments and undertake follow up work to provide a continued package of help to meet their needs.
- 17.3** Take services out into the wider community via 'fit for purpose' vehicles.

# APPENDIX

## A NOTE ON DELIVERY STRUCTURES

The Core Functions set out in this guide are those agreed by current providers and young people as the ideal combination for the YIACS model. These Core Functions have been identified as those most able to respond to the often complex and inter-related concerns and difficulties young people experience with their mental health and wellbeing.

While the availability of all the Core Functions, together with any other Additional Functions, are important facets of the YIACS model, there is not a 'one size fits all' approach to how organisations deliver these functions. One of the key strengths of the existing network of YIACS is their local responsiveness and their commitment to meeting the needs of local young people. Often run and managed by local people, YIACS are part of their local communities. YIACS need to reflect the different contexts in which they work, such as urban or rural settings, and address the variations in need amongst the young people they serve.



### LEGAL STRUCTURES

There are a variety of legal structures for delivering the YIACS model. Most existing providers are legally constituted as charities (with or without company limited by guarantee status). More recently, organisations have also been set up as community interest companies or other non-profit bodies.

In the past, a number of YIACS were either directly or indirectly managed through the local authority – most commonly, the local Youth Service. However, with the contraction of public sector funding, there are few of these providers now in existence.



### CO-LOCATION

A number of the Additional Functions identified in this guide are best delivered through co-location with specialist providers. Co-location may be within the YIACS or within the service of the specialist provider. However, in some areas local organisations are also exploring the potential for setting up the YIACS model through integrating and/or co-locating

personnel from different organisations to offer both the Core and some Additional Functions.

When different providers come together to deliver services/functions, it is particularly important to clarify and formalise in writing the roles and responsibilities of each organisation and of the individual staff employed in each organisation.

Some of the areas requiring particular attention as part of this process are:

- Exploring any differences or tensions in approach and practice in working with young people
- The range and levels of service to be offered by each partner
- How and when sessions will be offered and what happens if a session is cancelled or does not run - who is responsible for the affected young people?
- Cross-referral arrangements
- Information sharing and confidentiality
- Child protection and risk management
- Recording and monitoring arrangements
- How to promote effective team working
- Funding and resource issues
- Managing and resolving conflict.

The greater the number of agencies involved in delivering services/functions, the greater complexity there is in managing and resolving any differences.

It is also important to consider and learn from the experience of different delivery structures. Too often YIACS operating under public sector control have floundered because those directly working in or managing the YIACS have ultimately had little control over its operation. Subjected to other internal pressures from their employing organisations, staff in these YIACS have at times been forced to refocus or change their practice. As a result, these providers have sometimes come into conflict with YIACS' values, principles and priorities.

The experience from the field suggests that YIACS best survive when those closest to their management and delivery have direct control over the organisation's vision, mission and business planning. Frequently this has been best achieved through a charitable structure or some other non-profit-making legal structure.

## GLOSSARY

**For the purposes of clarity, the following is a short glossary to a few terms**, which are most likely to give rise to further queries. Where the terms in this guide create further queries to those listed below, please contact Youth Access:

**Email: [admin@youthaccess.org.uk](mailto:admin@youthaccess.org.uk) or**

**Tel: 0208 772 9900.**



### ADVICE

Advice is concerned with helping a young person to change or cope with practical issues and problems. It seeks to widen a young person's choices by providing accurate and relevant information about their rights, options and potential courses of action. Advice may help to identify and recommend ways forward, but decisions and choices are left to the young person. Any action agreed by the young person may be undertaken by, with, or on behalf of the young person.



### ADVOCACY

Advocacy is undertaken on behalf of young people with their expressed permission and is concerned with enabling the most vulnerable, or those who for whatever reason require support, to:

- Have their voice heard on the issues that are important to them
- Defend and safeguard their rights
- Have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives



### COUNSELLING

Counselling is one of a number of psychological therapies offered by YIACS, although it is often used in an everyday sense by services to act as an umbrella term for a range of therapies. For YIACS, the definition of the intervention is that agreed as part of NHS England's CYP IAPT programme:

“An activity voluntarily entered into by a young person who wants to explore, understand and overcome issues in their lives which may be causing them difficulty, distress and/or confusion. A counselling relationship has identified boundaries and an explicit contract agreed between the young person, counsellor and, where appropriate, parent or carer.

*The aims of counselling are to assist the child or young person to achieve a greater understanding of themselves and their relationship to their world, to create a greater awareness and utilisation of their personal resources, to build their resilience, and to support their ability to address problems and pursue personally meaningful goals.*

*A counsellor should be trained (or in training) to a diploma level (postgraduate or undergraduate), a member of a professional body, and bound by a code of conduct. If working with young people, a counsellor should be able to demonstrate the competences set out in the BACP's Competences required to deliver effective humanistic counselling for young people.”*



### EVIDENCE-INFORMED

This term is used here to include both evidence-based interventions and practice-based evidence.

Evidence-based interventions are those based on the outcomes of Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and systematic reviews. They are likely to be the interventions recommended by, for example, NICE treatment guidelines.

Practice-based interventions are those where the evidence is built through routine practice and the implementation of various outcome measures.

YIACS are encouraged, where possible, to implement nationally validated outcome measures and, where these are not seen as relevant, to be systematic in the way they collect data to inform the continued value of an intervention to young people.



A useful source of information regarding recommended outcome measures can be found at:  
**[www.corc.uk.net](http://www.corc.uk.net)**

# ABOUT YOUTH ACCESS

## Youth Access is the advice and counselling network.

We believe that all young people have a right to access young person-centred advice and counselling services where they will be

- ▶ Welcomed, listened to and respected;
- ▶ Given free, high quality help on their own terms;
- ▶ Helped to make their own decisions based on a clear understanding of their rights and options.

We promote the Youth Information, Advice and Counselling Services (YIACS) model as part of local services for young people everywhere. YIACS break down the barriers to getting help. They support young people to address a wide range of social, legal, practical, emotional and mental health needs in a coordinated way. YIACS are focussed on alleviating distress, defending rights and supporting wellbeing. They deliver a combination of advice, counselling, health clinics and youth work in young person-centred settings.

## Youth Access works towards its objectives by:

- ▶ Providing YIACS with the tools they need to deliver high quality services to young people
- ▶ Building the evidence to shape policy and services that meet young people's needs
- ▶ Promoting young people's right to be heard.



Championing advice and counselling

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