

## **Reading in terms of understanding the direction of (some) youth work in the UK (this is from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (Ofsted))**

### **Early Intervention and prevention- a youth work contribution. London**

Paul, thanks for ringing me the other day and for your sustained interest in this piece of work which spanned FES and social care. As I explained, it had been commissioned by the London FES SHMI, and in conjunction with Partnership Young London (PYL) <http://www.partnershipforyounglondon.org.uk/project/commissioning-snapshot> prior to the decision to stand down the former national lead role (youth strategy) and combine it with a new role which Anita now oversees. The field work was limited (and London based) but rather than lose it, and the good will of those LAs and others who had helped, we agreed to hand over the materials to PYL to complete and publish.

### **Key messages from the review**

- Youth work approaches can be a key and integral part of early intervention. The more successful approaches were well supported by DCSs and their success in working with vulnerable young people often attracted further fresh resources from health or local authority departments. However, most LAs have chosen not to weave youth work into their early intervention services. There has been a loss of 'core' locally based youth centre provision and projects in neighbourhoods needed to underpin early intervention.
- There was a well-defined and understood role for youth workers which differed from that of a social worker. Youth workers were often able to have short interventions with young people, provide support and motivation and often get them involved in local community projects and clubs outside of school. In doing so they helped young people broaden their social contacts and were able to provide create pathways into other services. In effect, the young people were being supported before they may have needed escalated social care intervention. Youth workers 'knew their patch' and had an educational function.
- The nature of the issues faced by young people invariably differed, but good examples were seen where vulnerable young women were referred from schools for concerns about sexualised behaviour or potential exposure to sexual exploitation. Youth workers helped them develop a much better knowledge of dangers and deal with risks. In other cases, year 6 children, and their parents, struggling to move from Primary to secondary school, were helped thereby preventing problems later. Advocacy work with young people with special educational needs helped them navigate their social care options. There was highly effective work with NEET young people helping them settle into college or apprenticeships.

[Source: www.Ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.Ofsted.gov.uk)