



Oslo

The Oslostandard for Outreach Work with Vulnerable Young People



A part of the City Government's prevention
campaign in the field of substances and addiction

Preface

Vice Mayor for Employment, Social Services and Diversity
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Oslo, 2nd June 2020

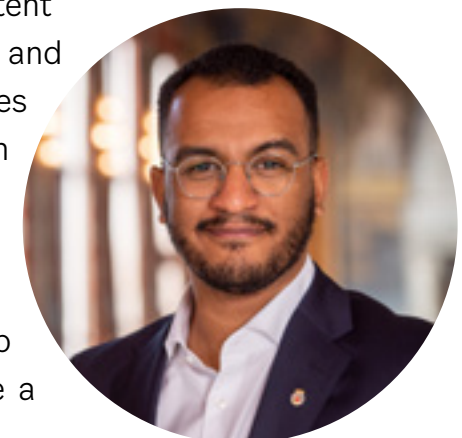
The City Government has adopted a Strategic Plan for Drug Policy in Oslo. Through it, the City Government wants to shift drug policy efforts from repair to prevention. An important element in prevention involves early detection, early identification and early measures with indications of possible problematic development in children and young people. One of the City Government's offensive preventative measures in this plan was to give the Agency for Welfare and Social Services, through the City Centre Outreach Service ("Uteseksjonen"), in collaboration with the District Outreach Youth Services ("Utekontaktene"), the task of developing a common professional standard. One that includes quality assurance of outreach work aimed at vulnerable young people.

Oslo has a 50 year history of using outreach work to reach vulnerable young people with early intervention. The City Centre Outreach Service focuses its fieldwork primarily on the city centre whilst the District Outreach Youth Services work in the local communities. Separately and combined these services play an important part in Oslo's prevention offensive. The goal is to prevent drug problems from occurring and provide early intervention to young people when various problems arise. The services carry out important follow-up support work which provides an increased quality of life for vulnerable youths and young adults.

Oslo faces major challenges in counteracting exclusion amongst young people. Many young people grow up in deprived families. After several years of decreasing youth crime, the police are now registering more young people who have four or more registered criminal cases during the past 12 months. The UngData

survey shows an increase in mental health problems among young people. From other sources, we know that poor mental health increases the risk of developing substance abuse problems. At the same time the municipality of Oslo's own surveys, indicate that there is a lack of trust between vulnerable young people and the established support system. The young people request more youth friendly services that take seriously what the young people themselves say is important to them. The city centre and the surrounding districts have different challenges and measures should be flexibly adapted to the needs of the local communities and have a long term perspective.

The City Centre and the District Outreach Youth Services will be made accessible so that it will be simple for vulnerable young people to make contact. The Outreach Services must build trust and be an important link between vulnerable young people and other welfare and support services. In order to achieve this the services must have the right conditions to be able to provide good outreach work, including sufficient staffing and resources to be able to work systematically and with continuity. The services must have competent employees who reflect the diversity in Oslo and who can bring the best out of the welfare services and vulnerable children through cooperation and relationship work. The knowledge that the district outreach services acquire over time through good quality outreach work is valuable and must be documented at individual, group and system level. This is how we can ensure a youth friendly and equal outreach service.





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Contents:

Preface	2
1. Introduction	6
2. Outreach youth work	10
2.1 What is outreach youth work?	11
2.2 The need for outreach youth work in Oslo	13
2.3 The formal establishment of outreach youth work	15
3. Quality criteria and initiatives for outreach youth work in Oslo	16
3.1 Professional conditions for good outreach work	17
3.2 Organisation and management	18
3.3 Resources and staffing	19
3.4 Cooperation	20
3.5 Competence requirements	24
3.6 Fieldwork	26
3.7 Follow-up work	29
3.8 Documentation and knowledge generation	30
3.9 Local community and city centre fieldwork	32
3.10 Youth friendly and equal services	34
4. Appendix	36
Glossary of Terms:	39
5. Literature	40



Photo: Jonas Chaboud

1. Introduction

This Oslostandard will contribute to fulfilling the City Government's goal of ensuring good and equal services for vulnerable young people across the city districts. The work with the Oslostandard is firmly established in the City Government's Strategic Plan for Drug Policy (City Government Proposition 158/18). The quality control criteria and measures are based on the purpose and provisions of various laws, political decisions (see section 2.3), feedback from young people and employees in youth services in Oslo, as well as from supporting documents and literature regarding outreach work in Norway.

In 2019, the City of Oslo had conducted outreach social work continuously for 50 years. This is unique in both Norwegian and the European context. The target group of outreach services consists of children and young people under the age of 25 who are present in vulnerable environments or who find themselves in challenging life situations and who do not receive sufficient help or support from other agencies. Where young people gather whether it be inside or outside public places, shopping centres, schools or youth clubs, these are the outreach service's arenas for fieldwork. As of the end of February 2020, there are outreach services in the majority of districts. Districts without outreach workers may have employees in other services who use outreach methods directed towards young people but who are not defined as outreach workers. In 2019 the combined outreach services in the districts consisted of approximately 50 full time equivalent employees.



Photo: Nana Due-Mensah

In addition, the Agency for Welfare and Social Services has 30 full time employees at the City Centre Outreach Service who work with people who are present in at-risk environments in central Oslo. The City Centre Outreach Service has no upper age limit but focuses primarily on young people under the age of 25.

Outreach youth work is not a statutory service but it is firmly politically established both locally and nationally. Outreach Services play an important role in the municipality's efforts for vulnerable young people and youth environments. This applies both to drug and crime prevention but also concerning general public health work. Professional documentation and dissemination of young people's experiences contribute to complementing and strengthening the understanding of Oslo's youth population.

Good outreach work is characterised by a regular presence amongst youth groups and detached work with a focus on building relationships and trust. Follow-up and intermediary work is flexible and individually tailored and it is systematically documented. The distinctive methodology and the closeness to young people ensures that outreach workers are well equipped to fulfil the ambitions of both equal and youth friendly services.

Today there are great variations between the districts when it comes to resource use, organisation and continuity of the outreach services and other services which use outreach methods. The districts are responsible for shaping the offer for young people in their own district. However, the City Government does not consider it a goal in itself that all the services in the districts should be identical. The purpose is to ensure that all the city's young people have access to an equal offer. Oslo is one city, but the social economic conditions and the needs of young people vary greatly from district to district. Therefore, there needs to be increased cooperation and strengthening of specialist services across the district boundaries whilst also developing locally specific services.

With this as a background, the City Government wishes to introduce a professional standard, which will ensure that the District Outreach Youth services in Oslo can deliver good and equal services. The quality criteria in chapter 3 contain both strong recommendations and guiding principles, formulated as "shall" points, which are directed towards the districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services. «Utekontaktene» is used in this context as a general term for all the municipal outreach youth services. «Utekontakt» is the most widely used name for the outreach youth services, and should be used by all the districts to ensure easily recognisable youth friendly services.

A knowledge base (*Kunnskapsgrunnlaget*)¹ supplementing Oslo standard is available as a separate document. Here there is an historical introduction to outreach work, a statement on the establishment in legislation and in political governing documents, a review of relevant previous literature and a presentation of new data relating to outreach work in Oslo.

A glossary of key terms used in this document can be found in a separate appendix.

1) Pettersen 2020



2. Outreach youth work

What is outreach youth work?

Outreach youth work is described both as a method and as an academic field. There is also, not one single definition of outreach youth work. The Swedish social researcher and fieldworker Björn Andersson has described outreach work in general as:

"Outreach work is a contact creating and resource-mediating social activity that is directed towards groups who are normally difficult to reach with other means, and who have a need for support, which is made easily accessible in arenas and contexts which are neither organised nor controlled by outreach workers".²

When outreach work is focused primarily at young people, it is often rooted in the overall principal goals of preventative or early intervention. The goal is therefore to prevent, reduce the risk or to intervene as early as possible in an already difficult life situation. Outreach service's target group can frequent more universal arenas such as schools and youth clubs and or vulnerable arenas such as the open drug scene. Examples of diverse factors which, individually or collectively, can pose a risk to young people may be poverty, overcrowding, exclusion, school dropout, unemployment, insecure family relations, violence and trauma, identity issues, mental health issues, harmful sexual behavior, excessive drug use and crime.

The distinction from other occupational groups, who use outreach methodology as part of their job, is that for outreach workers it is the outreach work itself that is at the core of their professional practice³. The outreach work takes place systematically, with a long-term perspective and its objective is to develop knowledge and establish trust in young people's own arenas⁴. Another distinctive characteristic with outreach workers is their close proximity to their target group. At the same time, outreach workers have a central role as mediators and as a link between young people and other welfare and leisure services. Outreach Services have historically stood for an all-inclusive view of young people and they have placed an emphasis on both the youths' resources as well as their challenges. This is in contrast to a problem-orientated focus on drugs, crime and what is described as anti-social behaviour. This has allowed them to engage in both general preventative and inclusive youth work whilst also proving help and support for those that require it.

Today, outreach work is increasingly tied to primary goals of drug and crime prevention, early measures and early intervention. In this instance, outreach workers can both give support to youths and intervene in vulnerable life situations. At the same time, the services also can contribute knowledge at an organisational level to the local authorities' general youth and public health work. Outreach services are important in the municipalities' overall efforts including through SaLTo⁵ cooperation. Among the services there has been a continuous effort to clarify the distinctive role and mandate of outreach services in relation to other statutory services such as Child Welfare Services, Public Health Services, the Police and the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration.

2) Andersson 2010 3) Erdal (red.) 2006 4) Klyve og Pedersen i Erdal 2006

5) SaLTo stands for "Together we create a safe Oslo", a local partnership for preventing substance use and crime amongst youth and young adults up to the age of 23 years.

The mandate for outreach services is to conduct preventative work amongst the most vulnerable young people that is those who have no contact or who are not sufficiently reached by other welfare services or leisure activities, who do not receive an adequate offer or who are unable to take advantage of existing offers. To be able to get into a position to help vulnerable young people requires trust in the youth scene. This trust is gained by building a good relationship with each individual youth and with the youth scene. Outreach workers' flexible and systematic presence and their principle of voluntary contact have been central elements for establishing contact and cooperation with vulnerable young people. Nevertheless, outreach workers are in the same grey area, between voluntary help and control, as are so many other social and health professional workers.

There are several examples of necessary practices that can challenge the voluntary principle and the trust between outreach workers and young people, who themselves may not trust the authorities, welfare and social services. General cooperation for early intervention and rapid referral to other government bodies can be for example, duty of disclosure to the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, Social Services, Child Protection Services or the Health Service in the event of serious concern, as well as increased requirements for individual documentation and case recording. Good professional work requires that outreach workers manage these different considerations.



The need for outreach youth work in Oslo

Political and professional priorities both locally and nationally indicate that there will be backing for preventative measures and early intervention directed at vulnerable young people. Outreach and detached approaches, such as outreach workers, are described as important contributions in these efforts⁶. Translating the overall goals into working practice, which reaches the youths with the most acute needs, requires knowledge about general development trends in the youth population. Equally important, outreach workers must have a good overview of special risk factors and leisure patterns of groups of vulnerable young people.

Increasing youth population

Since the end of the 1980s, Oslo has had a rapidly growing child and youth population. Population projections estimate that Oslo's child and youth population will continue this growth for the next decade⁷. Youth population varies greatly between the districts. There is also a great variation between the districts when it comes to the number of full time employees who work as outreach professionals, and the number of positions does not always reflect the youth population of any given district. Some districts have full-time outreach workers whilst in others, a large percentage are temporary and project funded positions (Korus Oslo 2019). This variation in size and continuity of the service on offer has been highlighted as a challenge for ensuring an equal preventative offer for young people⁸. This is also a part of the background for the desire for an Oslostandard for outreach work with vulnerable youths.⁹



6) BLD 2009, BLD 2007, HOD 2015, SaLT 2017, NOU 2019:26
 7) SSB/ www.bydelsfakta.oslo.kommune.no 2019, Korus Oslo – omfangsundersøkelse av oppsøkende ungdomsarbeid i Oslo 2019
 8) Kommunerevisjonens rapport 9-2018
 9) Byrådsak 158/18

Knowledge of vulnerable youths

Outreach workers' target group constitutes a small minority of the youth population. Outreach workers shall not only direct their efforts towards the young people with established and visible problems, such as school dropout, unemployment or registered crime, but also to young people with a higher risk for various social and health challenges. Reaching young people who do not yet display visible symptoms of at-risk behaviour in the public arenas is more demanding than, for example reaching those who are part of an open drug scene. Outreach work will therefore also involve reaching out amongst young people in the local community with the goal of identifying those who have the greatest need for early help and support.

Statistics and local knowledge of young people's movement patterns and leisure activities, drug use, criminal activity or mental health challenges in different youth environments and geographical areas are examples of relevant knowledge for the organization of outreach work. At the same time trends and social conditions in the youth scene are constantly changing. The young people who are present in at-risk environments and where in the city they gather will change from one school term to another. Therefore, outreach workers cannot base their work purely on living standards' statistics and other generalised knowledge. They are dependant on access to, and contact with, the different youth environments in order to gain insight and up-to-date information about the most important risk factors and which young people have, or are in danger of, developing problems. In the Knowledge Base, these themes will be discussed.

The role of outreach services in preventative youth work

The outreach workers are in a position to examine issues in connection with the developing problematic trends or individual work episodes among young people.


Outreach workers can be asked to contribute with information or special measures directed towards groups of young people there is a concern around. Good outreach work is however completely dependant on continuity and a systematic presence in order to fulfil three of its core tasks: Building relationships with vulnerable young people, contributing to trust between them and the community's welfare services, and collecting and passing on knowledge relating to developments and new trends amongst vulnerable young people.

Certain groups of vulnerable young people have little trust in or contact with support services. Outreach services that have worked continuously and systematically among the young people in their district will be in a unique position to establish or reestablish trust between these young people and the support services. This will in turn help to ensure that vulnerable young people receive equal services. The definition of vulnerable youth will vary at any given time and here outreach workers can play an important role in identifying both positive and disturbing trends in the youth environment. Taking this into account, outreach workers should be considered as a fundamental and essential part of the preventative youth work and not as part of a "fire extinguisher" for special situations.

The formal establishment of outreach youth work

As mentioned earlier, it is not a statutory requirement for municipalities to carry out outreach work in the form of an outreach service. However, the service can be established in different laws and regulations. Relevant in this context are the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Norwegian Child Welfare Act, the Norwegian Health and Welfare Acts and the Public Health Acts. Several outreach services carry out statutory tasks for the municipality such as initiatives in accordance with the Child Welfare Act. Outreach work is described and established in various different national and local acts, statutes and foundation documents. Action plans for SaLTo collaboration and the national and local plans for drug prevention are other examples of areas where outreach workers play an important role. Refer to the appendix base for a thorough overview of some of the judicial, political and professional documents that are relevant for the municipalities' outreach youth work and knowledge.





3. Quality criteria and initiatives for outreach youth work in Oslo

Quality criteria and initiatives are guidelines for the districts and The Agency for Welfare and Social Services, (The City Centre Outreach Service) which will ensure equal services and good cooperation around vulnerable youths across district boundaries.

The quality criteria are based on feedback from young people in the target group, peer educators, district outreach service employees, relevant professionals and academics and other youth services in Oslo. Underlying the criteria are also central acts, laws and professional literature for the outreach field. Refer to the Knowledge Base for a comprehensive review.

Professional conditions for good outreach work

3.1

Outreach workers should be present where young people gather together in the local community or city centre. The goal is to establish contact with those who have the greatest need for help and support. Services should be knowledge based and contribute to fulfilling local and national objectives for preventative child and youth work. Based on Mandates and Target Groups for Outreach Work¹⁰, Municipal Guide for Outreach Youth¹¹ and input from professionals and young people in the target group the following conditions should be established for outreach work in Oslo.

Good outreach work practice is characterised by:

- Knowledge based practice – where professional practice is based on research, practical experience from the field, user knowledge and participation.
- Voluntary contact with young people is built on trust, and that the outreach workers can be flexible and available according to the young people's needs.
- Preventative social and health work which has a broad focus on various risk and protective factors at different levels.
- That knowledge about young people at both individual and group level is linked to structural challenges like social inequality and to initiatives that can improve the situation for vulnerable children.

10) NOU 1980:37; Erdal 2006

11) LOSU 2012

3.2

Organisation and management

Outreach services need to adapt to local conditions. At the same time, large variations in both organisational and professional facilities make it difficult to offer an equal and easily recognisable service for young people. Many small outreach services can lead to vulnerable and unstable professional environments, less continuity and weaker use of resources. The Knowledge Base highlights that management and organisation are crucial for good outreach work and that it is prudent to consider what is an appropriate organisation of today's outreach services, across the district boundaries.

Recommendations to the Districts and to the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- Fieldwork that delivers a regular, systematic and predictable presence in local communities where young people gather. It can be especially vulnerable environments or more public arenas such as school playgrounds, youth clubs, sports facilities or public transport hubs.
- Relationship and trust building work, with the aim of being in a position to offer professional social and health follow-up support to those who need it.
- Individual follow-up in the form of support and guidance counselling structured cooperation focused on personal development goals as well as facilitating contact with other welfare, employment and leisure services.
- Systematic documentation, surveying and knowledge dissemination about vulnerable young people on individual, group and system levels contribute to ensure that a vulnerable youth's experience and voice are heard when they meet with the welfare service and society in general.
- Close cooperation with other services, family, relations or other networks where it is in the young person's best interest and in early consultation with the individual.
- Local community work – to contribute to supporting and mobilising available resources for young people in the local community. This can involve contact and cooperation with housing associations, sports clubs, voluntary organisations or businesses.

3.3

Resources and staffing

Permanent staffing and full-time positions contribute to both continuity and quality. Small services and outreach services are vulnerable when employees have time constraints in their employment contracts. A comprehensive, professional outreach service requires continuity.

Recommendations to the Districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- Outreach Services should be closely aligned to the rest of the organisation's youth services and preventative youth work either as their own service or as a team within another service.
- The core activities of the outreach service, which are systematic fieldwork, follow-up and referral work as well as documentation, are formally established and given high priority even if new tasks are imposed on them.

- Outreach Services are established in all areas of Oslo which, either individually or collectively, have the capacity to reach at-risk young people where they gather in their local communities and in the city centre.
- An evaluation is carried out regarding the size and organisation of the outreach youth work in each service. This should correlate with youth population size in each district, youth mobility between districts, local challenges relating to living conditions and other social or health challenges.
- Continuity is the objective for the staffing of the outreach youth work through, among other things, permanent positions and full time employment.
- The services have an action plan which ensures systematic fieldwork among vulnerable young people and which is adjusted to the target group's needs and leisure time patterns.
- Field worker positions (those who practice outreach work) should be included in the action plan where a minimum of 40 percent of



their employment¹² is designated for fieldwork in local areas where vulnerable young people gather. This includes the necessary preparation work and documentation of work carried out.

- Individual and group based follow-up work should take up 40 percent of the working hours of a field worker position.

3.4

Cooperation

Cooperation between services who work with preventative youth work and other youth services is a requisite for providing suitable help to vulnerable young people. Outreach services have an important function in this cooperation, both locally and throughout the city. Services must have adequate routines for collaboration at an individual level, for referral work and the sharing of knowledge at both group and system level.^{13 14}

Recommendations to the Districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- Services have routines for cooperation with other youth services within the district, and a clarified and systematic cooperation with other youth services in other districts as well as other relevant partners such as the local education authority, the school health service, Child Protection Agency, Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and the Police Crime Prevention Agency.
- An initiative is taken to proactively strengthen and reinforce the cooperation between SaLT coordinators and other preventative youth services in their own organisations. This is to facilitate improved information sharing at group and system level and coordination of work with target groups.
- Outreach worker's distinctive role and mandate in relation to other social services such as the Child Protection Agency, Police and other social service is clarified. In this context the duty of confidentiality concerning both the possibility for sharing and non-disclosure of confidential personal information is central.^{15 16}
- Professional Network (Fagforum for Utekontakter) in Oslo functions as a forum for inter-district cooperation where each outreach services is represented by its own leader.
- Digital platforms, such as Workplace, are used by leaders of outreach service to continuously share information and the planning of collective efforts.
- Arrangements are made for combined fieldwork¹⁷, observation work and other experience exchanges with other outreach services with the purpose of strengthening cooperation and to deliver an enhanced service to the target group.
- Proactively take the initiative to cooperate with outreach services from Oslo's surrounding municipalities where it is appropriate.

12) Based on a recommendation from LOSU 2012: 30% «out-time» in addition to preparation and documentation

13) LOSU 2012, s 24 og 25 14) Pedersen, 2011 15) LOSU 2012, s 15-16 16) Erdal (red.) 2006, s 85 - 91

17) Where outreach workers from different services conduct field work together in order to become more familiar with different areanas and to meet young people from outside their own district.



Photo: iStock



3.5

Competence requirements

Outreach social work is a methodical approach within social work¹⁸, which sets key demands to the practitioner both regarding formal and personal competence. It requires independent ethical employees with a sufficient knowledge of the system and not least a commitment to working with vulnerable young people. Young people in the target group and professionals are, according to the *Knowledge Base*, adamant that outreach workers need both relevant theoretical knowledge, practical skill and experience and have personal attributes suitable for this professional role. The use of peer educators has been emphasised as important for developing good and youth friendly services. These needs must be considered in relation to both recruitment and training in each individual service.

The Agency for Welfare and Social Services and the districts should, in close cooperation:

- Offer training for new outreach worker employees.
- Ensure that employees who work with children and young people have general knowledge about protection and risk factors, detection signs and signals, so that they can identify those who live in at-risk situations at an early stage.¹⁹
- Offer professional guidance for employees. The Substance Abuse Resource Centre, the City Centre Outreach Service and the districts with special expertise in different areas should be involved in this work.

Recommendations to the districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- Outreach workers should have a core competence consisting of social and health specific education at bachelor level including social work and health care degrees/ social services/ social education/ nursing. This will help with the ultimate aim of a sound disciplinary background to the development of the service.
- Personal characteristics in the personnel, in the form of a reflective attitude, good communications skills and inter-relation competence are highly emphasised, as these are important elements when offers to the target group are formed.
- Outreach workers have information about and actively use community work as a methodical approach.
- Arrangements are made so that local youths in the target group, or peer educators with good knowledge of the target group, can contribute as advisers in the recruitment process.

- Outreach Workers should reflect the diversity of Oslo, and contribute to equal youth services.
- Outreach workers have competence when dealing with young people and their development as well as information about changing youth culture and the different youth environments in Oslo.
- Outreach workers formulate a professional action plan for services which builds on the goals in the Oslostandard's founding principles for outreach work and takes into consideration the local needs for professional development.
- Close cooperation with educational institutions is sought out with the goal of strengthening the outreach service's knowledge-based best practices and supplementing them with social and healthcare education and ground level knowledge about outreach work with vulnerable young people. Students in educational placements with outreach workers should participate in this collaboration.
- Examine the possibilities for job positions with a simultaneous link between educational institutions and outreach services in the districts and or the city centre.



18) Erdal 2006
19) Helsedirektoratet, 2019

3.6

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is the distinctive methodology that characterises and defines outreach workers and services. It is through their systematic presence in local communities where vulnerable young people meet that the services gather information, build trust and develop contacts for future work. At the same time, increased youth mobility between the districts highlights the need for flexibility and cooperation between the services.

The districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services shall ensure that:

- Fieldwork is carried out by at least two employees, working together, to ensure professional reflection and quality in the work with the target groups. This also contributes to security and safety for both employees and young people in the target group.²⁰

Recommendations to the districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- Ensure that the services carry out fieldwork at the most relevant time of day in order to encounter vulnerable youths. This should include both daytime, evening and weekends.
- Develop fieldwork in schools though highlighting experiences and clarifying the role and function of the outreach workers in collaborating with the school.²¹



Photo: Velferdsetaten



Photo: Velferdsetaten

20) Arbeidsmiljøloven, § 4 -1 og § 4 -2
21) Fafo rapport, 2020

Follow-up work

Follow-up work by outreach services has the aim of building relationships together with the goal of facilitating positive changes at individual or group level. When outreach workers get to know young people in an informal setting it provides them with a distinctive perspective for further follow-up work. Arranging contact with other support and activity services is a central part of this follow-up work. In their contact with youth groups especially at-risk, fieldworkers can be the only representatives from the welfare system that the young people have contact with.

The trust that can arise must be managed in a positive and responsible way and built up to encourage helpful cooperation with the young person and their family, personal network and other services.

Recommendations to the Districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- The employees who carry out follow-up work establish routines to create clear follow-up processes, based on agreements with and informed consent from the young people involved²², or their parents and in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- All services have a good working knowledge of relevant collaborating services that can be a resource for young people and their families. Follow-up work should be carried out with the aim of referral to embedded statutory services in their home district or their place of residence.
- Cooperation with families or close relations is initiated, as a general rule, according to the individual young person's wishes and consent. Cooperation must always be in the young person's best interest. In instances where the parents must be involved without informed consent, the individual young person must be informed as early as possible.
- Family work, support and counselling for parents and or close relations, is carried out with the aim of strengthening the young person's closest social network.²³
- There is always one primary contact who, together with another outreach worker from outreach services, has knowledge of the young person who has agreed to and is receiving follow-up. This is to ensure the quality and continuity of the follow up work and to avoid relationship breakdowns with the service in the case of employee absence or if an outreach worker leaves the service.
- Assignment based follow-up, when the initiative is taken by someone other than the outreach service, is carried out in accordance with the professional understanding for outreach work c.f. points 3.1 and 3.2.

22) An example can be a «follow-up contract» where the expectations and responsibilities of both parties are formalised, together with a time scale and plan for the follow-up, and a clarification around the terms of the young person's consent and which information can be shared with collaborating services.

23) The OsloStandard for Families is under construction and will be published in 2020



Documentation and knowledge generation

Outreach workers are in a distinct position to be able to document the living conditions and challenges for individuals and groups of vulnerable young people in Oslo. Such knowledge will contribute to achieving the municipalities' targets in accordance with the Child Welfare Act, The Norwegian Public Health Act and the Health and Care Services Act. All outreach services must have routines for documenting and should work actively with knowledge generation and distribution.

Recommendations to the districts and to the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- Outreach services have routines for sufficient and robust documentation of their work, at an individual, group and system levels. This requires both professional competence and knowledge of the existing legislation such as the Public Administration Act and the Health Personnel Act.
- Outreach workers have access to a suitable professional system for documentation and knowledge generation.
- Efforts should be made to use a system that ensures unique and comparable data relating to vulnerable young people from the whole of Oslo. The system should encourage equality and better collaboration across services.
- Routines for data processing are in place and that personal information consent and confidentiality agreements are respected and enforced in all documentation work.
- Journal recording is mandatory for all individuals who receive individual follow up.
- Outreach services have routines for informed consent²⁴ ²⁵ both when following up with client journal recording and, where needed, when exchanging personal information.
- Services have routines and a template for recording environmental descriptions from outreach fieldwork.²⁶
- Services systematically develop quantitative data that documents the extent of the services on offer and contact with the target group. Such information should be comparable from year to year and across the different districts. Collective routines should be discussed with the objective of more comparable registration practices.²⁷
- The Agency for Welfare and Social Services offers training in documentation practice such as production and presentation of comparable statistics and qualitative data.
- Services convey relevant information from the youth environment, relating to risk factors and structural challenges. This knowledge must be recorded and made available, as annual reports, periodic reports or in the form of other documents.
- The Agency for Welfare and Social Services can offer guidance to services who

would like to survey the youth environment or a specific area or field of interest by using a surveying tool such as an SAT²⁸ Situasjon, Analyse, Tiltak or a HKH (Hurtig kartlegging og handling).²⁹

Fact box 1: Documentation and distribution of quantitative data

In order to secure comparable data for vulnerable young people from throughout the districts' outreach services they should have similar documentation practices concerning who and what is recorded. Central variables for quantitative documentation will be:

- Personal categories (e.g. if a person receives follow-up or is sought after by the Child Protection Agency etc.)
- Contact type ("observed in the environment", "contact / conversation")
- Place of contact
- Age
- Gender
- Last known place or district of residence

Both parts of the qualitative environmental descriptions, journal recordings and other personal information will be relevant sources of information that can be used to statistically describe the extent of vulnerable youth environments. In order to ensure equal practices and uniform data it will be advantageous to use the same professional data system, so that employees in all services receive sufficient training with regard to registration, extraction of data and compiling statistics.

Fact box 2: What is a HKH?

Rapid Assessment and Response (HKH) is an analytical and response orientated survey method for strengthening practice and developing new initiatives which address social or health related challenges. The survey should ideally be completed within a timescale of six to eight months. A HKH process should entail both qualitative methods such as observation, focus groups and interviews and more quantitative methods such as questionnaires. In Oslo, the City Centre Outreach Service, amongst other services, has used this method and has published several reports which, as a consequence, have both increased awareness about groups of vulnerable young people and also the development of new services.

The Competence Centre Oslo can offer guidance regarding the HKH-process, although the districts and their departments themselves complete the survey and reporting process. The Competence Centre Oslo can offer guidance through the whole period.

[Read more](#)

24) <https://www.datatilsynet.no/rettigheter-og-plikter/virksomhetenes-plikter/behandlingsgrunnlag/veileder-om-behandlingsgrunnlag/samtykke/>

25) Appendix: Template for consent as used by the City Centre Outreach Service

26) «Field rapport» or simuler

27) Fact box 1

28) SAT (Situation, Analysis, Measures) is a mapping and survey toll adapted to smaller services that want to survey the situation in a youth environment, or who want more knowledge about their target group. A SAT analysis can help services better understand their own priorities and shape their own efforts at individual, group and community level.

29) Fact box 2 <https://www.koroslo.no/skjulte-artikler/hkh/>

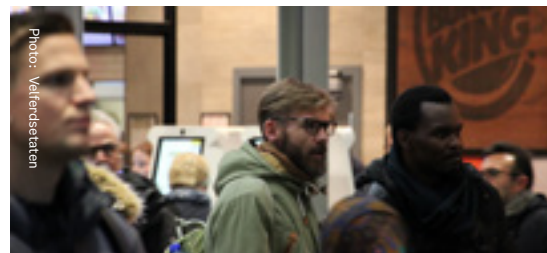
3.9

Local community and city centre fieldwork

Fieldwork in the local community where young people live has traditionally had a focus on creating satisfactory childhood living conditions through organising resources both in the local youth arenas and in the local community. The expression “City Centre Outreach Work” has been previously used to describe a more interventional outreach work, focused on young people with more compounded problems. A fundamental goal was to encourage young people away from especially problematic city centre areas by connecting them with initiatives in their own districts. In this context, the outreach work became first and foremost perceived as a tool to facilitate other social and health professional related work in the local arenas³⁰. Such a sharp distinction in practice between the city centre and the district outreach services is not suitable in today’s situation. The youth mobility we experience today shows that vulnerable young people do not just socialise in public arenas where they live, but they meet across the districts and at hubs in central Oslo. Outreach services must therefore both prioritise their resources locally and coordinate them in their own districts.

Recommendations to the districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services:

- All services must adapt their practices to their local environment and to the city centre and city challenges.
- The District Outreach Youth Services build up special expertise about the local environment, have sufficient knowledge concerning local challenges and developing trends and they actively share this knowledge with both District and City Centre Outreach Services.
- The City Centre Outreach Service should maintain their special expertise with regard to the city centre and its challenges, such as the open drugs scene, and have current knowledge as to where young people gather in the centre that should be shared with the other outreach services.
- Services should collaborate at both individual, group and system levels in various forums, where appropriate, in order to find collective solutions. Examples of this are follow-up meetings with individual youths, project or theme meetings, Professional Networks for Outreach Workers, SaLTø cooperation and joint field work.



30) Pedersen 2011

3.10

Youth friendly and equal services

Outreach Services shall contribute to youth participation and citizen engagement. These are central professional principles for the field that also correspond with the municipality of Oslo's greater objectives for citizen involvement and equality. Ensuring youth friendly and equal services requires both the formal establishment at service level and that the theme and suitable methods are discussed and used in daily contact with young people. In interviews carried out with young people for the Knowledgebase for this standard, the young people emphasised the importance of flexibility and the high levels of presence. In addition, they considered the outreach workers' personal qualities, such as interpersonal skills and the ability to create trust, as very important. The use of peer educators, both in the recruitment and in developing the service, will be an important contribution to youth friendly services.

The districts and the Agency for Welfare and Social Services must ensure that:

- Young people's opinions³¹ should heavily influence both the characteristics that field workers should possess and the professional structure and development of the services.³²
- Outreach Services provide clear information about the availability of their service and how young people can contact them on their own initiative.
- Outreach workers should focus on plain language, that is to say that both oral and written communication should be inclusive and understandable for young people.
- Young people in the target group are continuously involved and participate in the evaluation and development of services. The use of peer work and the employment of peer educators are examples of good practice.
- Services have an open dialogue with young people concerning when their duty of confidentiality is applicable. Also when concern arises and they could be required to pass on information to other services.
- Services work to include young people in society, counteracting school dropout and exclusion by building social belonging and success for each individual both in and outside of school and work.
- The service reflects the multicultural city, promotes diversity and has antidiscriminatory practices.
- It is desirable to have the same name for the Outreach Services in the Districts. Utekontakten should be used, as it is the well-established and easily recognisable term amongst young people.
- Outreach workers are knowledgeable about young people's use of the internet and social media.

31) Barnekonvensjonen, artikkel 12

32) See Fact box 3, www.ungdomsvennlig.no og Barnehjernet

Fact box 3: What are youth friendly services?

a) Through the project Youth Friendly Welfare Services, directed by the Municipality of Oslo and the County Governor in Oslo and Viken (2019), it was asked what young people, professionals and researchers believed were youth friendly services. Important characteristics of youth friendly services were according to the young people in the project:

- Follow up in the youths' own arenas
- Professional expertise and cultural knowledge about young people
- Those who work in the service should be flexible.
- Practical help.
- Cooperation across services in consultation with the young people
- Meet both basic and comprehensive needs
- Individual conversations, groups, meaningful activities

b) In group interviews with the young people in the outreach worker's target group (KoRus Oslo 2019) the youths were asked what characterises a good outreach worker. Some of the most important feedback was:

- Available and flexible
- Uses humour and is easy to talk to
- Cares/respects us
- Help when you need it
- Has a «good reputation» in the youth's environment.
- Offer activities, courses, events etc.
- Is to be trusted (duty of confidentiality)
- Non judgmental
- Tries to understand my perspective
- Has time and does not give up on us
- Shows empathy and affection



4. Appendix

- a) Legislation and supporting documents – list
- b) The City Centre Outreach Service's template for obtaining consent – Legally valid
- c) Glossary of Terms

Appendix A

Legislation³³:

- [Arbeidsmiljøloven](#) (§4-1, §4-3)
- [Barnekonvensjonen](#) (Artikkel 3, 12, 31, 33, 34)
- [Barnevernloven](#) (§1-1, §3-1)[Forvaltningsloven](#) (§§ 13-13f)
- [Helse- og omsorgstjenesteloven](#) (§1-1, §3-3)
- [Helsepersonelloven](#)
- [Folkehelseloven](#) (§1, §5)
- [Sosialtjenesteloven](#) (§ 17)

National supporting documents:

- [Oppsøkende barne- og ungdomsarbeid](#) (NOU 1980:37)³⁴
- [Nasjonal faglig retningslinje for tidlig oppdagelse av utsatte barn og unge](#)³⁵
- [Opptrappingsplanen for rusfeltet \(2016–2020\)](#)
- [Folkehelsemeldinga — Gode liv i eit trygt samfunn](#) (Meld. St. 19 (2018–2019))
- [Forebyggende innsats for barn og unge](#) (rundskriv Q-16/2013)
- [Rusreform – fra straff til hjelp](#) (NOU 2019:26)
- [Kommunal veileder for oppsøkende sosialt ungdomsarbeid](#) (Losu 2012)
- [Trøbbel i grenseflatene – samordnet innsats for utsatte barn og unge](#) (Fafo rapport 2020 -02)

Local supporting documents:

- [Folkehelseplan for Oslo 2017 – 2020](#) (Byrådssak 10/17)
- [Byrådets strategiske plan for rusfeltet i Oslo](#) (Byrådssak 158/18)
- [SaLTo handlingsprogram \(2017-2020\)](#)
- [Bydelenes forebygging av utenforskap blant barn og unge](#) (Kommunerevisjonens rapport 9-2018)
- [Klubben vår! \(Byrådssak 189/19\)](#)
- [Handlingsplan for psykisk helsearbeid 2015-2018](#) (Byrådssak 13/15) + i hver bydel
- [Barnehjernernevetnet - strategier og tiltak 2017-2019](#) (Byrådssak 207/17)
- [«Mangfoldets muligheter – Om OXLO – Oslo Extra Large](#) (Bystyresak 129/13)
- [Charter for integrerende byer](#) (Byrådet rundskriv 26/2013)
- [En psykt bra by – Strategi for psykisk helse i Oslo](#) (Byrådssak 194/19)

33) Some of the most important provisions, the list is not exhaustive. Other laws, such as the Children's Act, will also contain provisions of significance for the outreach services.

34) NOU 1980: 37 is included as it has been a central document for the design of outreach youth work for the last 40 years. It is still the only national supporting document that discuss outreach work as a distinctive field and methodology.

35) Replaces the Norwegian Directorate of Health's previous guide «From concern to action» from 2010.

Appendix B

Template for obtaining consent

Uteseksjonen



Opphevelse av taushetsplikt

- samtykkeerklæring

Navn	Fødselsdato
------	-------------

Jeg samtykker herved til at Uteseksjonen kan utveksle nødvendige taushetsbelagte opplysninger om meg i forbindelse med

Opplysningene kan ikke brukes til andre formål enn det samtykket er gitt for og det skal ikke utveksles flere opplysninger enn det som er nødvendig for formålet.

Følgende instanser/ personer kan få informasjonen:

Samtykket gjelder fra _____ til _____

Jeg er kjent med at jeg når som helst kan trekke samtykket tilbake

Sted: _____ dato: _____

Underskrift tjenestemottaker
(over 16 år)

Underskrift foresatte der tjeneste-
mottaker er under 16 år



Besøksadresse:
Maridalsveien 3, 0178 Oslo
Postadresse:
Postboks 30, Sentrum, 0101 Oslo

Telefon: +47 913 03 913
postmottak.us@vel.oslo.kommune.no
Org. Nr.: 979588933
oslo.kommune.no

Appendix C

Glossary of Terms:

Anti-discriminatory (non-discriminatory) practices: Practices that contribute to raising the awareness of, and counteracting, discriminatory practices and structures. Involves recognition that discriminatory power structures and mind-sets exist in society, and can manifest themselves as conscious or unconscious discrimination based on class, ethnic background, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability.³⁶

Fieldwork: the methodical, systematic work where employees seek out young people in relevant arenas. The objective is to make contacts, build relationships and acquire an overview of developing trends in vulnerable environments and to provide better help and support to vulnerable young people.

Fieldworker: term for professionals who carry out systematic fieldwork.

Prevention: 1) Efforts and measures where the objective is to avert or limit the injury, illness or problems (the disease prevention perspective). 2) Efforts, measures and processes that allow people to improve and maintain their health (the health promoting perspective). It is often divided into universal, selective and indicative prevention.³⁷

Equal Services: Services that (...) take into account that people are different, respect the diversity of the population, give everyone access to services of equal quality and adjust offers according to the intended user³⁸. Oslo is one city and all inhabitants should have access to equal services regardless of where they live.

Follow-up work by Outreach Services: Includes individually adapted help and support, social and health professional counselling, referral of contact with other agencies or structured cooperation around personal development goals. The follow-up work often starts through informal contact and relationships that are established through fieldwork in arenas where vulnerable young people gather. The follow-up is based on informed consent and important information is recorded in the young person's journal.

Assignment based follow-up work: Follow up of vulnerable young people that is carried out on the initiative of services other than the outreach services, such as school, Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration or Child Welfare Services. Examples of assignment based follow-up work can be participation in drug contracts for young people, assignments for The School Follow-up service (OT) for people outside of upper secondary education, follow up actions with young people who have assistance measures under the Child Welfare Act.

Outreach Youth Services: The generic term for services that perform outreach work/ field work as a part of the service. This includes both traditional outreach services and other services that use outreach or outpatient methodology in their work with young people.

SalTo: Coordination model for drug and crime prevention among young people in the age group 12-22 years, on the initiative of the City of Oslo and the Oslo Police District. Involves political and administrative leadership, their own coordinators in all districts and multiple agencies as well as numerous local initiatives and focus areas.

Early measures / early intervention: Intervention in a problem development process – in the area between universal prevention and treatment measures. Focus on reducing risk elements and strengthening protective factors.³⁹

Youth friendly services: Are services which are (...) adjusted to the youth group's cultural character, life and maturation phase, individual all-inclusive needs and human rights as they are outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other legislation.⁴⁰

Utekontakt / utekontaktarbeid: The traditional Norwegian term for specific outreach services in districts and municipalities that will be used in this document. Utekontakten's work is characterised by a preventative emphasis on vulnerable youths and systematic and methodical fieldwork where the target group gather. This approach is based on relationship- and trust- building work, individual counselling and referral work and the liaising of contact between young people and local welfare and leisure services. Examples of other names that have been used for Utekontakten services are street teams, youth teams or outreach teams (gateteam, ungdomsteam or oppsøkende team).

Uteseksjonen/The City Centre Outreach Service: The Agency for Welfare and Social Service's outreach service in central Oslo. Uteseksjonen has a larger focus on acute social and health problems (drugs, homelessness, crime and absconding from care). The service works with all age groups but has a special focus on young people under the age of 25 years.

Vulnerable Young People – Outreach Service's target group: Vulnerable or at-risk young people under the age of 25 who are to a lesser or to an inadequate extent are reached by the services. Young people who abscond from care are present in vulnerable arenas, experience risks connected to childhood living standards or who find themselves in a difficult life situation. The target group is often left without a satisfactory offer with regard to school, work or other activities or they are unable to take full advantage of the existing offers. Outreach workers also assist young people who do not feel that they have received adequate help and support or who want assistance in contact with other services.

36) Pedersen og Vollebæk i Erdal (red.) 2006

37) www.forebygging.no/ordbok

38) Byrådets rundskriv 26/2013 - «Charter for integrerende byer»

39) www.forebygging.no/ordbok 40) www.ungdomsvennlig.no

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