

GUIDELINES FOR SWEDISH YOUTH CENTRES



THE SWEDISH SOCIETY  FOR YOUTH CENTRES

THE PURPOSE ... of guidelines

The purpose of this document is to briefly present a general overview of the activities of youth centres and for individual centres to describe their own activities at the end of the document.

FSUM

Föreningen för Sveriges ungdomsmottagningar
The Swedish Society for Youth Centres

www.fsum.org



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OBJECTIVES

... and target group for Swedish youth centres

The general objective for Swedish youth centres is to promote physical and mental well-being, focusing mainly on sexual and reproductive health and the rights of youth and young adults. This is achieved through a comprehensive

medical, psychological, and psychosocial perspective. Each and every person has the right to knowledge, information, support, and treatment. The target group is youth and young adults who are between 12 and 25 years old.

PRINCIPLES

... behind the work of the youth centres

HUMAN RIGHTS

All activities in Swedish youth centres shall respect human rights as expressed by the United Nations (UN) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF YOUTH

One of the human rights is the right to health. The right to health includes sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), which in turn include the right over one's own body and sexuality. Young people have the right to influence their own lives and to make their own choices, but they also have the right to support in matters concerning their health and their situation in life.

Youth centres have the important task of fulfilling the rights and needs of youth. The view of human beings and working method of youth centres shall therefore be characterised by, and based on, human rights.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is very important for Swedish youth centres. The Convention declares that children, i.e. people younger than 18 years of age, are individuals with their own rights and their own human dignity. They also have the right to, and need of, support and protection. The work of youth centres is thus always based on the needs and concerns of the young person.

A NORM-CRITICAL APPROACH

Youth centres shall welcome all young people, regardless of sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or faith, sexual orientation, and age. A constant norm-critical perspective will improve the ability of each youth centre to make each visitor feel that they are seen and recognised on their own terms.

A WELCOMING YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

Knowledge about the way young people seek and receive help is crucial to ensuring the right assessment and treatment; this requires safe and stable relationships. Awareness about, and constant development of, a professional reception is necessary for young people to feel safe enough to seek help.

Youth centres shall offer individual and group visits, and reach out to schools and other parts of society. Some people visit the youth centre once or twice, while others may need recurring appointments for a long period of time.

LOW THRESHOLD, HIGH ACCESSIBILITY

Swedish youth centres are low-threshold centres. Having a low threshold means making it easy for young people to seek the help that they are entitled to. It is essential that young people seek help of their own free will, which means that the centres do not accept referrals. Some people visit the youth centre once or twice, while others may need recurring appointments for a long period of time. It is also part of the work of the centres to help young people find adequate help outside the centre, if needed.

It is important that visitors to the youth centre feel seen and that they are given a friendly reception. High accessibility is achieved by means of easily accessible, separate venues, a youth-oriented working method, and a non-critical approach. Centres can be contacted online, by telephone, or by visiting the centre. A scheduled appointment shall be offered when the centre is first contacted. It shall be

possible to receive help immediately, such as drop-in hours and/or urgent appointments. Visits to youth centres are always free.

It is important that visitors at the youth centre feel seen and that they are given a friendly reception.

A SALUTOGENIC PERSPECTIVE

The salutogenic perspective focuses on factors that lead to and support health and well-being. Health-promoting strategies require that the needs and problems of young people are addressed with respect and understanding.

It is important that visitors at the youth centre feel seen and that they are given a friendly reception.

It is crucial to have specific knowledge of the situation and development of young people. Personnel at youth centres meet people with different needs and problems, but always have a salutogenic perspective, as opposed to a diagnostic or disease-oriented working method. All personnel shall base their work on salutogenesis. This, in turn, is based on empirical evidence which shows that this way of thinking and working helps support young people in a good and sustainable way.

QUALIFIED CROSS-PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Personnel at youth centres have medical, psychological, and social work qualifications and



collaborate closely, using a cross-professional working method. This collaboration is crucial to be able to understand and, thereby, meet the needs of young people. The working method is efficient, since it enables a comprehensive view of a young individual, who may have different kinds of needs.

The working group shall consist of a registered midwife, a counsellor/psychologist, and a physician. These professions are necessary, since youth centres must be able to prescribe contraception and offer counselling, and have a physician with medical responsibility. The personnel may also include other professions that benefit the organisation.

The allocation of resources to personnel with psychosocial and medical competence should be balanced, so that the needs of visitors are always met. Youth centres should have access to personnel who, other than the basic skills of their profession, are also trained in andrology, gynaecology, psychotherapy, and sexology. The task also requires that the personnel can use a youth-oriented perspective and that they have specific competence in biological, psychological, and social aspects of adolescence, gender, gender identity and expression, sexuality, and sexual identity.

LEVEL OF RESOURCES

Experience shows that youth centres that work well have at least one full-time employed registered midwife, one full-time employed counsellor/psychologist, and a physician who is available for ten hours every week, for every 3,500 teenagers and young adults in the po-

pulation. This should be considered the minimum level. In municipalities where there are many young people whose registered place of residence is another municipality, other bases of calculation should be used to enable the corresponding level of availability.

MANAGING ORGANISATION

Youth centres may have different managing organisations. If several organisations are responsible for a centre, the division of responsibilities shall be established in a written agreement, where funding and levels of resources are also defined. The managing organisation shall describe the overall task of the youth centre clearly, establish objectives, and ensure conditions for the activities of the youth centre. The task shall be known by all personnel. It is necessary for the activities of the youth centre that the financial conditions are defined in a separate budget, which includes the activities of the centre in relation to its task and objectives. The budget shall also take into account the needs of further training and guidance among the personnel.

The personnel shall always be able to do their work, regardless of managing organisation.

Each youth centre shall have an especially appointed manager, as well as a physician who provides medical advice.



OUR YOUTH CENTRE

YOUTH CENTRE NAME AND YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

Address: _____

Managing organisation: _____

Target group: _____

Ages: _____

Personnel: _____

Number of visits a year: _____

Number of visitors a year: _____

Number of visitors a year in relation to the target group in total: _____

Number of visits a year by profession: _____



Reasons for visits: _____
REASONS FOR VISITS AS DOCUMENTED IN THE HEALTH RECORD SYSTEM FOR THE YOUTH CENTRE

Current outreaching activities: _____

Other areas of work specific to the youth centre: _____

Additional comments: _____

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