



Adoption
East Midlands

DERBY NOTTINGHAM DERBYSHIRE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



A QUICK GUIDE TO YOUTH CONNECT



Who are Youth Connect

The Youth Connect Team are part of the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) and is formed through a collaboration with the Nottinghamshire Youth Service. The wider offer is overseen through regular collaborative management between Nottinghamshire Youth Service and Adoption East Midlands (AEM).

We have a wealth of experience working with and supporting young people with their personal, social and educational development.



Rachel Atchinson
Youth Worker

As a youth worker, we are mentors and guides for your young person, supporting them in their daily struggles while providing critical resources to help them reach their potential. We play a role in fostering positive social development, education, and health in young people, making them integral to society.



What is Youth Work?



The key purpose of youth work is to:

'Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their potential.'

**Youth Work National Occupational Standards.*

Youth Work is a distinct educational process adapted across a variety of settings to support a young person's personal, social, emotional and educational development. It begins with the development of a unique, challenging and developmental relationship with young people, which is utilised to:



Explore their values, beliefs, ideas and issues.



Enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society.



Facilitate learning practical and life skills, that will help them to realise their full potential.

Youth Work Values

Youth work is underpinned by a clear set of values, these are:

- Young people voluntarily participating.
- Utilising young people's view of the world
- Treating young people with respect
- Seeking to develop young people's skills and attitudes rather than remedy 'problem behaviours'
- Helping young people develop stronger relationships and collective identities
- Respecting and valuing differences
- Promoting the voice of young people



A group of young women in blue athletic shirts are laughing and hugging each other on a grassy field. One shirt has the number "20" and another has "7".

Our Values

Our aim is to create safe spaces for young people to explore themselves and their relationships with others. We will provide youth workers who can be trusted and who will provide engaging and fun things to do, led by our young people's interests and wishes. We will provide spaces where young people can be together to share their commonality of being an adopted young person. We will also enable spaces where they can meet with other young people in their local area.

Promoting self-esteem and self-confidence is a primary aim of the work we do, and we will do this through a trauma informed youth work approach. We will listen to the voices of young people and mobilise that into action through our work.

Having these values is essential for achieving our vision, which will enable us to make the right decisions for our children and ensure that they are provided with the relevant youth support.



Our Youth Offer



We will aim to spend time getting to know your young person. We will meet with them 1:1 either at home or in the community according to their needs. We want to build a relationship with your young person so that they have the confidence to be able to talk about their likes and dislikes, as well as the things that are challenging and that they want to change. This period will be reviewed at the 6-week stage to decide how much more time is needed.

At the 6-week stage we would hope to understand your young person's needs and set some goals. These goals will aim to increase self-esteem, promote relationships, increase access to the wider community and potentially education goals. We will then identify a way to connect your young person into a local youth group or one of our adoption specific groups.

For those young people who may struggle with meeting with others face to face, we are developing an idea around using our social VR room with our VR headsets (Antser training package [Virtual Reality Across Antser](#)), which will be a safe virtual space planned and led by one of the team.

As well as supporting to achieve goals on a 1:1 basis, once we have identified a group for your young person, where possible, we'll work towards focusing the sessions less on their relationship with their youth worker and focus on rooting them in their local relationship groups. This is so that your young person will be able to feel confident to continue to attend the sessions once the youth work role has ended.



We will also aim to connect your young person with universal youth provision across the region depending on where you live. We have close connections with Nottinghamshire Youth Service, and we are developing our knowledge of provision in the Derby and Derbyshire area.

Youth Consultations

As part of our support package, we offer adoptive parents an opportunity to discuss their referral in a **one-hour virtual consultation** with one of our Youth Workers. During the consultation, you will have an opportunity to discuss the challenges your child is experiencing and explore these with a trauma informed approach.

The Youth Worker will conclude your virtual consultation by reflecting on what they have learnt about your child's difficulties, signpost you to other resources and groups that you may find helpful and make suggestions that could be useful in future. If applicable, they will also discuss any further support that they feel the youth connect team can offer you and your child and explain how this will be facilitated.

Once you have completed the **Youth Connect referral form**, please email Youthconnect@adoptioneastmidlands.nottscc.gov.uk, and we'll arrange a consultation with you.

If you would like any further information or have any questions relating to our consultations, please email: Youthconnect@adoptioneastmidlands.nottscc.gov.uk

Targeted Group and 1:1 Sessions

We want to provide opportunities for your young person to access targeted small group work on key issues relating to young people. This work can also be done on a one-to-one basis where needed.

This might be on issues such as sex and relationships, knife crime, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and/or social media.

We will offer these sessions in person, and we also hope to conduct sessions using the social VR room to run a virtual group.



YOUTH
Connect



Youth Work in School Settings

We are developing our offer alongside our education team and where we identify a young person with need in both education and youth, we will consider whether it is appropriate for us to engage with that young person in their school. This might be to create a safe lunchtime space, to support them to engage positively with peers, and to build positive relationships with staff to promote their sense of belonging.

Young People Events

We offer regular young people's events for ages 8-12 years and 13-18 years during all school holidays. This is an opportunity for your young person to meet with other adopted young people, whilst taking part in activities which are accessible therapeutic activities. These events are supported by youth workers from Nottinghamshire Youth Service, AEM Youth Connect Workers and AEM Social Workers.



Parents

We want to hear your views and lived experience of parenting young people. So that we can hear your voices, we are running a Teenagers Co Production group led by Adoption UK. This space will enable parents and staff at AEM to meet and think about the issues relating to teenagers and you as their parents, to hear your lived experience and to support the development of our youth offer based on those needs. If you would like to be part of this group and contribute to our service development, please contact us on the email below.

Get in Touch

If you require support with your young person, we will ask you to fill out our [youth connect referral form](#). This will enable us to understand your needs in the fastest way possible. We will read the information you have sent and get back in touch with you with information about how we think we can help.

We know that for some families, where there is significant stress, completing a form can feel like a barrier. If you are feeling like this, please contact us on the email below and we will organise a time with you to talk through the form.

If you need support regarding your young person, please contact us on the following email:

youthconnect@adoptioneastmidlands.nottscg.gov.uk