



Youth Innovation

Conference

Working with corporates
to deliver Youth Work -
McDonald's, Makin it

David Walsh





Youth Innovation Conference

Detached Youth Work – David Walsh – Director of Operations

A

Supporting Communities

Supporting Communities Charity, established in 2022, support vulnerable young people and families who are at risk through 1:1 and group support within all settings.

B

Service Models

Supporting Communities operate under various models when supporting young people, families and communities.

C

Detached Youth Work

Supporting Communities deliver Detached Youth Work as part of the service. We will explore the Derbion and McDonalds projects today.

D

Working with Corporates

Benefits of working with corporates and partners to deliver youth services



A

My Journey

- Over 17 years' experience supporting and empowering young people across a range of settings
- Proven track record working across the VCSE, public, and private sectors
- Experienced in primary, secondary, residential, and further education environments
- Recognised as a multi-award-winning professional for impactful projects and leadership
- Successfully supported the fundraising of millions of pounds for youth services
- Directly engaged and positively impacted the lives of thousands of young people
- Led the development and delivery of innovative initiatives across the Midlands
- Contributed to shaping national policy and strategic youth agendas

A

Who are Supporting Communities



Youth Support

- Educational Mentoring
- Community Mentoring
- Post 16 transition Support
- Emotional Wellbeing Support
- Targeted interventions
- Group Workshop Support



Family Support

- 1:1 Family Support
- Group Family Support
- Emotional Wellbeing Support
- Documentation Support, Professional
- Communication Support



Community Support

- Detached Youth Work
- Outreach Services
- Mobile Youth Bus Provision
- Targeted Community Interventions
- Group Wellbeing Sessions
- Group Family Sessions

B

**Engagement – Find out three facts
from a person you don't know**

ACTIVITY

Engagement and Support Pathways



MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



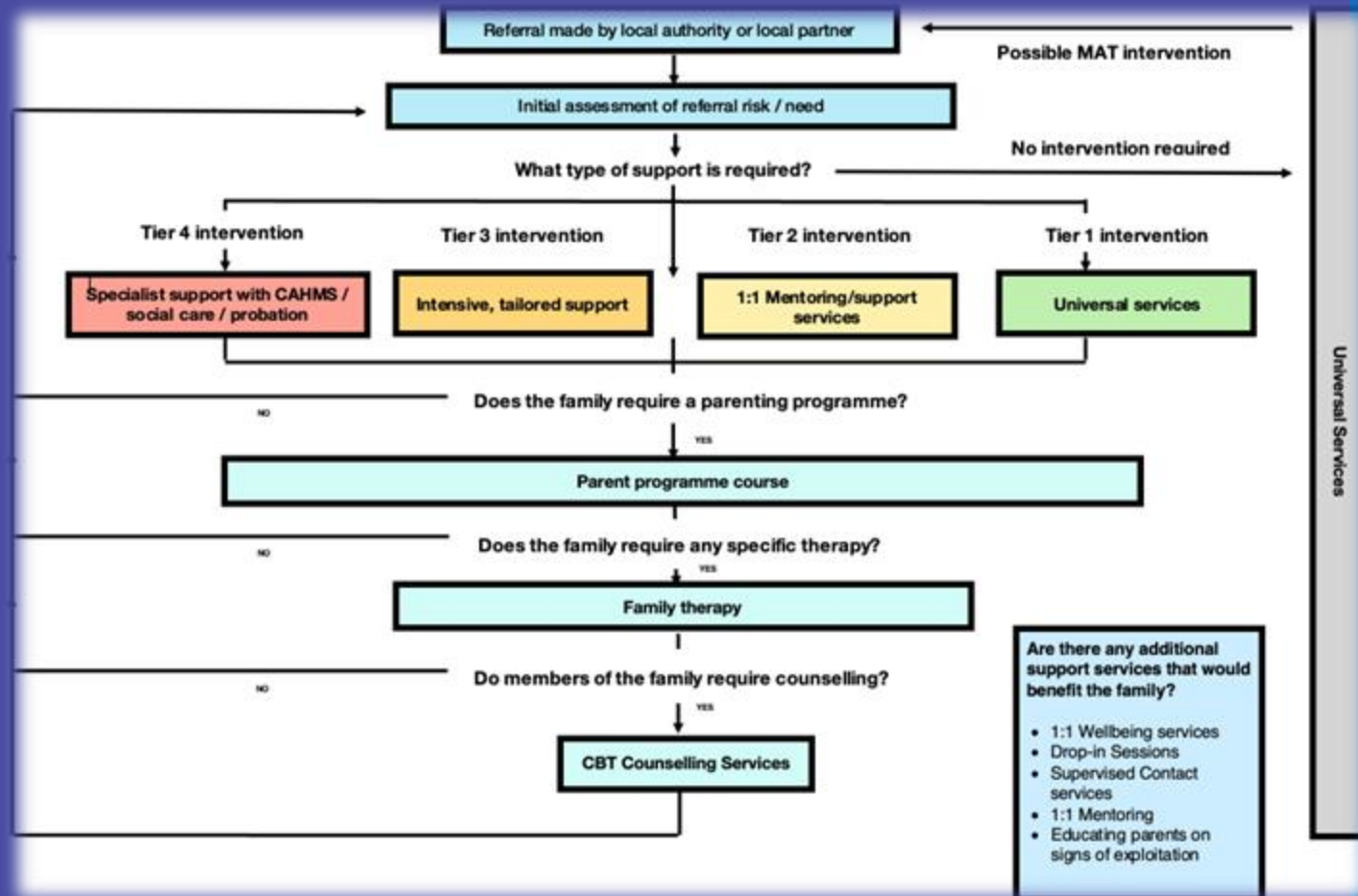
Engagement and Support Pathways

Supporting Communities deliver across various environments, considering the contextual safeguarding needs of those we support.



Do you know the process and where to get support from?

Engagement and Support Pathways



Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family!



Why do you people gather in shopping centres and restaurants, and what is the impact?



Challenges within the Youth Sector

- **Long Waiting Times** – Delays in accessing vital support, especially for mental health.
- **Funding Cuts** – Local authority budgets are reduced, leading to fewer services.
- **Regional Inequality** – Support varies widely depending on location.
- **Staff Shortages** – Fewer trained youth workers available.
- **Short-Term Funding** – Services often rely on temporary grants.
- **Lack of Early Intervention** – Focus has shifted to crisis response.
- **Complex Needs** – Growing demand for multi-agency support.
- **Trust Issues** – Some are wary of engaging due to past experiences.



Derbion Project

Detached Youth Work- Derbion



Why We Did It

With limited opportunities available, many young people were gathering in large groups around the shopping centre.

- Derbion is a key hub for shoppers, young people, and local residents.
- The centre faced challenges due to negative behaviours and attitudes, which led to feelings of intimidation and disconnection among visitors.
- This placed added pressure on Derbion staff and security teams to manage anti-social behaviour and maintain a welcoming environment.



What We Did

- Partner agencies came together to deliver youth outreach, engagement, and activities through a dedicated Community Hub space within Derbion.
- Youth workers built trust through meaningful conversations, helping young people reflect on and change their behaviours.
- The Hub offered positive, diversionary activities that reduced boredom and created a safe space for social interaction.
- As a result, incidents of anti-social behaviour decreased and there was a noticeable reduction in conflict with security staff.



BBC
CHILDREN
IN NEED

A photograph of a McDonald's restaurant at night, with its golden arches illuminated. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape that serves as a background for the title text.

McDonalds **'Makin It'** Campaign





Detached Youth Work– McDonalds

Why Young People Gather in Places Like McDonald's?

- **Lack of youth spaces** – No local youth clubs, drop-ins, or safe social environments.
- **Open and accessible** – Warm, dry, and open late with no entry cost.
- **Free Wi-Fi and charging points** – A place to stay connected.
- **Familiar and routine** – Becomes a regular hangout spot due to lack of alternatives.
- **Avoiding home life** – Some seek space away from difficult home environments.
- **Non-judgemental environment** – Staff are often more lenient than other public spaces.
- **Nowhere else to go** – Especially true in areas with cuts to youth provision.



Detached Youth Work – McDonalds

Problems That Can Arise

- **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)** – Group gatherings can lead to noise, mess, or intimidating behaviour.
- **Conflict with staff or customers** – Tensions can rise due to overcrowding or disruptive behaviour.
- **Negative public perception** – Groups of young people may be unfairly stereotyped or stigmatised.
- **Police involvement** – Increased presence can escalate situations and damage trust.
- **Missed support opportunities** – Without outreach or engagement, young people's needs go unnoticed.
- **Vulnerability** – Young people may be exposed to grooming, exploitation, or peer pressure.

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**How Do You Think Youth Services Benefit Local
Businesses?**



Our Funders



Working with corporate partners

How Youth Services Benefit Local Businesses

- **Reduce ASB** – Fewer incidents in and around shops.
- **Improve footfall** – More welcoming spaces attract more visitors.
- **Lower staff pressure** – Less need for conflict management or security.
- **Protect property** – Reduced risk of vandalism or damage.
- **Boost local economy** – Young people become positive contributors as customers and future employees.
- **Strengthen community** – Shows investment in the area and improves public perception.

Thank you

