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Towards a Youth Work Agenda

A Research report on youth theatres and
Connexions

Commissioned by the National Association
of Youth Theatres (NAYT)

School of Education and Professional Development

August 2003

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Executive Summary

This research investigated the relationship between youth theatres and Connexions. The work was commissioned by the National Association of Youth Theatres (NAYT) and supported by the Department for Education and Skills (DFES). Connexions is a major new government initiative for 13-19 year olds, designed to improve and enhance support for them at this key stage during their lives. Central to Connexions is the concept of the personal adviser (PA), who will have an overview of their ambitions and needs. PAs may well identify opportunities for personal development for young people and youth theatres are well placed to offer rich and rewarding experiences for young people. This process of "referring" young people to a youth theatre for a variable period of time was a key concept which was tested in the research.

This research considered the following questions:

1. Can youth theatres in England contribute to the Connexions process?
2. Do youth theatres differ in their approach to working with young people and how do these differences impact on their ability to become involved with Connexions?
3. What training and development needs exist among youth theatres in regards to Connexions and how could these be addressed in future work?

The research was conducted through a postal questionnaire which was sent to all of the youth theatres in England (Wales and Scotland have different arrangements for supporting young people) who are members of the NAYT and additional theatres which were identified as a result of a search by the research team. 972 questionnaires were sent out, and 159 were returned. This is not a particularly high response rate, but it is in line with general return rates for postal surveys and the returned questionnaires did allow the research questions to be answered.

In terms of results, a rich and varied picture of youth theatre activity in England emerged. It was found that theatres vary widely in terms of funding, size and the type of work they undertake. Knowledge of Connexions was not particularly high and many youth theatres wanted far more information about Connexions. This is a key finding, it should not be assumed that youth theatres have full knowledge of Connexions and much work to improve awareness needs to be undertaken. It was found that generally many theatres wish to have involvement with Connexions work. Key concerns raised were about funding and training issues, with theatres identifying a lack of capacity in youth work skills as a possible barrier to future work. There was a perception among some theatres that Connexions referrals would be young people who were disruptive, had special needs or other personal and behavioural issues. Correspondingly, many theatres believed that Connexions referrals would disrupt the work of the group and upset carefully established artistic and organisational routines. Information was also gathered on the philosophy of practice in individual theatres and the way this affected their likelihood to want to work with Connexions referrals. It was found that theatres which had an emphasis on arts and the theatre as

endeavours were less likely to want to work with Connexions, whereas theatres which had a grounding in youth work were more likely. These differences however, are not particularly strong, and overall it was found that most theatres would be prepared to work with Connexions referrals if the correct frameworks were put in place.

The report draws a number of conclusions based on the research conducted. Overall it was concluded that youth theatres are in a strong position to contribute to Connexions work and can do a great deal to enhance the opportunities for personal development for young people. Because of the wide variation in youth theatres and their individual natures, it was concluded that a centrally made policy of cooperation or a blueprint which would cover all Connexions and youth theatre partnerships would not be desirable and would lead to many theatres possibly rejecting work. Communication and information sharing with youth theatres was seen to be crucial in this phase of the development, with networks of voluntary organisations receiving timely and relevant advice about how they can contribute to Connexions and benefit from additional funding opportunities available. Communication and training would also seek to lessen the perception that Connexions referrals are somehow difficult or challenging and taking them would disrupt the work of established groups. Clearly there is a possibility for this to happen, but evidence from the questionnaire showed that some youth theatres had overestimated this risk and perceived Connexions as a service solely for special needs or emotionally and behaviourally challenging young people. Another finding concerned the use of funding by Connexions partnerships. Funding which is developmental (so called "seed-corn" funding), is vital to youth theatres if they are to move to a position where they can take on Connexions work. Connexions partnerships will need to take a medium and long term view of relationships with theatres and work to establish trust and cooperation, and a funding framework which allows theatres stability and the capacity to plan for the future.

In summary the research has confirmed the view that youth theatres are in an excellent position to contribute to the work of Connexions partnerships. The role of agencies such as the NAYT is vital for success and local Connexions services should seek innovative ways to work with youth theatres.

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Introduction

Connexions is a name becoming increasingly familiar to anyone involved in work with, or support for, young people in the 13-19 years old age range. It is a major new Government initiative to re-organise and improve support for young people at that key time of their lives:

The Connexions service has been established to provide integrated information, advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for all 13-19 year olds in England. It aims to help young people engage in learning, achieve their full potential and make a smooth transition to adult lives

(*'Working Together –Connexions with Voluntary and Community Organisations'*, CSNU, page 6)

Central to this new service will be a network of 'Personal Advisors' who will act as 'brokers' for every young person, and will ensure that someone has an overview of each young person's ambitions and needs. Rather than replacing existing professionals working with young people, such as youth workers, Careers Guidance staff, etc,

'this will be achieved by building on the work of a wide range of existing agencies in the public, private, and voluntary and community sectors' (ibid, page 6)

Connexions is a universal service for all young people, but it will have a particular focus on young people with multiple issues and problems. Indeed, the new 'youth support service', now known as 'Connexions,' was first mooted in the Social Exclusion Unit Report, 'Bridging the Gap' (1999), which focussed on the disaffected 9%(161,000) of 16-18 year olds who are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET). Connexions has brought with it significant new funding on top of funding for existing services, and is delivered by 47 Connexions Partnerships which share boundaries with the local Learning and Skill Partnerships.

So, what does this major new initiative mean for voluntary youth groups already working with youth people? Connexions is clearly keen to work with them and build on their success, but is this realistic, or possible? In particular, how realistic is it in relation to the national network of locally based youth theatre projects? This research aimed to investigate those issues.

The National Association of Youth theatres is the flagship/membership organisation for youth theatres in England, commissioned the research with support from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Youth arts approaches, including youth theatre, have a proven track record of engaging positively and creatively with young people to achieve educational and developmental goals. Indeed, long-term research in the United States of America by Shirley Brice-Heath and others suggest that youth arts approaches are particularly effective tools for work with young people, because of the risk-taking and teamwork involved. Recent research by Manchester University ('Playing a Part') has shown the youth theatres within the NAYT umbrella thriving, supported by an energetic and pro-active national organisation.

That national organisation, NAYT, was keen to explore the readiness of local youth theatres to engage with Connexions in the way suggested by '**Working Together – Connexions and Voluntary and Community Organisations**', the joint publication from Connexions and NCVYS, the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services:

The value of work that voluntary and community organisations do for young people can be significantly increased through support from and involvement in Connexions (page 9)

To investigate this, NAYT commissioned the School of Education and Professional Development, at the University of Huddersfield, to devise, carry out and analyse a questionnaire-based survey of the NAYT national membership. The University of Huddersfield is a well-established provider of Youth and Community Work professional qualification training, including the post-graduate entry Diploma in Professional Studies – Youth and Community Work which has a particular emphasis on youth arts approaches, and which was established following research into the training needs of youth and community arts practitioners. The University of

Huddersfield is also the largest national provider of Connexions professional training to external clients.

The research process at the School of Education and Professional Development was co-ordinated by Dr. Matthew Pearson (Course Leader, MSc Multi-Media and Education) and Paul Thomas (Course Leader, Diploma in Professional Studies –Youth and Community Work, and Connexions trainer).

Research Questions

It is essential for research questions to be framed in advance of empirical work being undertaken, especially in the case of a questionnaire based piece of research. The research questions were developed by the research team at Huddersfield in conjunction with NAYT. The questions are:

Can youth theatres in England contribute to the Connexions process?

Do youth theatres differ in their approach to working with young people and how do these differences impact on their ability to become involved with Connexions?

What training and development needs exist among youth theatres in regards to Connexions and how could these be addressed in future work?

These questions are framed in a deliberately broad manner and a larger number of smaller questions arise from these overarching questions.

Methodology

The methodology for this research was specified at the outset by the tender by the National Association of Youth Theatres. A self complete questionnaire was designed and sent by post to all of the members of the NAYT in England. Researchers also identified a number of youth theatres who were in operation who were not members of the NAYT and sent the questionnaire to these organisations as well. In total 849 youth theatres who were on NAYT's database were sent questionnaires and an additional 123 which were not were identified by the researchers and questionnaires sent to these organisations as well.

Questionnaire Design

Questionnaire design is the key to successful survey based research and the research team adopted a collaborative approach to the design phase of the work. Because the questionnaire was the sole research instrument used for this work, it was doubly important that it was effective and well designed and allowed the research questions to be answered.

In order to facilitate the design of the questionnaire, an expert seminar was convened in February and representatives of youth theatres invited to contribute to the design of the instrument. The expert seminar consisted of the research team from the university, representatives from 4 youth theatres from the North of England and the management team of the NAYT. A draft of the questionnaire had been prepared in advance by the team at Huddersfield and during the day this draft was subjected to intense scrutiny by the expert team. As a result of the expert seminar the questionnaire was considerably developed and new questions added. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in appendix one of this research. One of the key decisions reached by the expert seminar concerned the use of the NAYT's own data fields for youth theatres, including the number of participants, the age range of participants, data on the numbers and types of productions undertaken by the youth theatres and details on the staffing arrangements. It was also decided that information on the formal constitution of the youth theatres was important and whether they had child protection, equal opportunities and insurance policies in place. This data on the physical and institutional arrangements of youth theatres will be crucial for examining whether there are variations on the responses to the other questions. For instance, it may have been possible to discern a distinct willingness on the part of some youth theatres to engage with Connexions referrals based on their size and capacity and the staffing structures in place. So this detailed data on the organisation of youth theatres is crucial to the overall success of the research. The expert seminar also decided that a classification of youth theatres based on principles and philosophy which was produced by researchers at Manchester University, could be used to gather information about the philosophy of practice in

the theatres. It was decided that the four types of theatre would be listed and respondents would be asked to rate their theatre against the criteria on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 was strongly identify and 1 was not identify at all. The inclusion of these four questions allowed an analysis of whether particular types of philosophy of practice in the youth theatres predisposed them towards being positive towards Connexions or otherwise.

On the issue of questionnaire in particular, the seminar identified the need to ask detailed and specific questions about the organisation and management of the youth theatres and their physical and human resources. The questions are central to a consideration of whether youth theatres can take part in Connexions. Alongside the practical and factual questions about theatre organisations, such as the numbers of young people attending, the workers involved and their qualifications, and the existence of an insurance policy, there was also a set of questions designed to elicit details about the philosophy of practice in each youth theatre. These questions (found on page 3 of the questionnaire), asked respondents to indicate, on a scale of 1 to 10 their identification with a set of statements about youth theatre. A previous piece of research, by the University of Manchester, had identified 4 models of practice within youth theatres and these were seen by the seminar to provide an excellent starting point for a consideration of the philosophy of practice in each theatre. So these descriptions were added to the questionnaire and respondents asked to score each one from 1 to 10 (do not identify, ranging to strongly identify) to give information about the goals and purposes of each individual youth theatre.

Most questions on the instrument were closed, meaning that a single response was needed (writing a figure in, or ticking a box), but to compliment these, spaces for comments were made on key questions, in particular those concerning the youth theatres readiness and willingness to work with Connexions services. These comments were collected by the research team and analysed to give a significant extra level of detail above and beyond the closed questions. These comments are reported, when they become pertinent to arguments being put forward, in the research results section of this report.

Questionnaire Administration

Postal surveys traditionally have a low response rate and from the outset the research team took practical steps to make the response as high as possible. A stamped addressed envelope was included with each questionnaire so youth theatres did not need to pay postage and to eliminate the risk of questionnaires being incorrectly addressed and not being returned to base. A £250 prize fund was also established with one completed questionnaire being selected and the winning theatre being awarded this money. So that the questionnaire was publicised widely in the field of youth theatre, an article in Youth Today was published in February. This publication is widely read by workers in the field and did generate a significant (24) number of queries about the research, mostly from youth theatres who did not belong to the NAYT but who wanted to take part.

Response rates

Of the 972 youth theatres who were sent questionnaires, 159 responded which is a 16% response rate. This is disappointing given the steps taken to ensure a high response rate and the offer of a £250 prize draw. But there were still enough questionnaires to make the analysis viable and the results generalisable to the whole population of youth theatres. There exists the issue that the sample may have been "self-selecting", which means that those youth theatres which did respond all shared some common characteristics, and conversely those who did not shared a different set of characteristics. Bias introduced by patterns of response is a common feature of survey based research and is to some extent unavoidable when using this method. Analysis of the questionnaires returned however, suggested very strongly that a wide range of youth theatres had responded. Some were large and well funded, some were small and existed on very modest amounts of funding, some were positive about being involved with Connexions and others were adamant that their theatre should and would not be involved. Youth theatres from all 9 Connexions regions in England responded, some which had been existence for over 20 years, and some in their first year of operation, with one even being in its first month of operation. Whilst it is impossible to speculate on what the results would have been with a higher completion rate, as far as we can ascertain the sample here is representative

of youth theatre activity and the results are generalisable to the whole population namely the 950 plus youth theatres existing in England in 2003.

Analysis of questionnaires

The questionnaires were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), this is the industry standard for social research and allowed a wide range of descriptive and inferential statistical tests to be conducted. Because of the complexity of the questionnaire, a necessity given the detailed information on each theatre which was collected, at times data is simplified in the presentation of results to make the drawing of conclusions more straightforward. This process is explained in detail where necessary.

Summary of Results

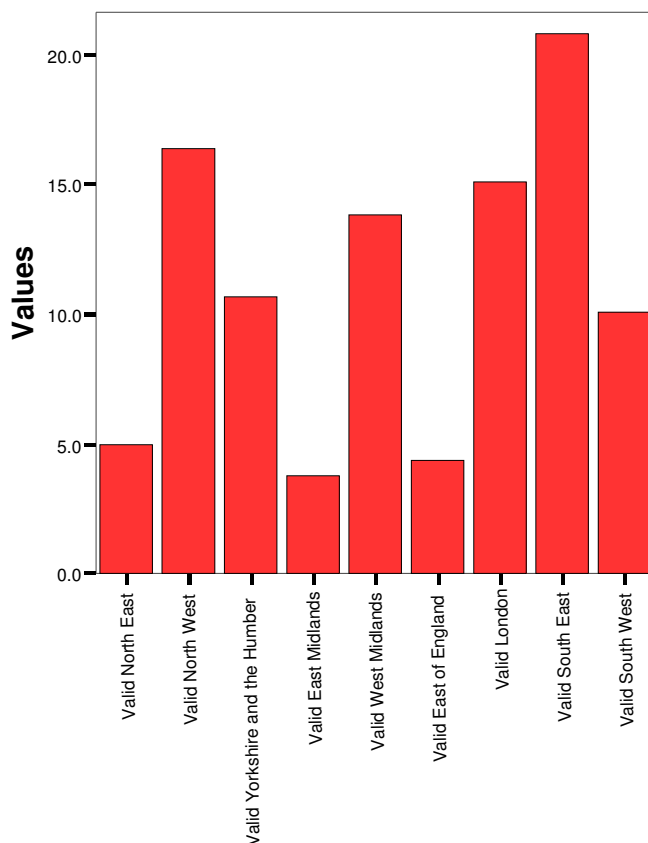
In a questionnaire based survey such as the one conducted for this research, the presentation of the results are one of the crucial sections of the research. It is in this section that the answers of the 159 youth theatres who responded to the questionnaire are analysed. In research terms there are two main objectives of this section. The first is to present the results in a form which is understandable, clear and coherent and which allows the reader to create their own opinions and draw their own conclusions from the research. The second is to provide a commentary on the results and draw specific conclusions about the research questions of the study. In most cases descriptive statistical procedures have been used in this study. Descriptive statistics report on the data which was actually collected by the study and are straightforward to produce because no element of adjustment for the size of the sample is made. Some tables take the form of cross tabulations. In this case the responses to one particular answer, for instance "would your theatre take Connexions referrals?" are placed in a table alongside responses to another question "amount spent by each theatre per year". This allows the responses for each category to be evaluated and a decision about the affect of one variable on the other arrived at. At times in the study inferential statistics were used. These statistical methods assess the likelihood that a particular result has come about by chance owing to the sample used and allow us to decide whether the result came about by chance or would hold good if applied to the entire sample (over 900 youth theatres). In order for inferential statistics to operate effectively, the sample should be a truly random one from the whole population. It was assumed in this research that our sample was effectively a random one as we were unable to detect a bias in the returned surveys. However statistical procedures were always used with caution in the study so that false results were not reported.

Geographical Location

The table below summarises the locations of the 159 youth theatres who completed the questionnaire. These regions correspond to the nine Connexions regions in England and this table allows us to judge whether a geographically representative sample was achieved in the questionnaire. The area with the largest number of respondents was the South East and the lowest number of respondents were from the East Midlands. Although there are some differences between the numbers of youth theatres in each region there are enough in each case for the results of this survey to be considered to be representative of the entirety of England.

Which ConneXions region are you located in?

Statistics : Percent



which ConneXions region are you located in?

Total Participants in youth theatres

Participants (total, male and female)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Participants	147	7.00	1500.00	103.7347	149.84898
Male Participants	143	1	500	36.97	53.710
Female Participants	144	5	1000	65.30	98.559
Valid N (listwise)	142				

This table summarises the total participants in each of the youth theatre. In cases where the theatre ran more than 1 group which is a common way of operation, the total for the theatre is shown here (obtained by totalling all of the groups together). The minimum number of participants is just 7 and the maximum is 1500. 12 of the 159 youth theatres who took part in the survey did not give a total number of participants, and in some cases explained that their number fluctuated according to the timing of performances and other activities. Where a range of participants was recorded, for instance when the responses was "between 80 and 100", the middle of this range was recorded in all cases, so in this example 90 would have been the figure used for analysis. When we consider the gender of participants there is a distinct preponderance of female participants with an average of 65 per theatre as opposed to just 37 per theatre for boys. Only 1 theatre in the entire sample of 159 had more boys than girls and most youth theatres had on average between 30 to 50% more girls than boys. These figures may reflect the enthusiasm of girls to get involved in theatre and theatre activities and perhaps a reluctance on the part of some boys to take part in an activity which might be perceived as not a masculine activity. This early finding from the questionnaire does have implications for future work with youth theatres and Connexions services as gender imbalances in groups will need to be considered when planning future activities.

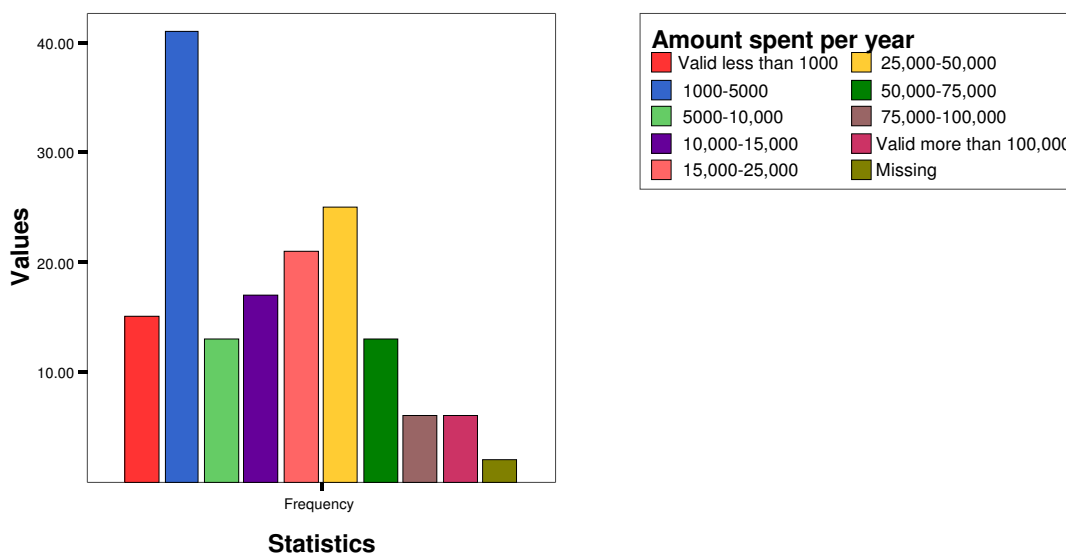
Amounts spent by youth theatres

Amount spent per year on theatre including wages

	Frequency
Valid	
less than 1000	15
1000-5000	41
5000-10,000	13
10,000-15,000	17
15,000-25,000	21
25,000-50,000	25
50,000-75,000	13
75,000-100,000	6
more than 100,000	6
Missing	
System	2

This table summarises the amount spent by each theatre in one year, including the wage bill. Respondents chose from 9 categories which correspond to the classification of theatre spending made by the NAYT. The most common response was between 1000 and 5000 pounds being spent on youth theatres and spending was spread quite evenly among the other categories, apart from the highest categories (75000 and above). Youth theatres spending more than 75,000 on budgets are relatively rare although they do exist. It is possible to see, even from this table, the distinction between youth theatres which exist entirely through the use of volunteers and those who pay salaries (even on a part time and consultancy basis). Youth theatres spending less than 10,000 may not be spending any money at all on salaries, but once costs rise above 10,000 it is likely that some form of wages are being paid to sustain activity. This finding also has implications for the research questions being posed as whether youth theatres staff with volunteers or salaried workers is likely to have an impact on partnerships with Connexions, especially when the important question of running sessions in the day time is taken into account. The graph below presents this information in bar chart form and it is easy here to see the spread of expenditure among youth theatres and the preponderance of youth theatres in the £1000 to £5000 sector.

Amount spent per year on theatre including wages



The amount spent by each theatre is not particularly illuminating when considered in isolation, especially if we are seeking answers to our research questions. The table below sheds further light on the relationship between the amount spent by each theatre and their likelihood to answer **YES**, **NO** or **UNDECIDED** to the crucial question of whether they would work with young people referred by Connexions services. In order to make the data more comprehensible, the original 9 categories of expenditure have been amended here to 3 corresponding to youth theatres who spend less than £10,000, those which spend between £10,000 and £50,000 and those spending over £50,000. A more detailed picture emerges here. 33% of youth theatres who spend less than £10,000 on wages are prepared to commit to working with young people referred by Connexions, 4% answered no to this question and 62% needed more information before deciding. When we move up a category of spending to those youth theatres spending between £10,000 and £50,000, the number who answered yes rises to 63%, the number answering no is just 3% and the number needing more information drops to 34%. For the highest category,

those youth theatres spending more than 50,000, no youth theatres said they would not be prepared to work with Connexions referrals and 76% said yes to this question, with 24% wanting more information before deciding.

Categories of spending * Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions Crosstabulation

			Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions			Total
			yes	no	Need more information before deciding	
Categories of spending	below £10,000 spent	Count	23	3	43	69
		% within Categories of spending	33.3%	4.3%	62.3%	100.0%
		% within Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions	28.4%	60.0%	61.4%	44.2%
		% of Total	14.7%	1.9%	27.6%	44.2%
	£10,000 to £50,000 spent	Count	39	2	21	62
		% within Categories of spending	62.9%	3.2%	33.9%	100.0%
		% within Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions	48.1%	40.0%	30.0%	39.7%
		% of Total	25.0%	1.3%	13.5%	39.7%
	more than £50,000 spent	Count	19		6	25
		% within Categories of spending	76.0%		24.0%	100.0%
		% within Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions	23.5%		8.6%	16.0%
		% of Total	12.2%		3.8%	16.0%

We can conclude from this cross-tabulation that as the amount spent on youth theatres rises, they become more confident in answering yes to accepting referrals from Connexions services. This is probably down to two factors. The first is the size of the youth theatres. Youth theatres which spend a lot of money are by definition large and can therefore accommodate greater numbers of people. Smaller youth theatres run on shoestrings, use volunteers rather than salaried staff and would therefore perceive an influx of young people as potentially a threat to the carefully balanced equilibrium of the group. The second factor also concerns staff, but this time it is down to the knowledge of the workers in the youth theatres. Youth

theatres spending money on salaried staff are more likely to employ workers with experience and knowledge of youth work and Connexions. A chi square test (omitted here for brevity) was performed to see if the relationship between knowledge about Connexions (question 18) and the question 3 categories of theatre spending was performed and this test revealed there was a statistically significant difference in these categories.

Waiting Lists

Waiting list

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	65	40.9	41.7	41.7
	no	91	57.2	58.3	100.0
	Total	156	98.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.9		
Total		159	100.0		

This question asked the youth theatres if they had waiting lists or not. It can be seen that 41% had lists, 57% did not, and 3 youth theatres (2%) did not answer this question. It appears that some youth theatres have waiting lists and some do not, and of itself this is not particularly illuminating statistic. Comments made to open questions on the survey did however reveal some important features in this regard. Many youth theatres with waiting lists did respond that they were "full" and could not accept new people referred by Connexions. They also indicated that their priority was with maintaining the status of the existing group and being fair to those who had added names to waiting lists. This will have significant impact for some youth theatres should they choose to work with Connexions services and it underlines one of the central messages of this research, namely that youth theatres should receive up front funding for working with Connexions services and this funding should be used to build capacity in youth theatres and lead to the creation of genuinely new places. If Connexions services are serious about using youth theatres in their

provision, then money needs to be made available to allow the youth theatres to expand and enhance their work.

Numbers on Waiting List

Numbers on waiting list

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How many on list	62	2	2700	135.16	406.496
Valid N (listwise)	62				

This question asked how many young people were on waiting lists for the youth theatres. Of the 65 who said they had waiting lists, 3 of these did not give a number. The figures here are skewed heavily by a number of youth theatres who reported waiting lists of over 1000 (with a highest figure of 2700). These figures did seem rather high, but in centres of high population density (London, Birmingham and the South East) it is not impossible that a theatre could have a waiting list in the thousands. In order to gain a picture of waiting lists in a more typical theatre, the following table excludes those with a waiting list of more than 50. It can be seen that 14 youth theatres had waiting lists over 50, with 48 having lists of less than 50. Considering this reduced sample, we can see that the mean waiting list is 19 people, with a standard deviation of about 14.

Number on waiting list (if less than 50)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How many on list	48	2	50	19.00	13.931
Valid N (listwise)	48				

Do youth theatres charge a fee?

Does your youth theatre charge a fee?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	128	80.5	83.1	83.1
	no	26	16.4	16.9	100.0
	Total	154	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	5	3.1		
Total		159	100.0		

This question asked youth theatres if they charged a fee for young people attending. 80% of youth theatres did this, 16% did not and 3% did not answer this question. We can conclude from this that the majority of youth theatres do charge young people for attending and this has implications for any work they may do with Connexions. Comments made on the questionnaires frequently mentioned the scarcity of funds for youth theatres and by far the most common comments made were worries about how extra places could be paid for. In fact many of the people who commented said that the theatre would consider taking Connexions referrals if funding was available and we can conclude from this that the issue of funding is one of the overriding concerns of the administrators and managers of youth theatre projects. This factor should be taken seriously in any future developments between Connexions services and youth theatres and services should ensure that any negotiations about taking referrals mention funding up front. Without this assurance, we conclude that many youth theatres will be reluctant to enter into negotiations about taking referrals, fearing that extra work without payment will be incurred.

The table below continues the theme of charges made for young people attending youth theatres. A methodological question arose here as some youth theatres responded with a weekly amount, some quoted an amount per term and some did so on an annual basis. Those youth theatres who quoted annual amounts had their amounts divided by 3 (which we assumed to be the number of terms in one year). Some youth theatres quoted annual subscriptions and a weekly amounts which needed to be paid on top. In these cases the annual amount was divided into 36 weeks (estimated to the number of weeks in one year) and this was added to the weekly amount. The table contains information on both termly and weekly amounts.

We can see that the average cost per term is £50, with a maximum of £950 (accounted for a theatre school which was aiming at professional style training) and a minimum of just £2. The amounts per week averaged £2.60 with a maximum of £20 and a minimum of just 33p.

Amount charged in fees by youth theatres

Amount charged by theatres

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Amount of charge term	76	2	950	50.03	111.397
Amount of charge week	54	.3	20.0	2.609	2.7672
Valid N (listwise)	2				

Age Range of Participants in Youth theatres

The following two tables contain information on the question about the age range of the youth theatres. Rather than provide means (which may not give the whole picture), these tables show how many youth theatres set upper and lower age ranges for each age group. We can conclude from these figures that youth theatres do not have a typical age range. All ages from 4 upwards were accepted by youth theatres, and at the upper end, people over 20 and even in their 30s were listed. Although current definitions of a young person set the upper age limit at 24, clearly some youth theatres did work with older people and recorded this on their questionnaires.

Age range lower

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	4	2	1.3	1.3	1.3	
	5	10	6.3	6.5	7.8	
	6	13	8.2	8.4	16.2	
	7	18	11.3	11.7	27.9	
	8	22	13.8	14.3	42.2	
	9	13	8.2	8.4	50.6	
	10	14	8.8	9.1	59.7	
	11	20	12.6	13.0	72.7	
	12	8	5.0	5.2	77.9	
	13	16	10.1	10.4	88.3	
	14	14	8.8	9.1	97.4	
	15	3	1.9	1.9	99.4	
	16	1	.6	.6	100.0	
	Total		154	96.9	100.0	
	Missing	System	5	3.1		
	Total		159	100.0		

Age range upper

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10	1	.6	.6	.6
	13	1	.6	.6	1.3
	14	4	2.5	2.6	3.9
	15	4	2.5	2.6	6.5
	16	20	12.6	13.0	19.5
	17	7	4.4	4.5	24.0
	18	35	22.0	22.7	46.8
	19	21	13.2	13.6	60.4
	20	13	8.2	8.4	68.8
	21	18	11.3	11.7	80.5
	22	1	.6	.6	81.2
	23	1	.6	.6	81.8
	24	5	3.1	3.2	85.1
	25	21	13.2	13.6	98.7
	27	1	.6	.6	99.4
	30	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	154	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	5	3.1		
Total		159	100.0		

Age range of theatres in numbers of years (lower age subtracted from upper age)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
RANGE	154	2.00	22.00	9.8442	3.86391
Valid N (listwise)	154				

This table was produced by subtracting the lower age from the upper age in each of the youth theatres to give the number of years of age range that each one would accept. It can be seen that the average range of a theatre is nearly 10 years with most of the youth theatres being within 4 years of these figures (the standard deviation is 3.9). We can conclude from this that youth theatres as a whole do accept a wide range of ages and this has potential implications for any future work with Connexions. Some respondents informally commented on the questionnaires that they only worked with children up to the age of 12 so would have difficulty accepting referrals from Connexions, and others stated that an influx of “teenagers” would potentially unbalance their groups. Some respondents realised that funding

may allow new groups within a youth theatre to be set up and even if the theatre's existing profile was not suitable, there was potential for expansion if the necessary funding was forthcoming. Clearly there is a lesson here for any future partnerships between youth theatres and Connexions services will need to be sensitive to the age profile of individual groups.

Types of Worker

Types of worker in each theatre

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Full time employment	67	1	30	2.49	3.715
Part time employment	108	1	50	4.19	6.186
Voluntary	83	0	30	5.57	6.157
Senior Members	35	1	20	4.17	3.959
Valid N (listwise)	10				

This table summarises the questions which asked respondents to indicate the number of workers in the theatre. These categories correspond to data collected by the NAYT and give us an impression of how youth theatres are staffed. Across the four categories, voluntary staff account for the largest number of workers, followed by part timers and then senior members. Full time youth theatre workers are to be found in the field and further analysis showed that 61 of the 159 youth theatres responding to the questionnaire had one or more full time workers. It is possible here to discern a key difference between youth theatres, namely between those who have a full time member of staff and those who do not. This prompted the research team to explore further and the following two tables explore the different responses to the key question "would you be prepared to work with young people referred by Connexions" for those youth theatres who have one or more full time workers (1st table) and those who have no full time workers. It can be seen that 66% of youth theatres with full time workers answered yes to the key question with a lower number of 42% for those without. More youth theatres who were undecided about the question (53%) had no full time staff than those who did (31%). Further

statistical tests (not included here for brevity) were conducted to examine if this was a statistically significant difference for the entire population and this was seen to be highly statistically significant¹, so we can conclude that youth theatres with full time workers are more likely to be amenable to working with Connexions. This is often because full time workers have links with Connexions and youth services (often recorded informally on questionnaires) and they are likely to have more knowledge and experience of Connexions and can give a realistic response to whether or not they could work with young people referred by Connexions. The fact that over half of the youth theatres with no full time workers wanted more information before deciding whether to work with referrals suggests that future policy should be directed towards education and information giving to those youth theatres so they can make informed decisions about whether to become involved.

Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions (theatres with one or more full time workers)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	44	65.7	66.7	66.7
	no	1	1.5	1.5	68.2
	Need more information before deciding	21	31.3	31.8	100.0
	Total	66	98.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.5		
Total		67	100.0		

¹ An Independent Samples T Test was conducted with a significance (2 tailed) of .003. This means that there is almost no chance that this difference occurred by chance in the sample and we are indeed looking at a real difference between the two types of youth theatres.

Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions (theatres with no full time staff)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	39	42.4	42.4	42.4
no	4	4.3	4.3	46.7
Need more information before deciding	49	53.3	53.3	100.0
Total	92	100.0	100.0	

The following table was created by totalling all of the workers in each youth theatre to construct a new variable of total workers. It can be seen that the minimum workers is 1 (not unsurprisingly) and the maximum is 62. The average is 7.7 with a relatively low standard deviation of just 8.5 which means that two thirds of youth theatres have a staff of between 1 and 15.

Total workers in each Youth Theatre

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TOTWORK	159	1.00	62.00	7.7453	8.53286
Valid N (listwise)	159				

Qualifications of Workers in Youth theatres

Numbers of workers holding specific qualifications

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qualification/Specific YT	29	0	11	2.14	2.199
Qualification/Youth work	49	0	30	2.43	4.439
Qualification/Teaching	100	0	11	2.27	1.979
Qualification/Performing Arts	118	1	100	5.07	11.267
Valid N (listwise)	16				

The following tables are created from questions concerning the qualifications of workers in each of the youth theatres. This is a highly significant part of the questionnaire as it deals with worker knowledge and experience. Respondents had to indicate how many workers held qualifications specifically in youth theatre,

possessed a qualification in youth work, had a teaching qualification or a qualification in performing arts. These categories were not mutually exclusive and one individual could hold more than one of these. It can be seen that the largest category is workers with a qualification in the performing arts (an average of 5). Workers with qualifications in the other categories held on average 2 of these and these were quite evenly distributed.

Total qualifications held by staff in Theatres

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TOTQUAL	158	.00	78.00	5.6962	9.52349
Valid N (listwise)	158				

This table charts a new variable created by adding all of the categories in the question above for each theatre. What is created is a new variable which shows the total number of qualifications held by all workers for each youth theatres. The average was 5.6 qualifications per theatre. It is important to stress that some workers will hold more than 1 qualification, for instance a theatre with 3 staff may have a total qualification tally of 6 (2 qualifications each per worker).

Average number of qualifications held by each worker in Theatres

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
MEANQUAL	158	.00	4.00	.8304	.64754
Valid N (listwise)	158				

This table takes the information gained on worker qualifications a little further. To create this new variable, the number of qualifications held in total by all workers in a theatre was divided by the numbers of worker in that theatre. What results is an average number of qualifications for each worker. The maximum in this case is 4 for a worker who holds qualifications in all of the categories and the minimum is 0 for someone with no qualifications. It can be seen that the average number of qualifications for a youth theatre is worker is just less than 1 (.83) suggesting that most workers hold at least one qualification referred to in the questionnaire. But again we must remember that the most numerous qualifications are ones related to performing arts. Although these are highly regarded and give many youth theatres

staff with experience of professional theatre and processes, they are different to youth work qualifications which give workers an insight into Connexions processes and connect them with the field.

Young People’s involvement in the running of youth theatres

The next set of questions referred to the part which young people play in the running of each theatre. A set of yes/no questions were asked about what areas of activity young people were involved in. The individual questions referred to: proposing productions; recruiting workers; marketing; budgeting; policy making; and worker appraisal. These questions allow us to see how involved young people are with running the theatre, and by extension what sort of a theatre operation is being run. Is it run by adults with young people as passive consumers of the services on offer, or is young people’s agency acknowledged and ways found for them to take an active part in the running of the theatre offered to them? Not unsurprisingly, 80% of youth theatres allowed young people to propose productions. The next highest category was for marketing with 58 of youth theatres consulting or involving young people in this. Policy making accounted for the next highest category at 46% and 24% of youth theatres indicated that young people played a role in worker appraisal. The least number of youth theatres (17%) indicated that young people played a role in the financial running of the theatre and worker recruitment likewise accounted for just 14% of the youth theatres. This breakdown is unsurprising, accounting as it does for those areas of theatre management where young people are likely to be interested and have something to offer.

Decision making/Proposing productions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	128	80.5	80.5	80.5
no	31	19.5	19.5	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Decision making/Worker recruitment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	23	14.5	14.5	14.5
no	136	85.5	85.5	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Decision making/Marketing

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	93	58.5	58.5	58.5
no	66	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Decision making/Policy making

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	74	46.5	46.5	46.5
no	85	53.5	53.5	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Decision making/Budgeting

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	27	17.0	17.0	17.0
no	132	83.0	83.0	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Decision making/Worker appraisal

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	39	24.5	24.5	24.5
no	120	75.5	75.5	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Do youth theatres hold auditions?

The next section asked youth theatres if they held auditions or not. Some youth theatres indicated that policy on this changed according to the type of production being considered, but most youth theatres were able to answer this question without any problems. 30% of youth theatres did hold auditions. We can conclude that many youth theatres accept young people without auditioning them for any particular theatre skills or talents and many respondents indicated in writing that their theatre had a definite policy of accepting any young person regardless of what they could or could not do. However they did often also indicate in written comments that commitment to the theatre, regular attendance and good behaviour was required and a small number went further indicating that young people referred by Connexions may not exhibit these traits and would not “fit in with the ethos of the group”. We have discovered in administering this questionnaire that many theatre workers perceive that Connexions is somehow dealing with young people who have a specific problem or who are likely to disrupt the work of the theatre in some way by lacking commitment or being troublemakers in some shape or form. Combating this potential negative view of Connexions referrals (both on individual and group levels), will be a matter of communications with youth theatres and the provision of appropriate training.

Do you hold auditions?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	yes	30	18.9
	no	127	79.9
	Total	157	98.7
Missing	System	2	1.3
Total		159	100.0

Types of work carried out in youth theatres

The next set of questions probed the kinds of work being done in youth theatres. These questions were split into devised work (scripted and written for the youth theatres), improvised work, street theatre and an "other" category for work not falling into these boxes. 92% of youth theatres performed devised work, and 92% also used improvisation. Street theatre was practiced by 39% of youth theatres and 26% of youth theatres indicated other forms of work. Responses to the "other" category were extremely varied and included: video work, dance, circus skills, music making and so on.

Type of work/devised

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	146	91.8	93.6	93.6
	no	10	6.3	6.4	100.0
	Total	156	98.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.9		
Total		159	100.0		

Type of work/Workshops/improvisation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	145	91.2	93.5	93.5
	no	10	6.3	6.5	100.0
	Total	155	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	4	2.5		
Total		159	100.0		

Type of work/Street Theatre

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	62	39.0	44.0	44.0
	no	79	49.7	56.0	100.0
	Total	141	88.7	100.0	
Missing	System	18	11.3		
Total		159	100.0		

Type of work/Other

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	42	26.4	31.6	31.6
	no	91	57.2	68.4	100.0
	Total	133	83.6	100.0	
Missing	System	26	16.4		
Total		159	100.0		

Work other than youth theatre

Does your theatre do work other than youth theatre

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	54	34.0	34.8	34.8
	no	101	63.5	65.2	100.0
	Total	155	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	4	2.5		
Total		159	100.0		

This question was asked to ascertain if groups were doing work other than that which could be classified as youth theatre. Some groups did respond that they did other work, (such as circus skills), but in these cases this answer was captured in the final table of the previous set of questions. 34% identified work other than youth theatre as activities. Once again activities here were very varied and there was always decisions to be made about whether a particular activity was covered in the main classification of youth theatre or was a different type of work.

Youth theatres: Constitution and Policies

The next section consisted of questions concerning the policies and constitutions of the youth theatres. Respondents were asked whether they had an insurance policy, whether the theatre was formally constituted or not, and whether they had health and safety, child protection and equal opportunity policies in place.

Over 92% had insurance policies.

Do you have an insurance policy?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	147	92.5	93.6	93.6
	no	9	5.7	5.7	99.4
	Don't know	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	157	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.3		
Total		159	100.0		

60% of youth theatres were formally constituted, 35% were not and 9 youth theatres (6%) did not answer this question one way or the other.

Is your youth theatre formally consulted?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	95	59.7	63.3	63.3
no	55	34.6	36.7	100.0
Total	150	94.3	100.0	
Missing System	9	5.7		
Total	159	100.0		

83% of youth theatres had equal opportunity policies in place, 13% did not, and 4% of youth theatres did not answer this question.

Do you have an equal opportunities policy?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	132	83.0	86.3	86.3
no	21	13.2	13.7	100.0
Total	153	96.2	100.0	
Missing System	6	3.8		
Total	159	100.0		

85% of youth theatres did have a child protection policy, 12% did not and a further 4% of youth theatres did not answer this question.

Do you have a child protection policy?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	135	84.9	87.7	87.7
no	19	11.9	12.3	100.0
Total	154	96.9	100.0	
Missing System	5	3.1		
Total	159	100.0		

79 % of youth theatres did have health and safety policies, 17% did not and 4% did not answer this question.

Do you have a health and safety policy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	125	78.6	82.2	82.2
	no	27	17.0	17.8	100.0
	Total	152	95.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.4		
Total		159	100.0		

The results of the policy and constitution details of each theatre are not particularly illuminating when considered in isolation. But we can hypothesise that a theatre which is formally constituted and has all relevant policies in place would be in the best position to take referrals from Connexions. If work with Connexions is placed on a formal footing and service agreements issued, then youth theatres will need to have relevant policies in place. To probe this issue further a new variable was created. Youth theatres which had all 4 policies in place and were formally constituted were contrasted with those who did not. The result is an almost exact 50/50 split between the 159 respondents to the questionnaire.

All policies in place

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	78	49.1	49.1	49.1
	Yes	81	50.9	50.9	100.0
Total		159	100.0	100.0	

In order to probe the relationship between those youth theatres who had all policies in place and were formally constituted and whether this was likely to affect responses the way they responded to the question about taking Connexions referrals a cross tabulation was created, this statistical procedure will determine if there is a correlation between theatres which have all policies in place and their willingness to take Connexions referrals. There could, for example, be a positive correlation, with

those theatres with all policies in place far more likely to indicate they will take Connexions referrals because this indicates they are well organised, have strong administrative support and are of sufficient size. However, the results show that youth theatres did not answer this question differently if they had policies in place than if they did not. A Chi Square test (not shown for brevity) was performed on these figures and demonstrated that there was no statistical correlation between the two variables. Clearly youth theatres did not see the absence of policies or a formal constitution as a barrier to taking Connexions referrals. This leads us to conclude that any future development in this area will need to support those youth theatres who do not have all policies in place so that they can develop and apply these mechanisms in order to satisfy statutory requirements. The fact that many theatres which did not have formal policies in place did answer indicate that they would take referrals is a positive finding, but support for these theatres to enable them to operate within an appropriate legal and administrative framework is crucial to any future successes.

**All policies in place * Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions
Crosstabulation**

			Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions			Total
			yes	no	Need more information before deciding	
All policies in place	No	Count	40	2	35	77
		% within All policies in place	51.9%	2.6%	45.5%	100.0%
		% within Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions	48.2%	40.0%	50.0%	48.7%
		% of Total	25.3%	1.3%	22.2%	48.7%
	Yes	Count	43	3	35	81
		% within All policies in place	53.1%	3.7%	43.2%	100.0%
		% within Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions	51.8%	60.0%	50.0%	51.3%
		% of Total	27.2%	1.9%	22.2%	51.3%

Sources of Funding for Youth theatres

Indicate sources of funding/1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Local Government	55	34.6	55.6	55.6
	Parent theatre	15	9.4	15.2	70.7
	NOF	7	4.4	7.1	77.8
	Health Authority	1	.6	1.0	78.8
	Trusts and foundations	17	10.7	17.2	96.0
	RAB	2	1.3	2.0	98.0
	corporate	1	.6	1.0	99.0
	youth service	1	.6	1.0	100.0
	Total	99	62.3	100.0	
	Missing	System	60	37.7	
Total		159	100.0		

Indicate sources of funding/2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Local Government	5	3.1	12.2	12.2
	Parent theatre	2	1.3	4.9	17.1
	NOF	4	2.5	9.8	26.8
	Health Authority	1	.6	2.4	29.3
	Trusts and foundations	19	11.9	46.3	75.6
	RAB	7	4.4	17.1	92.7
	corporate	2	1.3	4.9	97.6
	European (ESF SRB)	1	.6	2.4	100.0
	Total	41	25.8	100.0	
	Missing	System	118	74.2	
Total		159	100.0		

One section of the questionnaire dealt with the issue of funding and asked youth theatres to indicate where their sources of funding came from. Because youth theatres are not always financed by a single monetary stream, there had the chance to identify their two main sources of funding. For the purposes of this question, any income generated by the youth theatres themselves, for instance in the form of ticket sales or fundraising activities was not counted. This is because almost all youth

theatres generate income in this way, and in this question we are interested in the external sources of income which support youth theatres. One of the main statistics to come out of this question was the fact that of the 159 youth theatres who responded, 99 had one or more external sources of income, and 41 had two sources of income. This means that 60 youth theatres did not have any external sources of income and relied totally on ticket sales, fund raising and private donations. The sources of funding for the youth theatres which were externally funded was dominated by local government which accounted for 35% of the 1st source of funding and 3% of the second. The next most popular funding source was trusts and foundations, with funding from parent theatres coming very close (10.7 and 9.4% accordingly). Only one of the theatres received money from a youth service which tells us that of the theatres which responded to the questionnaire, funding from youth services is extremely rare. This finding does have some bearing on future policies. Because youth theatres do not have experience of receiving funding from youth services, it is likely that work will need to be done to build relationships and trust and set in place formal mechanisms for allowing the transfer of funds. The actual procedures for payment of funds relating to Connexions based work is beyond the scope of this report, but Connexions services, youth services and youth theatres will need to liaise to establish ways of working which allow financial matters to be handled quickly and efficiently. Youth theatres tend to run on very tight budgets and if they take Connexions referrals this will involve them in additional outlay up front, for instance in the form of increased staff costs, room and premises hire, increased insurance premiums and so on. If payments for work undertaken are not made swiftly and levels of remuneration are transparent, then the extra work may actually harm a youth theatre's existence. So we recommend that serious work is undertaken to establish funding principles and mechanisms so that youth theatres can thrive on the extra funds generated by Connexions referrals and Connexions services can build long term relationships with the theatres.

Membership and knowledge of the National Association of Youth theatres

Is your group a member of the NAYT?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	94	59.1	61.4	61.4
	no	59	37.1	38.6	100.0
	Total	153	96.2	100.0	
Missing	System	6	3.8		
Total		159	100.0		

The table above shows the responses to the question of whether the youth theatres were members of the National Association of Youth Theatres (NAYT). 59% of responses to this question were "yes", 37% were "no", and 6 youth theatres did not answer this question. The table below shows the results of the question "have you heard of the NAYT (if not a member already)". Of those youth theatres which were not members, 76% had heard of the NAYT and 18% had not. These findings tell us that the NAYT has a well established presence in the work of youth theatres with good representation and membership. Youth theatres who are not members have also heard of the association. There was no direct question to ascertain why youth theatres were not members of the NAYT, but there is strong evidence here to suggest that the NAYT could build a strong recruitment drive on the basis of increasing amounts of Connexions work for youth theatres. Engaging in Connexions work will involve youth theatres and key workers in new sorts of working and require new skills, including administrative, financial and of course people centred skills. A central organisation like the NAYT has the resources and coverage to give theatres advice and guidance if they take on Connexions work. The NAYT could be a crucial organisation in the success of any Connexions/Youth theatre partnerships and work needs to be undertaken to ensure that the NAYT is in a position to give accurate, detailed and timely advice to theatres and run training events and produce literature to support work in this area.

Have you heard of the NAYT (if not a member already

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	45	76.3	80.4	80.4
	no	11	18.6	19.6	100.0
	Total	56	94.9	100.0	
Missing	System	3	5.1		
Total		59	100.0		

Are you aware of the support the NAYT provides?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	99	62.3	64.7	64.7
	no	8	5.0	5.2	69.9
	further information	46	28.9	30.1	100.0
	Total	153	96.2	100.0	
Missing	System	6	3.8		
Total		159	100.0		

The final question relating to the NAYT specifically is detailed in the table above. It asked whether youth theatres were aware of the support the NAYT provided. 62% of youth theatres answered "yes" to this, with only 5% answering "no". This suggests again that the NAYT had been effective in publicising its services and benefits of membership to theatres. Nearly 29% of theatres wanted "further information" about the services which the NAYT provided. This is a high figure and is possibly caused by theatres wanting to know more specifically about the support which the NAYT can provide for youth theatres which are becoming involved in Connexions work.

Knowledge of Connexions

Knowledge of Connexions on scale of 1 (no knowledge) to 10 (full knowledge)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would describe my knowledge of ConneXions as	158	1.00	10.00	4.2911	2.70951
Valid N (listwise)	158				

The table above shows the result for the question which asked respondents to rate their knowledge of Connexions. They were given a ten point scale, where 1 indicated no knowledge, and 10 full knowledge, and asked to circle the number which best represented their current knowledge of Connexions. All but 1 respondent answered this question, and the mean (average) response was just over 4, indicating that the average youth theatre has a modest knowledge of connexions. The arithmetical mean does not however tell the full story of this question, and the distribution of responses in each of the 10 possible responses is also useful to consider. 21% of respondents described their knowledge of Connexions as being non-existent, and a further 12% and 11% gave themselves ratings of 2 and 3 respectively. This means that 44% of the sample described their knowledge of Connexions as being 3 or under, which we can interpret as meaning that their knowledge of Connexions is poor. Corresponding, the top 3 responses (8, 9 and 10) accounted for just 18% of the sample. So the distribution of knowledge of Connexions among youth theatres is not uniform and it is far more likely that a youth theatre has a non-existent or poor knowledge of Connexions rather than a good or excellent one. The implications of this finding are obvious, more work to educate theatres on Connexions is needed. This should include training on the actual processes of Connexions, the role of personal advisers (PAs) and the philosophy of practice which underpins Connexions work.

Another question which was asked relates to existing work and knowledge of Connexions: "has your theatre had any contact with Connexions?", 25% of youth theatres said yes to this and 74% said no. Of those who said yes, often this is because one or more of the workers in that particular theatre was involved with a Connexions service, other contacts had been made on an informal basis. Formal relationships between youth theatres and Connexions services were very rare. 12

youth theatres (7.5) had received individual referrals from Connexions, 6 youth theatres (3.8%) had received referrals from other agencies and 1 youth theatre had engaged in an employment based project organised in partnership with Connexions.

Types of Information which Youth Theatres wanted about Connexions

Another question asked was an open question (anything could be written in a space provided), concerning the types of information which the youth theatres wanted about Connexions. Of the 159 youth theatres, only 9 respondents gave a response here. This may have been because the question was open and therefore required a written response rather than a box tick, respondents in many questionnaires are reluctant to fill these questions in. Of the 9 who did respond there were a variety of responses, 3 wanted more information specifically about Connexions and Connexions processes. 1 wanted advice on how to deal with "behavioural and personal issues", 1 wanted advice on "counselling and youth work", 2 wanted advice on "special needs", 1 on "expected outcomes", and 1 who said "any information would be good". From these responses we can see that certain themes emerge. There is a clearly a perception that Connexions referrals will be primarily for young people with behavioural problems or with special needs, and this is confirmed in another open question later in the survey which asked for general comments. Some youth theatres would like to know about youth work and counselling and others want to know about expected outcomes when dealing with Connexions referrals. This suggests that there is quite a widespread misunderstanding of what Connexions is and what it means.

The identification that some theatres make between Connexions and young people with special needs or behavioural problems is likely, we argue, to create a barrier between Connexions services and youth theatres. Many youth theatres will be unwilling to get involved in Connexions work because of the perception that referrals will be difficult, disruptive or require specialist skills which the theatres do not possess. In turn, Connexions services may perceive some theatres to be "precious", only willing to deal with the young people who they hand pick to take part in activities and unwilling to widen participation to those young people who would not

normally have accessed youth theatre services. In order to break down this possible barrier to communication, it is essential that Connexions services and youth theatres enter into negotiations about how they can work together, and that youth theatres are encouraged to look on Connexions work positively and without falsely attaching stigma to this work.

Philosophy of Practice in each theatre

Identification with statements about theatre

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our Youth Theatre is about producing high quality performances	159	1.00	10.00	8.0660	2.26777
Our Youth Theatre is about providing workshop and training experience for young people	159	1.00	10.00	8.6478	1.68440
Our youth Theatre is about the social and personal development of young people	159	1.00	10.00	9.1352	1.64267
Valid N (listwise)	159				

This table summarise the answers given in the section about the philosophy of practice in each theatre. A set of 4 statements was prepared and youth theatres asked to rate each statement on a Likert scale running from 1 (strongly disagree), to 10 (strongly agree). A 10 point scale was chosen because it would spread the given answers over a wider range than a 3 or 5 point scale and allow greater scope in secondary analysis. Average responses to these questions tended to be towards the upper end of the scale, with many youth theatres answering 10 to every question, indicating that all of these statements were important. The questions about producing high quality performances actually had the lowest mean score (of 8), the one about training and experience came next (with 8.6) and the highest average score of all in this category was over 9 for the question about the social and personal development of young people. It appears that nearly all youth theatres make this an important priority, and this fact, considered alongside other evidence from the

survey confirms that youth theatres have great potential to contribute to Connexions processes.

Advice and Guidance to Young People Attending Youth theatres

Attitude to providing advice and guidance to young people attending theatre

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Careers and education in theatre and arts?	158	1.00	10.00	6.8671	2.39720
Personal and social issues?	159	1.00	10.00	7.5849	2.17378
Valid N (listwise)	158				

The table above lists the responses to two questions about advice and guidance given to young people. The advice was divided into two types, that concerning careers and education in the theatre and the arts, and the other on personal social issues. For each question, the respondents gave a number, where 1 showed no importance was attached to the item, and 10 indicated that strong importance was attached. The summary shows that the average score for personal and social issues is higher than that for guidance about theatre and the arts. The averages across all 159 theatres are not particularly illuminating though as they shed no light on whether a differentiation in response is linked to awareness of Connexions and willingness to participate. In order to see if there was a correlation between variables relating to Connexions (would you be prepared to work with Connexions referrals? What is your knowledge of connexions?), and attitudes towards giving advice and guidance, tests of correlation were done. These were all inconclusive and it could not be proved that these sets of variables were linked. It was not possible to reach statistical conclusions about links between these variables so we can conclude that theatres' willingness to engage with Connexions is related to things other than their attitude towards providing advice and guidance to young people.

Attitude to having fun in theatre

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our Youth Theatre is about having fun	158	1.00	10.00	9.1076	1.52092
Valid N (listwise)	158				

Identification with each type of model of theatre

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Theatre/Arts model	159	1.00	10.00	7.0440	2.71504
Community model	159	1.00	10.00	5.9119	2.78646
Youth arts model	159	1.00	10.00	7.4591	2.72062
Applied theatre	159	1.00	10.00	5.2201	3.12938
Valid N (listwise)	159				

The table above lists the mean scores for the questions about identification with each type of theatre. The four types of theatre (identified originally in research by Manchester University), are described as follows:

INSERT THESE IN

It can be seen that the type of theatre most closely identified with by the 159 youth theatres responding to this question was the youth arts model. This was closely followed by the theatre/arts model. Although the types of youth theatre were not designed to be mutually exclusive and most theatres would of course exhibit characteristics of all of these, it can be argued that youth arts model and the theatre/arts model can be constructed in opposition to each other. One has the young person at the centre of the process and values the work done with individuals whilst the quality of performances, although important, is secondary to this. The other has the quality of the performance as the central focus of endeavour and although young people are no doubted valued in this model, the performance still remains the main focus. The other two models of youth theatre were identified with less strongly than with these first two, with average scores of 5.9 for the community model and 5.2 for the applied arts model. In order to determine if there was a correlation between the identification with these types of theatres and theatres' readiness to engage with Connexions processes, various tests, including T-tests and ANOVA (analysis of variance) were conducted. It was found that theatres who said that they were definitely not prepared to work with Connexions, had a much stronger identification with the theatre/arts model than those who said they would. It was

also found that those theatres who needed more information before deciding whether they would work with Connexions tended to have a stronger identification with the theatre/arts model. Correlations between other models of theatres and these questions were inconclusive.

Overall this crucial part of the questionnaire reveals that there is a distinct difference between theatres which have a philosophy based in the theatre/arts model and those based in youth arts models. This difference is not particularly strong however and there is much evidence to suggest that all youth theatres can express a desire and willingness to work with Connexions, regardless of their philosophy. It may be the case that theatres which identify with theatre arts models require greater work in terms of communication and training, so they can gain insights into Connexions processes and explore how their work can support this.

Would you work with young people referred by Connexions?

Would you be prepared to work with young people referred by ConneXions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	83	52.2	52.5	52.5
	no	5	3.1	3.2	55.7
	need more information before deciding	70	44.0	44.3	100.0
	Total	158	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		159	100.0		

The figures in the tables above have already been used in this results chapter to illustrate differences between types of theatre within the sample. The results of this question are presented here in simple form and it can be seen that 52% answered unequivocally to the question about working with Connexions referrals. Only 3% gave a definite no, and the remainder of those who answered (44%) needed more information before deciding. The large number of youth theatres who wanted to know more about Connexions before committing themselves confirms our finding that communication and training is vital to success in the future.

Could you take individual referrals from Connexions?

Could your theatre take individual referrals from ConneXions?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	81	50.9	51.6	51.6
	no	13	8.2	8.3	59.9
	Don't know	63	39.6	40.1	100.0
	Total	157	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.3		
Total		159	100.0		

The table above summarises the answers to the specific question, could you take individual referrals. 51% of youth theatres said they could, 8% said they could not, with 40% not decided. This figure of 40% is largely the same youth theatres who were undecided in the previous question, and a theatre answering this way for the first of the “would you work” questions, was often likely to answer this way for the remainder of the questions.

Could you take group referrals from Connexions?

Could your theatre take group referrals from ConneXions?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	86	54.1	55.5	55.5
	no	21	13.2	13.5	69.0
	Don't know	48	30.2	31.0	100.0
	Total	155	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	4	2.5		
Total		159	100.0		

The table above summarises the response to the key question of whether a youth theatre could take group referrals from Connexions. Interestingly the figures for a “yes” here are higher than for individuals (up to 54% from 51%). The “don’t knows” have reduced to 30% (from 39%) and the “No” responses have increased from 8%

to 13%. This suggests a number of things. The first is that theatres are more confident with group referrals than individual referrals. The reasons for this can only be speculated upon, but it is likely that the previously identified trend of some theatres to consider Connexions referrals to be “problematic” or “disruptive” affected this answer. There may have been a perception that individual referrals would be problematic, whereas a group referral would be an easier proposition to deal with.

Could you run sessions in the daytime?

Could you run sessions in the day time?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	87	54.7	56.1	56.1
	no	46	28.9	29.7	85.8
	Don't know	22	13.8	14.2	100.0
	Total	155	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	4	2.5		
Total		159	100.0		

The table above summarises the responses for the key question of whether youth theatres could run sessions in the daytime. This is important when considering Connexions referrals where work is likely to be conducted in the daytime. Overall we see that more than half of theatres could run sessions during the day, just 29% said no, and 14% wanted more information before they could decide whether they could offer daytime sessions. This question is encouraging for Connexions partnerships with youth theatres as it appears that many of them will be able to work flexibly to provide day time provision.

Conclusions

This research has demonstrated the potential of the Connexions initiative for building capacity for work with young people – capacity that can include the positive contribution of youth theatres and other voluntary organisations. However it has also demonstrated the challenges for Connexions partnerships, for the NAYT and for individual theatres in building that capacity in order to offer genuinely enhanced opportunities to a wider range of young people.

There is no one model, or even models of youth theatre, so a policy of cooperation made centrally is likely to fail and a “one-size” fits all model of cooperation is likely to be rejected or seen as unworkable by many theatres, which have strongly individual arrangements for funding and operation. Connexions partnerships should work locally with youth theatres to build relationships and explore ways forward. No blueprint for this will exist at national level, but locally good practice and innovative projects could come into being given the right level of support and political will.

Communication with youth theatres is essential, particularly with those youth theatres which are small or which are run by voluntary staff. A central question is the communication of the issue that Connexions young people are not “problem” kids, or have special needs, but rather are capable of contributing substantially to youth theatres. In many cases, theatres may have excellent structures in place for taking young people who have not previously been involved with youth theatre and giving them opportunities for rich and meaningful personal development. The crucial issue is to convince theatres that taking Connexions referrals will not necessarily mean creating imbalances in their group dynamic or jeopardising the work of the group. There needs to be much work done, including further research, to help and support youth theatres in working with young people who are not their normal clients.

Development of those youth theatres which do not have all relevant policies is needed. This should be undertaken in conjunction with Connexions services so that

youth theatres can protect the young people they work with and have organisational protection in the case of accidents or incidents occurring.

Training is a significant need, there is a great variety of youth theatres. 70% of youth theatres have staff with no qualifications in youth work. This definitely does not rule out a significant contribution to Connexions work, but issues of child protection, health and safety and associate practices need to be addressed. This is a particular challenge for the NAYT, to increase “youth work” skills and perspectives within individual theatres without imposing on their core purpose. Connexions partnerships can help here by improving communications with and support for voluntary youth work networks.

Many youth theatres run on funds which are transient and not substantial. Connexions services should aim to build high quality relationships with youth theatres that offer, where possible, stability of funding so that youth theatres can plan for the future and escape cycles of short term funding which are harmful to long term existence.

Connexions partnerships must work to help build capacity within youth theatres so they are able to take part in future work. This may involve the strategic use of seed corn and developmental funding which allows organisations to grow and add the extra capabilities needed to take Connexions referrals. Without this developmental context, many youth theatres and voluntary organisations in general will struggle to respond quickly and effectively to Connexions.

Appendix one: Questionnaire



Towards a Youth Work Agenda



Questionnaire for Youth Theatres

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. This research has been commissioned by the National Association of Youth Theatres (NAYT) and is being conducted by the University of Huddersfield. The research will ensure that youth theatres are fully included in the government's expanding support for work with young people. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your answers will remain confidential and will be used only for the purposes of this research.

About your theatre

What is the name of your Youth Theatre Project?

What is your role within the YT?

Participants Total _____ Male _____ Female _____

What is the age range of participants in the YT? _____ to _____

Does your YT have a waiting list? Yes No If yes, how many are the on waiting list? _____

Does your YT charge a weekly or seasonal based fee to participants? Yes No

How many workers are engaged in Y T activity? How many workers have a...?

Enter numbers in boxes

Enter numbers in boxes

Full time employment

Specific Youth Theatre qualification

Part time employment

Youth work qualification

Voluntary

Teaching qualification

Senior members

Performing arts related qualification

Are YT participants involved in any of the following decision making processes?

Tick all which apply

Proposing productions

Worker Selection

Budgeting

Marketing

Policy Making

Worker Appraisal

Approximately how much is spent on Y T activities (including wages) per year?

Tick one only

Less than £1000

£1000 - £5000

£5000 - £10,000

£10,000 - £15,000

£15,000 - £25,000

£25,000 - £50,000

- £50,000 - £75,000
- £75,000 - £100,000
- More than £100,000

Does your youth theatre hold auditions for young people wishing to join?

Yes No

About the philosophy of practice in your youth theatre

For the following statements, please place a circle around a number to indicate your response

<p>Our youth theatre is about producing high quality performances</p> <p>Please circle one number</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very important</p>
<p>Our youth theatre is about providing workshop and training experiences for young people</p> <p>Please circle one number</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very important</p>
<p>Our youth theatre is about the social and personal development of young people</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very important</p>
<p>How important is providing help and guidance for the young people who attend your theatre?</p> <p>Please circle one number</p> <p>On careers and education choices in relation to theatre and the arts</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very important</p> <p>On personal and social issues</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very important</p>
<p>Our youth theatre is about having fun</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very important</p>
<p>4 models of Youth Theatre are listed below, please indicate how strongly your particular theatre or project fits into each of the models</p> <p>1 Theatre/Arts: the “reason for being” within this model is provide access to professional quality drama and</p>

theatre processes. Personal and social development outcomes may be by-products of this work but the driving force is to create theatre and performance.

Strongly identify 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Do no identify at all

2 **Community:** the “reason for being” is to reflect and represent concerns of specific communities and promote community development through theatre.

Strongly identify 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Do no identify at all

3 **Youth Arts:** the “reason for being” and overriding aim is to support the personal, social and political development of young people through theatre.

Strongly identify 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Do no identify at all

4 **Applied Theatre:** the “reason for being” is to address specific issues using theatre as a tool.

Strongly identify 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Do no identify at all

Knowledge about Connexions

Connexions is a new support system for 13-19 year olds across England. It brings together existing agencies to provide improved support, guidance and development opportunities for young people

I would describe my knowledge about Connexions as

Excellent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Non-existent

Has your youth theatre had any contact with Connexions? Yes No

If Yes, please indicate the nature of the contact

Individual referrals from Connexions

Individual referrals from other agencies (e.g. social services)

<p>Employment based projects <input type="radio"/></p> <p>Other <input type="radio"/> Please describe _____</p>
<p>Would your theatre be prepared to work with young people referred to you by Connexions?</p> <p>Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> We need more information before deciding <input type="radio"/></p> <p>Please indicate below the types of information and training which would be useful to you</p>
<p>Connexions places emphasis on young people's involvement in designing and developing the new and improved youth support services. Do you think that your theatre could contribute to this at local level?</p> <p>By taking individual referrals from the Connexions service Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Don't know <input type="radio"/></p> <p>By running sessions for groups of young people referred by the Connexions service Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Don't know <input type="radio"/></p> <p>Would you have the capacity to run sessions during the day time? Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Don't know <input type="radio"/></p> <p>Comments:</p>

Thank you for taking part in this survey. All questionnaires will be used only for research purposes and all responses will be anonymous and no individual respondents or theatres will be identified by name in any dissemination of the research.

If you would like to make further comments or know find about more about the issues raised above, then contact

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