



Defining Digital Youth Work

Digital Youth Work is youth work for a digital age, youth work for the 21st Century

It is based on understanding the importance of digitalisation in young people's lives; that their lives are lived both offline and online, that the internet of things surrounds them, that digital literacy is now a core skill, and that young people without access to the online world or skills to navigate it are at a disadvantage compared with their peers.

Digital youth work isn't only for those with strong technical skills, it's based on the willingness understand young people's life contexts, to learn from them and to support them to navigate their lives. It's also about making the most of new technology to make our youth work offer even better and more exciting. For this we need to be able to try new things out – some things work, some don't, it's ok.

Digital youth work includes utilising our skills to help young people have their voices heard through digital media and technology and supporting them to have their rights upheld, in the digital world as well as the physical one.

For youth work to stay relevant we need to engage with and reflect the digital world.

Discussion questions:

- How do you think youth work should develop in the digital age?
- How does digital fit in to the youth work outcomes or goals?
- How are you already using digital technology and social media in youth work?
- If a young person comes to you with a problem online, how equipped do you feel in helping them?
- What ideas do you have of using new technologies in your planning for youth work?

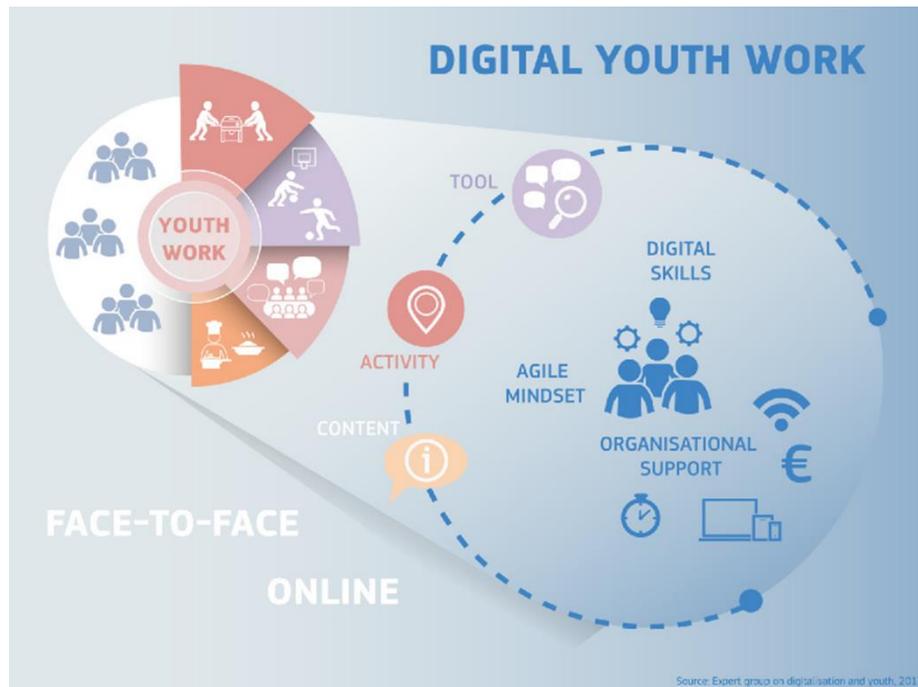


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EU expert group on digitalisation and youth

This group's 2018 report, *Developing Digital Youth Work*, presented:

- A working definition of 'digital youth work';
- Policy recommendations on the development of digital youth work;
- Identification of training needs of youth workers relevant for digital youth work, based on
- existing competence frameworks for digital skills and for youth work.



The group used the following definition:

- Digital youth work means proactively using or addressing digital media and technology in youth work.
- Digital youth work is not a youth work method – digital youth work can be included in any youth work setting (open youth work, youth information and counselling, youth clubs, detached youth work...).
- Digital youth work has the same goals as youth work in general, and using digital media and technology in youth work should always support these goals.
- Digital youth work can happen in face-to-face situations as well as in online environments – or in a mixture of these two.
- Digital media and technology can be used either as a tool, an activity or a content in youth work.
- Digital youth work is underpinned by the same ethics, values and principles as youth work.