

Name _____ Date _____

Do youth clubs help stop crime?

Adapted from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/6917077.stm>



The government wants to tackle teenage delinquency

A youth club in every neighbourhood to tackle teenage delinquency is the latest government pledge. But do they really stop young _____ getting into _____?

Youths in Britain are more likely to drink, take _____, have sex, join gangs and get into _____ than almost anywhere else in Europe, new figures show.

Now the government announces its new plan to tackle teenage delinquency by having a youth club in every neighbourhood.

The lack of "somewhere to _____ in the evening" is a common complaint among many teenagers and often given as a reason for them going _____ the rails. But research shows simply giving them a base to meet and socialise can do more harm than _____.

Just _____ out at a club can have a negative impact on young people's lives, making them more likely to _____, drink and become teenage parents.

However, youth clubs can be improving when structured activities such as sport, art or drama are laid on. Youth activities that take _____ regularly, in a group setting, with a clear structure and well defined aims help young people to develop _____ social and emotional skills, the study says. They can also offer structure to young people who lack it at _____.

'Asking for trouble'

"Every young person should be expected to do at _____ an hour a week of constructive after-school activities," says Julia Margo, a researcher.

Other research supports the theory that a youth club which is little more than a hut with a pool _____ and darts _____ can be corrupting. A study by the University of London's Institute of Education for the Department for Education and Skills tracked a group of _____ born in 1970 to examine the impact of youth activities over time.

It concluded giving young people a place to hang out without organised activities, or effective supervision, is damaging. Young people not only need places to go but _____ to do, the report said.

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Extension Activity

Below is a selection of your comments.

Youth clubs are a great idea. Unless your parents could afford to pay for activities, you were left with nothing to do. I was lucky enough to be involved with sports for most of my teens although there was a period I didn't participate and hung about with friends on the _____ with nothing to do. Even now the teens in my area hang about the local shops bored, or kicking a _____ at the shops because they have nowhere to go, no facilities to use. If there were youth centres offering structured appealing activities, I'm sure our teens would be more than willing to take advantage of them rather than drinking _____, making babies and anti _____ behaviour. Underage drinking also leads to binge drinking which is a major problem now. The reason behind it is boredom. It is programmed into their heads that getting _____ means having fun and entertainment, which of course leads on to trouble... and lots of it.

Cheryl, Cambridgeshire

Every day I have to cycle past groups of _____ who deliberately stand in my way and call out abuse. Just a few metres past them stands a youth club in which they appear to spend the rest of their _____. If this is an example of youth _____ doing good for an area, I'd hate to go to one without such a venue.

Matt, London, UK

I think that more youth clubs will be more beneficial to youngsters. I remember when my friends and I were teenagers and there was absolutely nothing to do but _____ around the streets, we all decided to give the local youth _____ a go to ease the boredom. We were glad that we did - it was fun, it kept us out of _____ and best of all we all made new _____ in there. Anything has got to be better than gangs of kids sitting outside a scared little _____ lady's house in the evenings, hasn't it??

Shelley, Harlow

The challenge is to actually challenge and engage with the more distant youths, the ones who _____ the trouble. They have to have a feeling of ownership/belonging as well as discipline, but it is a hard balance to achieve. Too much _____ way and problems appear. A community I lived in built a sports centre for the local youths at great cost - within a few years it was burnt _____. The youths who do such acts are so far removed from society that it is nearly impossible to include them, and youth centres won't work. Maybe it's old age creeping up _____ me, but I truly believe the balance of ownership and belonging and discipline would best be served by enforced national _____ for youth. Drastic? Perhaps, but the reality is little else would work for the extreme youths who, whilst in the minority, cause the greatest problems.

Bruce, Scotland

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A youth club in every neighbourhood to tackle teenage delinquency is the latest government pledge. But do they really stop young people getting into trouble?

Youths in Britain are more likely to drink, take **drugs**, have sex, join gangs and get into **fights** than almost anywhere else in Europe, new figures show.

Now the government announces its new plan to tackle teenage delinquency by having a youth club in every neighbourhood.

The lack of "somewhere to **go** in the evening" is a common complaint among many teenagers and often cited as a reason for them going **off** the rails. But research shows simply giving them a base to meet and socialise can do more harm than **good**.

Just **hanging** out at a club can have a detrimental impact on young people's lives, making them more likely to **smoke**, drink and become teenage parents.

However, youth clubs can be improving when structured activities such as sport, art or drama are laid on. Youth activities that take **place** regularly, in a group setting, with a clear structure and well defined aims help children to develop **better** social and emotional skills, the study says. They can also offer structure to young people who lack it at **home**.

'Asking for trouble'

"Every young person should be expected to do at **least** an hour a week of constructive after-school activities," says Julia Margo, a researcher.

Other research supports the theory that a youth club which is little more than a hut with a pool **table** and darts **board** can be corrupting. A study by the University of London's Institute of Education for the Department for Education and Skills tracked a group of **people** born in 1970 to examine the impact of youth activities over time.

It concluded giving young people a place to hang out without organised activities, or effective supervision, is damaging. Young people not only need places to go but **things** to do, the report said.

Below is a selection of your comments.

Youth clubs are a great idea. Unless your parents could afford to pay for activities, you were left with nothing to do. I was lucky enough to be involved with sports for most of my teens although there was a period I didn't participate and hung about with friends on the **streets** with nothing to do. Even now the teens in my area hang about the local shops bored, or kicking a **football** at the shops because they have nowhere to go, no facilities to use. If there were youth centres offering structured appealing activities, I'm sure our teens would be more than willing to take advantage of them rather than drinking **alcohol**, making babies and anti **social** behaviour. Underage drinking also leads to binge drinking which is a major problem now. The reason behind it is boredom. It is programmed into their heads that getting **drunk** means having fun and entertainment, which of course leads on to trouble... and lots of it.

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Every day I have to cycle past groups of **teenagers** who deliberately stand in my way and call out abuse. Just a few metres past them stands a youth club in which they appear to spend the rest of their **time**. If this is an example of youth **clubs** doing good for an area, I'd hate to go to one without such a venue.

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The challenge is to actually challenge and engage with the more distant youths, the ones who **cause** the trouble. They have to have a feeling of ownership/belonging as well as discipline, but it is a hard balance to achieve. Too much **either** way and problems appear. A community I lived in built a sports centre for the local youths at great cost - within a few years it was burnt **down**. The youths who do such acts are so far removed from society that it is well nigh impossible to include them, and youth centres won't work. Maybe it's old age creeping up **on** me, but I truly believe the balance of ownership and belonging and discipline would best be served by enforced national **service** for youth. Drastic? Perhaps, but the reality is little else would work for the extreme youths who, whilst in the minority, cause the greatest problems.

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