National Youth Agency

Developed by the National Youth Agency

Colour Your Code

Full session plan

Introduction

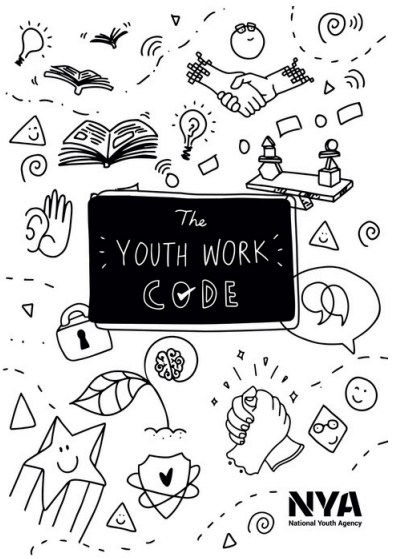
This session invites you to explore the Youth Work Code of Ethics with young people in a creative and meaningful way. These principles guide youth workers to build safe, respectful, and inclusive spaces where young people feel valued and empowered.

Through doodling and discussion, you'll reflect on what these values mean for you and your group. Together, you will create a collaborative artwork that brings these ethical principles to life, celebrating trust, participation, and positive relationships in youth work.

This activity is about sharing ideas, listening to each other, and understanding what makes youth work spaces safe and supportive.

The easiest way to use this resource is to print all the A4 doodle sheets and encourage participants to doodle while discussing how the Youth Work Code of Ethics relates to young people and your organisation's ethos.

The downloads are available below in the session overview section.



The A4 doodle sheets are designed to:

- Support reflection
- Spark discussion
- Encourage thinking about ethical practice in youth work

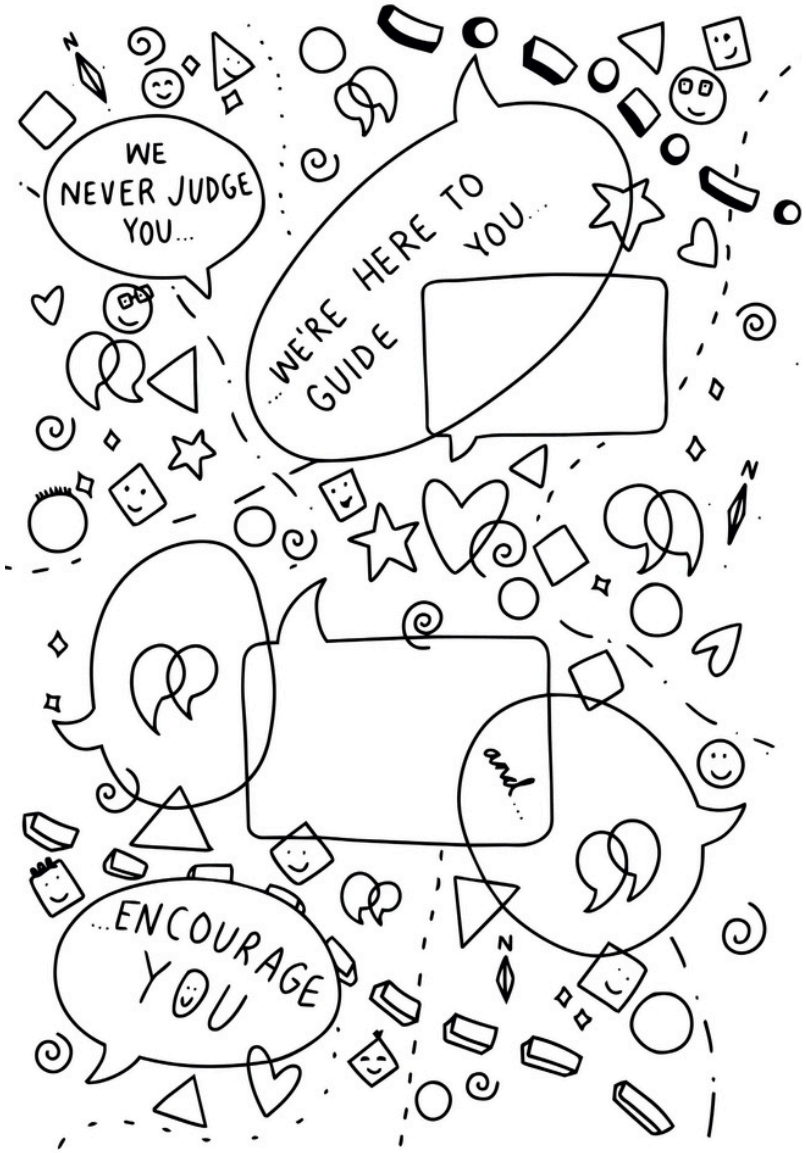
Thanks

This resource is designed alongside Connect and Reflect, a set of cards and adaptable training sessions for youth workers and managers to explore The Code of Ethics, The Five Principles of Youth Work alongside Ethical Dilemmas in Youth Work.

Colour Your Code has been co-produced with young people, whose honesty, creativity and commitment to strengthening youth work practice have been central to its development.

We are grateful to VOY Design, whose expertise and imagination helped bring the vision of an interactive and engaging session to life.

We would also like to thank Blackbridge Charitable Community Benefit Society and Kinetic Youth, who piloted the resource and provided valuable feedback and reflections that enhanced its clarity and impact

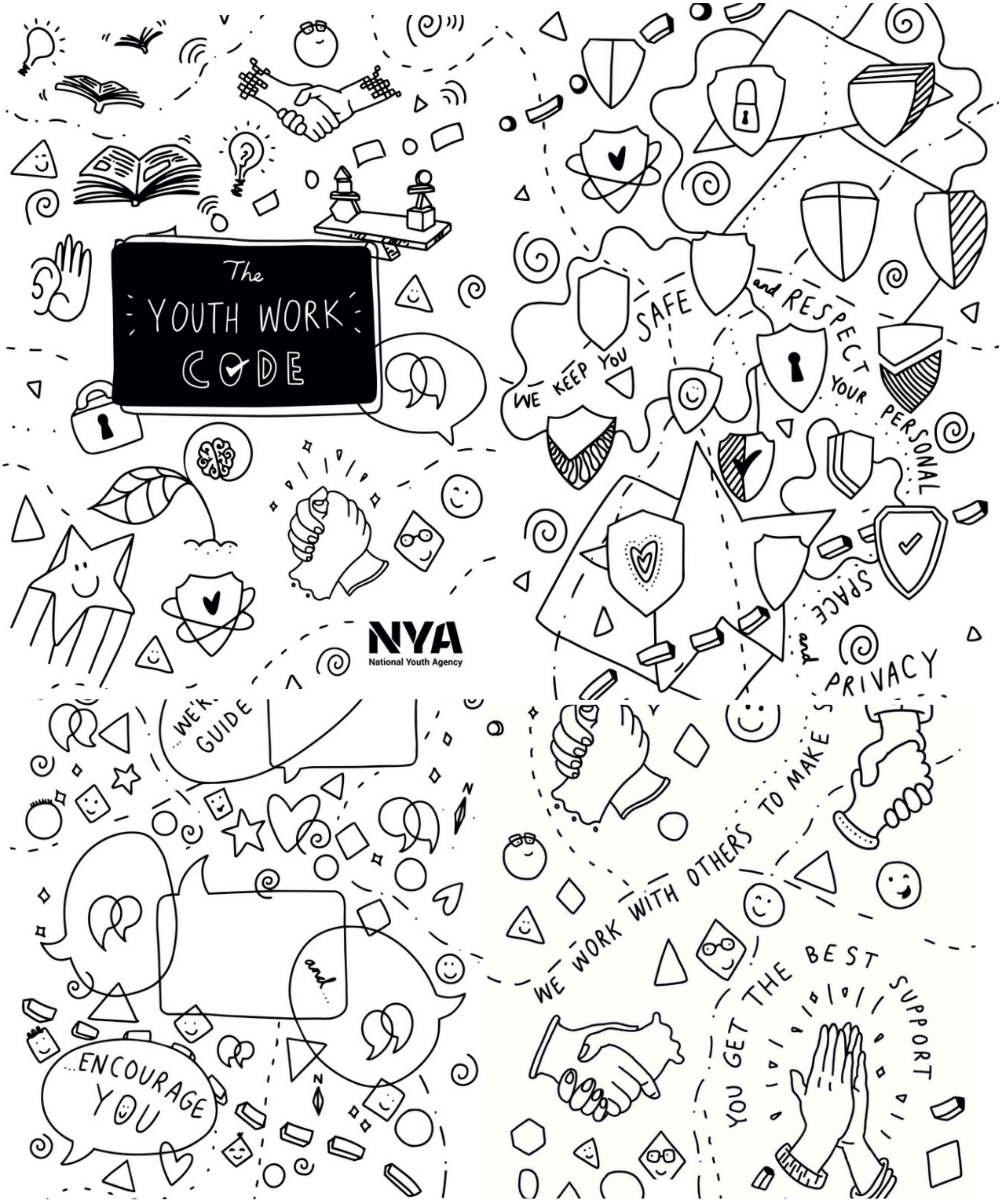


Session Overview

Colour Your Code is an interactive session designed for youth workers to engage young people in exploring the Youth Work Code of Ethics through creative doodling activities.

The session encourages reflection, discussion, and collaboration. Once all 12 doodle sheets have been completed, they can be arranged together to create a large, shared piece of artwork that represents ethical principles in the youth work setting.

DOWNLOAD THE DOODLE SHEETS HERE.



Recommended age range

This activity is suitable for young people aged 12 and above, but youth workers should use their discretion based on the needs and maturity of their group.

Confidentiality

Discussions about ethics and rights may evoke strong emotions. Youth workers should:

- Create a safe, supportive environment
- Be prepared to offer follow-up support or signposting if sensitive issues arise
- Explain that if someone shares information that raises concerns, you have a responsibility to act on it
- Allow time at the end of the session for young people to unwind and decompress informally
- Identify who young people can speak to after the session if they want to discuss issues further
- Provide contact details for your organisation, including your Safeguarding Lead, and up-to-date information about local support services

Group Size

We recommend 6–12 young people per group to allow everyone space for meaningful contributions.

Inclusion and fairness

Equality, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging (EEDIB)

This session is designed to be flexible and adaptable to meet the diverse needs and abilities of all participants. To ensure everyone can take part meaningfully, consider creating an Inclusivity Checklist.

This checklist can help you review and plan for accessibility across different areas, such as:

- Physical accessibility – Is the space easy to navigate for everyone?
- Sensory accessibility – Are lighting, noise levels, and materials suitable for different sensory needs?
- Communication needs – Are instructions clear and available in multiple formats?

Working with young people to co-create this checklist is a great way to make inclusion part of your everyday practice. Their input ensures the activities reflect real needs and experiences.

Person-centred approach

Put the young person at the heart of everything you do. This means focusing on their:

- **Wants**
- **Needs**
- **Interests**
- **Long term ambitions**
- **Short term goals**

By prioritising these, you create a space where young people feel valued and empowered.

Creative adaptations

Discuss ways to make the session more engaging for different learning styles. Ask young people directly about methods and adaptations that might help them to express themselves fully. For example:

- Instead of doodling, use clay or sculpture to create symbols that represent the Code of Ethics
- Offer a mix of materials so participants can choose what feels most suitable and comfortable for them
- You might want to adapt the session to create a piece of music, dance or drama

1-2-1 adaptation

This session can also be adapted for a onetoone conversation. In this version, you can explore the 10 condensed Code of Ethics statements together and invite the young person to colour in the Youth Work Code doodle sheet, which includes all the key symbols.

Alternatively, the young person can choose any doodle sheet to colour in, using it as a gentle and creative way to open conversation, explore ideas, and reflect together at a pace that feels comfortable for them.

Aim

To help youth workers and young people explore how the Code of Ethics relates to their relationships and organisation.

Learning outcomes

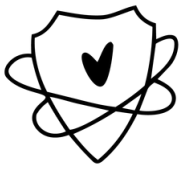
By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain the purpose of the Code of Ethics and why it is important
- Explore and identify how ethical practice applies within their own youth work setting
- Understand the youth work relationship and what it means to have a trusted adult supporting young people, including why trust, consistency, and clear boundaries are essential for creating safe and empowering environments
- Create a visual representation of the Code of Ethics that can be displayed within the youth setting

Resources needed

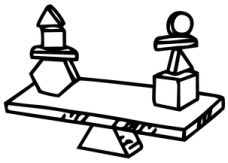
- 12 A4 downloadable doodling sheets including the title sheet and list of statements
- Colouring materials: coloured pencils, felt-tip pens, crayons
- Optional craft materials: eco glitter, tissue paper, collage materials, stickers

Discuss key terms and phrases



We keep you safe and respect your personal space and privacy

Shield for safety and protection



We are honest, fair and treat everyone equally

Scales for fairness and equality



We listen to you and take your ideas seriously

Ear for listening and understanding



We help you grow, learn new things and build confidence

Sprouting plant for growth and learning



We work with others to make sure you get the best support possible

Handshake for teamwork and collaboration



We support you to make your own choices about your life and future

Star for independence and empowerment



We never judge you and are here to guide and encourage you

A speech bubble containing quation marks to show conversations of kindness and support



We are always learning, so we can support you better

Books for learning and improvement



We keep your information private unless we have to share it to keep you or someone else safe

Lock for privacy and confidentiality



We act the same way online and in person, with respect, care and honesty

Digital/physical handshake, respect in all spaces

Social media

If you'd like to showcase your finished artwork on social media, use the hashtag #YouthWorkEthics and celebrate positive, ethical youth work.

Session outline

Time	Activity	Resources	Facilitation Prompts / Notes
0–20 min	**Introduce the concept of the Youth Work Code of Ethics**	Large group discussion	**Do: Explain the code of ethics** • It is a set of rules that youth workers follow to make sure you're treated fairly and safely • Helps keep youth workspaces positive, respectful, and safe **What it means for young people** • You are listened to, and your opinions matter • You are treated with respect, no judgment, no favourites • Your safety comes first, both in person and online • You have the right to be included and not left out • You can ask questions or speak up if something doesn't feel right **Why it matters** • It helps you feel valued, confident, and supported • It makes youth workspaces safe and positive for everyone • Helps you understand my role in being a trusted adult **Do** • From the discussion, create a group

Time	Activity	Resources	Facilitation Prompts / Notes
10–30 min	**Preparation for creating Poster**	Large group	**Explain:** • Each participant will colour in or doodle one of the Code of Ethics A4 posters. • Read out each statement before starting **Ask:** • "What do you think your statement is trying to say?" • "Why do you think your statement is important in our youth club/group?" • "How does your symbol/emoji represent the statement?" **Explain:** • Once everyone has finished their drawings, all the individual posters will be pieced together to create one large collaborative artwork **Colour Selection** • Place a variety of colouring pencils, felt tips, etc., on the table • Invite the group to pick 4–5 colours they all agree on • Explain that choosing a small set of colours helps the final combined artwork look unified and connected • Suggest they consider colours linked to their group identity or logo, if relevant **Optional Twist** • Do not explain the final assembly at the start • Encourage young people to complete their posters individually • Offer support for those who may lack confidence or need assistance • Once everyone has finished, surprise the group by revealing that the pieces fit together to create one large collaborative artwork. Decide as a group how you want to assemble your poster

Time	Activity	Resources	Facilitation Prompts / Notes
Flexible	**Colouring in and discussion**	Doodle downloads + Colouring in resources	As you go through the session, you can ask the following questions to enable deeper discussion, reflection, and understanding. **Discussion Prompts** • "Why do you think your statement is important in our youth club/group?" • "Have you seen this happening here before? What did it look like?" • "How do we already show this in our group?" • "What could we do to show this better?" • "If someone new joined today, how would they notice this value in our group?" • "What else would you add/ what do you think is missing?"
Flexible	**Work out how the artwork will be presented and join the artwork together**		When deciding where to display the artwork, focus on choosing the most appropriate and safe location. Consider the following: • **Safety First:** Check your health and safety policy around displaying artwork. It might suggest that you avoid fire doors, entrances, or areas where loose-hanging materials could pose hazards • **Creative Options:** Think beyond physical spaces, scan and share the artwork on your organisation's website, social media, or as part of an exhibition • **Social media:** If displayed online, use the hashtag (#YouthWorkEthics) to join the movement and celebrate positive youth work. • **Permissions:** Ensure you have the correct permissions before sharing young people's images or artwork publicly