

WHY WE DO IT?

INTRODUCTION

Component 3 introduces volunteers to the principles and practice of youth work and specifically addresses definitions and principles. It also addresses the expected outcomes from the youth work process for young people, volunteers, the organisation and the wider community.

At the end of this component learners will be able to:

- Discuss definitions and principles of youth work.
- Describe and discuss the expected outcomes from youth work at each of the four levels mentioned above.

OVERVIEW

CORE CONTENT	LEARNING OUTCOMES	MATERIALS INCLUDED
<p>Principles & Practice of Youth Work:</p> <hr/> <p>Definitions of youth work.</p> <p>Principles of youth work.</p>	<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <hr/> <p>Discuss the definition of youth work.</p> <p>Describe and discuss the principles of youth work.</p>	<p>Worksheets and exercises; Factsheet on the definition of youth work as per the Youth Work Act 2001 http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2001/en/act/pub/0042/index.html</p> <p>Factsheet on the Principles of Youth Work as set out in the QSF Document http://omc.gov.ie/documents/youthaffairs/QSF_Brochure_o80310.pdf</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p> <hr/> <p>Outcomes for Young People: i.e. What do we hope you people will gain from their involvement with us?</p> <p>Outcomes for Volunteers: i.e. what will volunteers gain from their involvement in youth work practice?</p> <p>Outcomes for the Organisation: i.e. What do we hope to gain from our work with young people?</p> <p>Outcomes for the wider community: What do we hope the wider community will gain from the organisation's work with young people?</p>	<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <hr/> <p>Describe the expected outcomes from the young person's perspective.</p> <p>Describe the outcomes they expect as a result of their involvement with the organisation.</p> <p>Describe the expected outcomes from the organisation's perspective.</p> <p>Describe the expected outcomes for the wider community as a result of the organisation's work with young people.</p>	<hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factsheet on definition of outcomes. • Factsheet on process for identifying outcomes. • Outcomes at each level will be specific to each organisation.

WORKSHEET:

DEFINITIONS OF YOUTH WORK

Break group into small groups of three. Provide each group with a flipchart page and marker. Invite each group to develop their definition of youth work in response to the line: **Youth work is...**

Give each group 15 minutes to complete the exercise. When completed, invite each group to present their definitions of youth work to the large group. Provide time for large group discussion on each of the definitions presented, highlighting the following:

- Similarities and differences in the definitions
- Key words used to define youth work

Following large group discussion, the trainer presents the Youth Work Act, 2001 definition of youth work (*see Factsheet 1: Definition of Youth Work*) and discussed the following questions with the large group:

- Does this definition describe your understanding of what youth work is?
- If yes, how?
- If no, why not?
- What are the similarities and differences between the Youth Work Act definition and those developed by the group earlier?

⁶ Youth Work Act, 2001: Definition of Youth Work.

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2001/en/act/pub/0042/sec0003.html#parti-sec3>

FACTSHEET:**DEFINITION OF YOUTH WORK****YOUTH WORK ACT, 2001⁶**

“Youth Work” means a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation, and which is;

- (i) complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training.
- (ii) provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.

WORKSHEET:**PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK – MOVING DEBATE****AGREE/DISAGREE/DON'T KNOW**

Place three flipchart pages in different corners of the training room, one with AGREE, one with DISAGREE and one with DON'T KNOW.

Tell participants that you will call out a number of statements about the purpose of youth work and they are invited to go to the relevant corner of the room depending on what they think about the statement i.e. do they *agree*, *disagree* or *don't know*. Following each statement, and when participants have selected their response, the trainer will facilitate discussion among participants regarding their thoughts on the statement in question.

Note: Participants should be informed that this is about their opinions about the purpose of youth work rather than them being concerned about right or wrong answers. Participants can also have the option to change their position during discussion if they wish.

STATEMENTS:**THE PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK IS...**

- To provide recreational activities for young people.
- To give young people a greater say in issues that affect them.
- To keep young people off the streets and away from negative influences.
- To give young people responsibility for their own learning.
- To allow young people to plan and run their own activities.
- To involve young people in their own community.
- To supervise young people.
- To educate young people.

FACTSHEET:

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK?⁷

...it seeks to raise the awareness of young people about society and how to act upon it

...it happens outside the formal school curriculum

...it is a planned, systematic educational experience

...it is an active mode of learning

...it provides structures for young people to participate

...it promotes an experiential learning model

...involves young people on a voluntary basis

...is a mutually beneficial, enjoyable and fun experience for both youth workers and young people

...it prioritises the active participation of young people

...it is a partnership between youth workers and young people

...it is set in a community context

...it is based on the voluntary involvement of adults as voluntary youth workers

...young people are involved in learning by doing

...it enables communities to contribute to meeting the needs of their own young people

⁷ National Youth Health Programme (1999). Health Promotion in Youth Work Settings – A Practice Manual

FACTSHEET:**WHAT IS YOUTH WORK?⁸****The purpose of youth work:**

- To build young people's self-esteem and self-confidence.
- To develop their ability to manage personal and social relationships.
- To offer worthwhile and challenging new experiences.
- To provide learning opportunities to enable young people to gain knowledge and develop new skills.
- To build young people's capacity to consider risks and consequences and make informed decisions and take responsibility.
- To help young people develop social awareness and a sense of social solidarity.
- To give young people a voice in decision-making which affects their lives.
- To enhance young people's role as active citizens.
- To listen to and hear what young people have to say.

⁸ http://www.youth.ie/youth_work

How does it happen?

With a focus on process in which the active and critical participation of young people is essential, the methods adopted and the programmes and activities engaged in by youth workers and young people are very diverse, including:

- Recreation, sport and indoor/outdoor pursuits.
- Arts and culture, including drama and the Irish Language.
- Citizenship, social action, youth participation, rights and equality issues, the environment, development education and politics.
- Welfare and well-being including health promotion, relationships and sexuality, stress management, first aid, drugs, alcohol and smoking.
- Life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, planning and decision making, communication, problem solving, initiative and responsibility.
- Critical analysis, creative and reflective thinking.
- Intercultural and international awareness activities and exchanges.
- Information technology.

FACTSHEET:

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK?⁹

What are the values of youth work?

The values of youth work match the purpose of education and are fundamental to the process, raising the confidence of individuals, their contribution to society, and their value as citizens. These values are:

- Empowerment of young people.
- Equality and inclusion.
- Respect for all young people.
- Involvement of young people in decision-making.
- Partnership.
- Voluntary participation.

What are the benefits of youth work?

Youth work adds value to the lives of all young people, helping them develop lasting skills and attributes, and can particularly affect the lives of young people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, or are most challenged by school. It can help to build confidence, provide role models, open up new experiences and give young people a sense of belonging.

- **For young people:** Youth work is both educational and enjoyable; both fulfilling and fun along with those that take part have more opportunities and more options for the future.
- **For communities:** Youth work is about adults and young people working together, building community spirit and playing an active role in the development of their communities
- **For society:** Youth work tackles real social issues, it combats disadvantage, it enhances democratic life and it's huge value for money!

⁹ http://www.youth.ie/youth_work

Definitive features of youth work:

- Youth work is about voluntary participation.
- Young people are involved in youth work because they choose to be, because they want to do worthwhile, enjoyable things in their free time in the company of their friends and interested, supportive adults, both paid and volunteer.
- Youth work ‘starts where young people are at’.
- Youth work is flexible and versatile in its approach. It starts with young people’s own interests and ambitions and helps them to expand their horizons.
- Youth work is about partnership.
- In youth work the young people are active partners in making decisions, planning programmes, setting priorities. The youth work relationship is based on dialogue between young people and adults.

FACTSHEET:**PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK¹⁰****5 Core Principles outlined in the Quality Standards Framework:¹⁰****All youth work practice and provision is:**

- 1. Young person centred:** recognising the **rights** of young people and holding as central their active and **voluntary participation**;
- 2. Committed to ensuring and promoting the safety and wellbeing** of young people;
- 3. Educational and developmental;**
- 4. Committed to ensuring and promoting equality and inclusiveness** in all its dealings with young people and adults;
- 5. Dedicated to the provision of quality youth work and committed to continuous improvement.**

¹⁰ Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (2010). Quality Standards Framework (QSF). http://omc.gov.ie/documents/youthaffairs/QSF_Brochure_o80310.pdf

WORKSHEET:

PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK

APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK IN PRACTICE

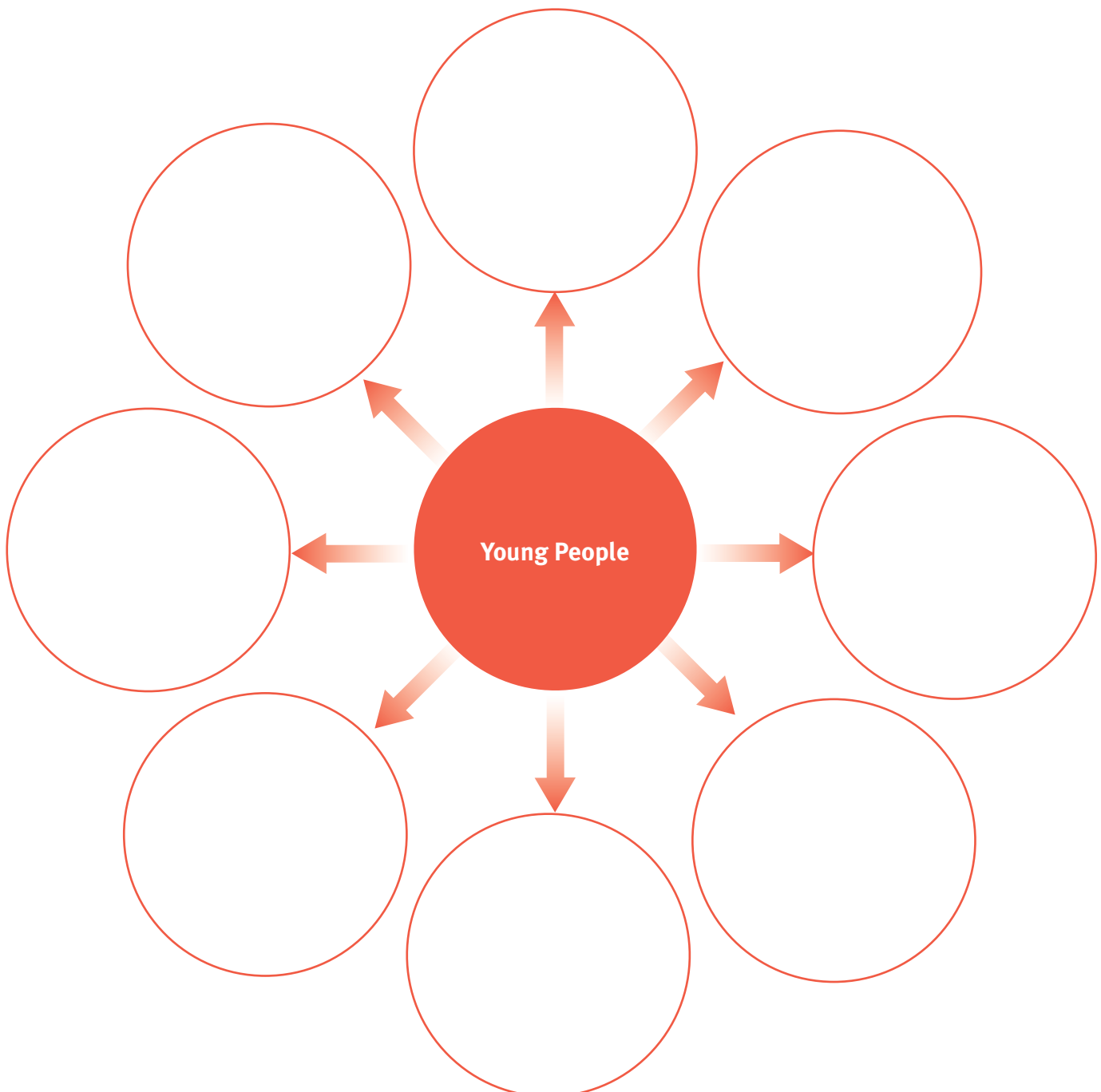
In small groups, consider the principles of youth work and use the following worksheet to give examples of how these principles can be applied in practice in working with young people. When small groups have completed the exercise, take feedback and facilitate large group discussion. On a flipchart, draw together an overall list of examples of how these principles can be applied in every day youth work practice.

PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK	APPLICATION TO PRACTICE
<p>All youth work practice and provision is:</p> <hr/> <p>1. Young person centred: recognising the rights of young people and holding as central their active and voluntary participation.</p> <hr/> <p>2. Committed to ensuring and promoting the safety and wellbeing of young people.</p> <hr/> <p>3. Educational and developmental.</p> <hr/> <p>4. Committed to ensuring and promoting equality and inclusiveness in all its dealings with young people and adults.</p> <hr/> <p>5. Dedicated to the provision of quality youth work and committed to continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Give examples of how this principle can be applied in practice in your work with young people:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

WORKSHEET:**OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN YOUTH WORK**

Individually, or in small groups, discuss and identify all the possible outcomes there are for young people from their involvement in the youth work process and complete the worksheet below:

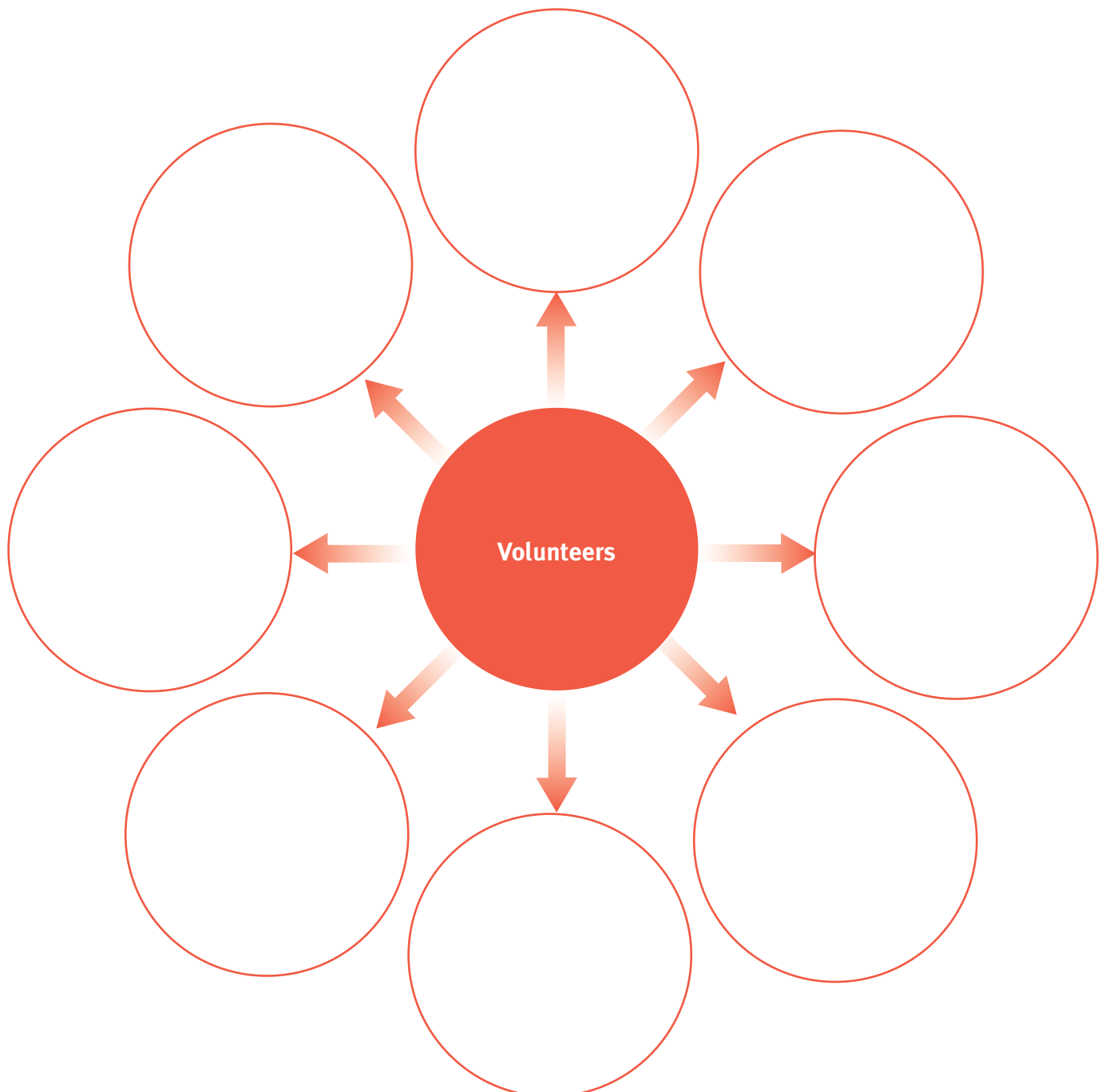
- Discuss why these outcomes are important for young people.
- Discuss how volunteers can support young people to achieve these outcomes.



WORKSHEET:**OUTCOMES FOR VOLUNTEERS FROM THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN YOUTH WORK**

Individually, or in small groups, discuss and identify all the possible outcomes you as volunteers/leaders expect to gain from your involvement in the youth work process and complete the worksheet below.

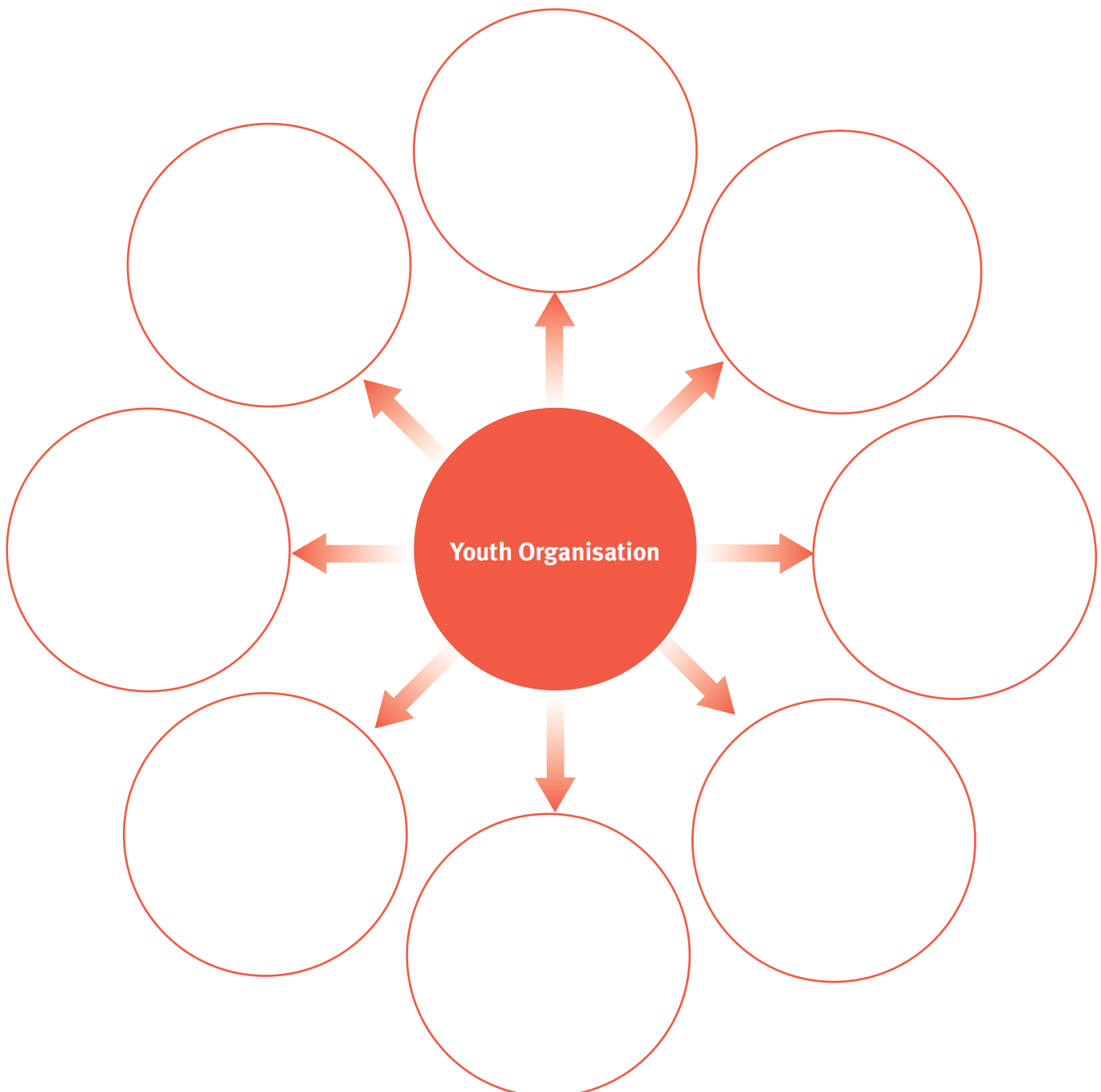
- Discuss why these outcomes are important to volunteers/leaders?
- Discuss how volunteers can be supported to achieve these outcomes through their involvement in youth work practice.



WORKSHEET:**OUTCOMES FOR THE ORGANISATION FROM ITS WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

Individually, or in small groups, discuss and identify all the possible outcomes you think the organisation hopes to gain from its work with young people and complete the worksheet below.

- Discuss why these outcomes are important to the organisation.
- Discuss how the organisation can work to achieve these outcomes.



WORKSHEET:**OUTCOMES FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

Individually, or in small groups, discuss and identify all the possible outcomes you think there are for the wider community from young people's involvement in this youth organisation and complete the worksheet below.

- Discuss why these outcomes are important for the wider community.
- Discuss how the wider community can achieve these outcomes.

