



Caring on the Streets: A Study of Detached Youthworkers

Jacqueline K Thompson

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They're fighting for our kids, and the battleground is the street! In 1956, the Boston Special Youth Project defined the field of detached youthwork this way: "Detached work involves intensive contact with a corner-group where the worker meets the teen-age group in their natural environment. By close association with them and getting to know their needs as a group and as individuals, the worker forms a positive relationship and helps them to engage in socially acceptable activities which they come to choose. The basic goal is helping them to change undesirable attitudes and patterns of behavior." Today, author and youthworker Jacquelyn Kay Thompson brings this exciting, heartbreaking and often dangerous profession to light in *Caring on the Streets: A Study of Detached Youthworkers*. The book examines the demanding task of assisting runaways, gang members, prostitutes, drug addicts, and other troubled youths and explores how the profession is practiced in the United States. Here are true-life stories of the courageous, caring individuals whose professional life is spent on the streets, in bars, pool halls, motels, housing projects, and hangouts "where the kids are." In addition to sharing the personal experience of detached workers, *Caring on the Streets* illuminates these facets of the profession:

- history of detached youthwork
 - methodology and philosophy of detached youthwork
 - model programs
 - research procedures for youthworkers
 - becoming a detached youthworker ...and more!
- Caring on the Streets* contains interviews with seventeen youthworkers who assist clients outside of formal office settings to give you insight into the experiences, challenges, and dedication of detached youthworkers. This thoughtfully-indexed work also includes reference notes and five appendixes.

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Donna Cook:

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