

SUPPORTING YOUTH WORK IN SCOTLAND

SUMMER 2016

# THE LINK

YOUTH WORK EXPO SPECIAL WHY YOUTH WORK MATTERS TO THE FUTURE OF SCOTLAND



**Key figures from  
business, education  
and public policy  
give their view on  
the crucial role of  
youth work**





# Foreword

At the beginning of 2016 we brought key figures from business, the public sector and education together for the first time to highlight and celebrate the contribution youth work makes to society, individuals and to the realisation of the programme for government.

*“Education is not about the filling of a vessel but the lighting of a flame.”*  
Plutarch, Greek Historian

## Youth Work Expo:

To give an overview of the value of youth work to young people and society at large.

To show the strong links between what youth work does and the programme for government.

To show examples of how youth work changes lives for the better from the viewpoints of both young people and volunteer leaders.

To make the case for government, business, and charitable trusts to invest further in both universal and targeted youth work activities, both locally and nationally.

To promote the key strategy themes.

This summit was part of the wider implementation of the National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019, an event that highlighted the importance of challenging the status quo, with regard to how and where young people learn and progress.

The main purpose was to ensure a greater understanding of the benefits that youth work brings individually, collectively and as a catalyst to shape our country and national policy, so Scotland can indeed be the best place for young people to grow up.

This magazine is full of the testimonies and opinions of not youth workers, but academics, industry leaders and key figures from across Scottish society, who all state the need for a strategic and long-term vision for the youth work sector.

Youth work is fundamentally an informal educational process, delivered inside a relationship which is a mutual one between young people and the worker, club or organisation, one which can be rejected at any time by that young person. What attracts and keeps them coming back is the strength of the programme, the skill and empathy of the youth workers, and the camaraderie and friendship which blossoms in such an environment.

There can be no doubt that the key to personal, moral and economic progress is a well educated population and the development of a learning society. We in the youth work sector know how to achieve this. We must offer our young people the opportunity to learn and develop outside the classroom.

But this knowledge goes well beyond the youth work sector. Professionals across the breadth of public policy now recognise the positive impact youth work has on young people. The National Youth Work Outcomes that underpin the Scottish Government’s Youth Work Strategy contribute significantly to growing our young workforce, to community cohesion, educational attainment, health and wellbeing and reducing criminal behaviour.

Let’s get the message out there; ‘Youth Work Changes Lives,’ for good.

**Jim Sweeney**

CEO YouthLink Scotland/Co- Chair National Youth Work Strategy Reference group





# Youth work and schools

Education Scotland's Strategic Director believes we have a unique opportunity to make the breakthrough needed to close the attainment gap. **Graeme Logan** is currently leading the Scottish Attainment Challenge in partnership with Scottish Government and local authorities. For him youth work will be very much part of that breakthrough. Here we set out his vision for youth work and schools.



At Education Scotland we are supporting schools to design a curriculum that gives all young people the experiences and opportunities to achieve to the highest possible standards. This includes planning key interventions and support from a range of professionals including youth workers. For children living in areas of deprivation, this can often involve widening their experiences and achievements.

Increasingly, we are seeing youth workers work alongside teachers and others who support children and young people, and the sector has a key role to play in helping us to achieve our vision of excellence and equity for every child and young person.

Youth workers often connect with young people in a way that makes a tremendous difference to confidence and self-esteem as well as to knowledge and skills. I have been

hugely impressed by work I have seen, some of it when I was a headteacher, where youth workers are extending the experiences, opportunities and achievements for young people and children as young as eight, helping them improve their motivation and engagement.

Curriculum for Excellence broadly describes the experiences and outcomes desired in a wide range of areas including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These three areas are the particular focus of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. In order to achieve curriculum levels, learning needs to take place in a variety of settings and children need to apply their learning in a variety of real-life and practical ways. The most outstanding youth workers will be able to articulate how their work with young people helps to contribute to young people's attainment in these areas.

There is also an opportunity for youth workers in the new National Improvement Framework, currently being implemented. 'Raising attainment and achievement' is one of the quality indicators that HM Inspectors will be assessing in schools from August 2016, and in very good and excellent examples I would expect the contribution of youth workers and other CLD professionals to feature strongly where young people's achievements are outstanding.



High Life Highland

Education Scotland is working with YouthLink Scotland to implement and monitor the National Youth Work Strategy, and to ensure that we reap the benefits for the Scottish Attainment Challenge, a working group has been set up to interface with both it and the Developing the Young Workforce policy areas. The working group is setting out to articulate a clear, collective message about the contribution that can be made by youth work, and to agree a programme of communications and capacity building. They also want to establish a strategic approach to knowledge brokering and networking.

A quote from Gabriela Mistral resonates deeply within the Scottish Attainment Challenge: "Mankind owes to children the best it has to give. Their life is fragile. If they are to have a tomorrow their needs must be met today. Many things can wait but not the children."

Schools cannot deliver Curriculum for Excellence on their own. Each curriculum needs to give young people as many opportunities to succeed as possible, and youth workers, along with other partners, have a key role to play in achieving the break-through children need today.





# Beyond the classroom

**John Swinney, Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, talks about the key role youth work has in helping to close the attainment gap.**

It is vital that all of Scotland's children and young people have a fair chance to flourish. Youth work makes a significant contribution to this: put simply, it helps to change lives. I am always humbled by stories from young people and practitioners which demonstrate the real life impact of youth work.

Youth work and community learning and development takes place across all our communities, helping young people to make positive choices as they emerge into adulthood by building their confidence, skills and capacity for further learning and employability.

The phenomenal growth in the completion of youth awards is a real sign of youth work's success. Since the Awards Network was established in 2008, participation and completion of awards has grown by 273% with over 73,000 awards completed in 2014-15 alone. That success is down to the talents and skills of thousands of youth workers, many of them volunteers, some of them young people, investing their time to help our young people be all they can be.

Government plays its part too. Scotland's youth work strategy - 'Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland' - connects with other key policy areas, especially in education. That contribution was recognised by the OECD in its recent review of Scottish education - connecting schools with learning in the community, and out-of-school life in general; promoting healthy lifestyles and helping to tackle health inequalities; and engaging families and communities in our education system.

Youth work also has a role to play in transferring good practice in informal and community learning approaches into schools to help close the attainment gap between children from the most and least deprived communities. And as a partner in Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, youth work can help to increase the range of pathways available to young people to further learning, training and skills development.

No sector plays a more significant role in helping young people to realise their rights and engage in our democracy. One of youth work's great strengths is the opportunities it gives young people to get involved in social action, volunteering and decision-making in their communities.

We all have a responsibility to make young people's rights a reality. I am proud of the role that an SNP Government has played, ensuring 16 and 17 year olds now have a say in our democratic process and helping young people's voices be heard on matters which affect them.

Young people are leading the design, shape and focus of the Year of Young People in 2018. Their views and experience are also helping to inform the best approaches to design, create and lead a fairer Scotland. And all this engagement reinforces what some of us already know - we can learn much from listening to Scotland's young people.

Indeed, I want Scotland to be a country that loves to learn and where learning is lifelong and lifewide: youth work has a key role to play in helping us all, but especially our young people, achieve this.



# Reforming our public services - Fire and Rescue

In the last five years there has been a 50% reduction in deliberate fire-raising. In our interview with **David McGown**, Deputy Chief Assistant Officer with Scottish Fire and Rescue, he explains the crucial role of youth work in reducing criminal behaviour and improving communities.



## What has been the benefit to SFRS of working in partnership with youth work organisations?

Nationally, key agencies such as YouthLink Scotland, Young Scot and the Scottish Youth Parliament have been influential in the development of our Youth Engagement Framework.

Locally we have worked closely with many youth workers in the delivery of our services. This has enabled us to engage with a larger, and more diverse, group of young people than we would have been able to working on our own. It has enabled us to work with young people who may have previously been beyond the reach of our staff. This has also helped develop the skills of our staff and we have been able to access local training provided by our partners. For instance, in North Lanarkshire we have had front line firefighters trained in the Solihull Approach, helping them to understand the emotional wellbeing of young people, and how their life experiences influence the way they may react in certain situations.

**Deliberate secondary fires (involving grass, refuse, bins, etc) almost halved in 5 years (from 25,676 in 2010/11 to 13,533 in 2014/15). "We believe that our partnerships with the youth work sector, and our engagement with young people, have made a significant contribution to this reduction."**

## How does youth work help you connect with young people?

The development of our services is carried out by our Youth Engagement officer, a role filled by an experienced youth work professional, registered with the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Standards Council for Scotland. Having this role within the service has been vital to ensure that our staff develop the appropriate skills and have access to resources that enable them to engage positively with young people. A youth work approach features strongly in our Youth Engagement Framework where we highlight the importance that the CLD regulations play in the development and delivery of our services.

## Does the youth work approach need to be more widely recognised through national and local government policy?

I believe that youth work is already rightly gaining more prominence in both national and local policy. What makes a difference, however, is true partnership working at a local level. To provide positive opportunities for young people, and ultimately to improve communities, the value of youth groups, charities and public services working together cannot be overstated. Policy is required, but it is the practical implementation of policy which is crucial.



**SCOTTISH**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
Working together for a safer Scotland



## What is your experience of youth work during your time with the Fire Service?

I have been with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) for 29 years. In that time I have seen a significant increase in our initiatives with youth work organisations, and we have developed a range of programmes to either develop young people's skills or educate them on safety. Currently we have the 'Fire Cadet/Young Firefighter' schemes, multi-agency safety courses, 'Fire Setters' programmes and bespoke 'FireSkills' sessions. More recently, the SFRS has developed, and published, its Youth Engagement Framework, setting out why, and how, we will work with young people to promote safety and prevention, while developing their skills at the same time.

Barnardo's and the Scottish Prison Service demonstrate the power of great youth work through the 'Outside In Youth Work' team at HMYOI Polmont. This partnership shows the important contribution youth work makes in developing a positive learning environment for young people in custody.

# Young offenders and the youth work approach



*"What I like about youth work is the way you are spoken to and treated. Every young person is treated the same: with respect and warmth. The attitudes and moods of youth work staff are very consistent, they are always the same and you always know what you are going to get from them. The staff are very approachable and laid back and make you feel normal. It is different to other services because of the unique way they operate and go about their job. They are 100% in it for the young people and they will do their best to help any young person as long as it is in the best interest of the young person."*

Both organisations recognise that, as young people are still forming their personal identities, focusing on their positive strengths and interests and nurturing their potential is arguably even more important in custody than in the community.

They also recognise that young people in custody are among some of Scotland's most troubled, disadvantaged, vulnerable and, at times, risky young people, and that meeting their needs requires a wide range of interventions and approaches.

What, therefore, are the key strengths of youth work and how does youth work best contribute within a multi-professional team in Polmont?

The key strength of youth work is its ability to engage with young people on a voluntary basis and form effective and trusting relationships with them. From the basis of a respectful, trusting relationship youth workers can encourage young people to take part in opportunities that are fun, creative and challenging.

In Polmont, because of childhood adversities, many young people may have to be cautious about trusting other people, particularly adults in authority. Professional youth work practice can overcome this barrier to engaging in learning in custody. This is clearly expressed by a young person who uses the service:





*“Another unique thing about youth work is that you tend to trust them a little bit more and you would feel more inclined to talk to them about issues or problems because you know for sure they have no other hidden agendas and they only care about helping you and that’s it. Although the youth work staff are very kind and trustworthy they manage to maintain a balance, you can relate to them and talk about stuff but if the youth work staff thought for a second anyone was in any danger or trouble they would report anything they were told or heard. When I initially came to Polmont, going to youth work provided me with a chance to get involved in different activities and meet different people which only enhanced my time in prison.”*

Last year, ‘Outside In Youth Work’ reached 767 young men in Polmont. Youth work takes place both in Polmont’s ‘Activities’ areas, and more recently in the residential halls – where young people’s cells are the place they have meals and recreation. This development shows the Governor’s understanding and belief in the capacity of youth work to reach out to young people in the spaces they live and gather.

In setting out its vision for young people in custody, the Scottish Prison service adopts the Curriculum for Excellence senior stage as the framework for the new learning environment. The important contribution of youth work to support learners to develop all four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence is well recognised.

Issues explored through youth work include health and well-being, rights, and equality and diversity. Project-based groups include media and music or fundraising groups. Increasingly, these activities are linked to awards and qualifications such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, (35 young men were involved in the award last year achieving 12 Bronze Awards and 105 sectional certificates), ASDAN, Youth Achievement Awards, Dynamic Youth Awards, PDA youth work and SQA.

Also essential to the success of youth work in Polmont is a skilled, experienced and committed workforce. Delivering an informal youth work ‘feel’ within a structured environment requires strong partnership working and a high degree of professionalism. All the team are eligible for registration with the CLD Standards Council, having professional degrees in youth work and/or over ten years experience in the field.

Lisa Hogg, Service Manager, said: *“Working in prison you have to be doubly professional. Security is paramount, and for the safety and wellbeing of the young people it is essential to be highly organised and to ensure all procedures are followed correctly.”*

One young person describes some of the benefits of involvement in youth work in custody.

*“I am regularly involved in youth work activities and personally I think that youth work is one of the good positive activities available in Polmont, if not the best activity. Most people that haven’t been to youth work think that it is just going up to play pool or play Xbox and listen to music but to others it’s much more than that. It’s the closest thing to being outside as possible. It is available to everyone and it encourages people who tend*

Within Polmont, the youth work approach is particularly well suited to:

- Providing opportunities to young people who less readily engage in formal learning opportunities.
- Delivering activities which develop knowledge and understanding of issues relating to equal opportunities, supporting the Equalities and Diversity agenda and challenging attitudes that are linked with offending.
- Developing confidence and self-esteem by providing young people with opportunities to be creative, for example through performing and visual arts, which contributes well to the new performing arts space.
- Promoting participation and citizenship.

*not to leave their cells the chance to go up there and meet new people and to get more self-confidence. They also do other activities such as YouthBank, fundraising and the DofE award. These activities also teach you new skills that you can use outside. For example the ‘YouthBank’ helps you with your money management skills. It also helps you work better in a team and improves your decision-making skills. Another good thing about youth work is the staff. They are all brand new and every single one of them would go the extra mile to help you. The youth workers also encourage you to take part in more positive activities. For example they encouraged me to become a peer mentor and it was them that recommended me to the peer mentor staff. I would like to thank the whole of the youth work team for everything they have done for me. Keep up the good job.”*



# Interview

**Sue Brookes, Governor of HMYOI Polmont, talks about the power of the youth work approach in restorative justice.**

## Why youth work?

Many of the young men who are in custody in Polmont have a significant background of disadvantage, neglect and underpinning trauma. We need all sorts of different services to work with them, particularly services that can make the activities fun, and get lads engaged in activities who would, likely, in the community, have been significantly disengaged. Over 90% of the young men here have got a background of exclusion from education. Youth workers have made a significant impact on Polmont. They are an integral part of the management team and have been involved in shaping provision through groupwork and drop-in sessions as well as developing our equivalent of a street work approach. They engage alongside prison staff in all sorts of other activities but particularly activities which promote a rights-based approach.

## What do you think it is about a youth work approach that connects with young people?

I think it is partly the informality of it, and about making it fun and interesting. We have learnt a great deal about the concept of co-design and working with young people in a way which doesn't just consult them, but which generates their ideas, not only for the particular project they are working on but how things might be improved in the future. We have spent a lot of time with youth workers in Barnardos, developing what we call the 'Peer Hub'. The hub is about young people working to support other young people. Youth workers are working alongside prison staff to develop that concept and to expand the number of peers supporters that we have available in Polmont.

Youth work has this very informal approach which draws young people into learning. We can then, if

appropriate, pass them onto more formal education with partners like Fife College, our formal education contractor. So there are all sorts of ways in which youth work can help young people to move forward, including working with our staff and more intensive one-to-one support through our Inclusion Unit. Strategically, youth workers make a massive contribution to developing the curriculum for the establishment, but most importantly for me, it's about engaging the young people in the design, development and delivery of activities within Polmont.

## What evidence have you gathered around the effectiveness of youth work at Polmont?

One of the consistent messages in the SPS survey was an uplift across a range of questions related to health and well-being, with young people reporting they feel more confident, more engaged and better about themselves, which I am absolutely sure youth work has made a core contribution to.

Youth work has been involved in capturing success stories of young people who have done well at Polmont and then successfully moved back out into the community. We worked jointly with Education Scotland to produce a DVD about success stories, which we play to every young person who arrives and goes through the induction process, so right at the outset they are getting the feeling that 'things can change for me, my life can be different'. And lastly I would say that for society, youth work makes a massive contribution to what I would call restorative work in general.







## Reforming our public services - Police

Police Scotland is committed to engaging with young people and improving relationships by increasing the opportunities for positive dialogue. Superintendent **Gavin Phillip** of Police Scotland explains how youth volunteers are helping to bridge the divide.

I felt extremely privileged to be given the opportunity to make a contribution to the recent Youth Work Expo. While this allowed me, on behalf of Police Scotland, to highlight the contributions that key partners such as Young Scot and YouthLink Scotland are making to some of the work we are trying to take forward, of greater importance was the opportunity it provided to hear more about the fantastic work that youth workers do to support young people across Scotland.

We want to put young people at the heart of decision-making.

To do this, the 'Police Scotland Youth Volunteers' programme was established to provide young people aged 13-18 with the opportunity to gain confidence and develop leadership skills by working with the Police whilst volunteering in their local community. It also aims to provide adult volunteers with the opportunity to work with groups of young people and the Police. By December 2015, 21 groups had been established throughout Scotland with more planned. This involves 391 youth volunteers, and 96 adult volunteers have been recruited to support the youth volunteers.

The volunteers have made significant contributions to the following;

- T in the Park Music Festival, Strathallan Estate, Auchterarder
- The Open Golf Tournament, St Andrews
- The Wickerman Music Festival, Dumfries
- The Edinburgh International Military Tattoo, Edinburgh

### Police Scotland Youth Volunteer feedback

- 87% said it helped them at school
- 76% said it helped them get ready for work
- 71% said it helped them in becoming an adult
- Motivation to learn improved from 3.9 to 4.5 (out of 5)
- Determination to succeed increased from 4.0 to 4.5 (out of 5)

We have also established the Police Scotland Youth Advisory Panel (PSYAP). This panel consists of 16 members from across Scotland. They are aged between 13-25 and come from



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe

a diverse range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The broad reach of the members ensures that the work the panel does goes some way to represent the young people of Scotland today.

### To date the PSYAP have;

- Enhanced the Young Scot digital content on crime, safety and the Police – launched on the new Young Scot digital platform ([young.scot](http://young.scot)) in May 2015. Since April 2015 there have been over 20,000 page views of 'Choices for Life' content on our platform.
- Improved the creative content of Police Scotland's informational videos on hate crime including disability, sexual orientation, transgender and race/religion. These were uploaded to the Police Scotland website and promoted through social media.
- Contributed to the promotional material on the Student Safety Campaign and provided insight into how best to raise awareness.
- Commenced work to create young person specific content on Police Scotland's website.
- Developed the 'Know your Rights' document.



# Be ambitious

## Paul Johnston, Director General, Learning and Justice for Scottish Government, talks about the need for ambition in our work with young people.

I was delighted to speak at the Youth Work Changes Lives Expo in Edinburgh. At the event I was pleased to highlight the Scottish Government's commitment to young people and to the youth work sector. We know that youth work is changing lives, by supporting young people to make choices that will shape the rest of their life.

In many respects, we are already seeing great progress.

The OECD (the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) recently reviewed Scotland's education system and said that there is a huge amount to celebrate:

- We are seeing clear upward trends in terms of attainment and positive destinations.
- Over 9 in 10 entered a positive follow up destination in 2014.
- Nearly 2/3 of school leavers continue in education.

They recognised youth work's role in their review.

*"Scottish young people work increasingly towards recognised awards such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, the Youth Achievement Award and the John Muir Award. There is thus recognition of young people's personal achievements within and beyond school, including through partnerships which support learning."*

The OECD did make it clear that we have more to do. We are still not achieving the outcomes that we want to see for all young people, especially those from the poorest areas of Scotland.

Education Scotland inspections point to some communities where the collective work of schools, youth workers, the police and many other partners are allowing children and young people to fulfil their potential and really flourish.

2018 will be the Year of Young People, and now is the time to agree the action that will allow us to drive forward further significant improvement in the lives of children and young people by that time.

Coming back to Scottish Government as Safer Communities Director in 2013, I saw some incredible changes that had taken place during my absence. For some reason, these differences were not making the headlines. But I think they are truly remarkable.

- Recorded crimes and offences by people ages 8 – 17 have reduced by 45%, from 78,572 in 08/09 to 43,117 in 12/13.
- Children referred to the children's reporter on offence grounds were 11,554 in 08/09. This dropped to 2,891 in 14/15, a reduction of around 75%.

- Numbers of young people convicted of handling offensive weapons were 812 in 2006/07, which dropped to 165 in 2013/14, a reduction of around 80%.

What level can we get these figures down to by 2018 and what will it take? I know that the continued energy and engagement of youth workers will be crucial.

As we seek to make further progress, we must think carefully about how we are going to deliver improvement. How do we improve things? Improvement science tells us we need:

- a clear aim;
- a method; and
- we need to measure it.

Those aims are there at a high level in the National Youth Work Strategy: think about it at local level, in the organisation or community that you work in. Get together with others to agree it. Be ambitious.

In my experience, it is crucial to test out different approaches, be willing to learn from others, and learn from success as well as from failure.

Finally, measure. If it works, share it, spread it. If it doesn't, learn from it and move on.

I look forward to seeing more of the energy, inspiration and impact that youth work can bring, as we work together seeking to change the lives of young people across Scotland.





Paragon Ensemble

# Youth participation and rights

**Tam Baillie, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, talks about the contribution that youth work makes to delivering our international children's rights obligations as expressed through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).**



One of the most challenging issues during my term of office has been the impact of poverty on children and young people. We know that poverty adversely affects the educational attainment, mental health and future employment prospects of children and young people. Young people have been severely impacted as employment opportunities have diminished. The role of youth work in these circumstances is critical in providing assistance, as and when young people need it. Youth work adopts an approach which is universal and targeted. Importantly, this can help young people to get the support and services which they need. It also provides a range of opportunities for learning and development as young people transition into adulthood, contributing to Curriculum for Excellence and Getting It Right for

Every Child with a focus on maximising opportunity and improving life chances for our young people.

Youth work engages with young people in a way that assists the promotion of the UNCRC. For instance, it helps to ensure that decisions made about young people are taken in their best interest (Article 3); it helps young people to participate in a range of activities to maximise their development (Article 6); and it creates space for young people to express their views and have them taken into account (Article 12).

In my view, an awareness of rights promotes a better understanding of rights and allows us to consider where we could - and should - improve the delivery of rights. It is appropriate that the National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19 recognises the over-arching

framework of the UNCRC as integral to the implementation of youth work in the future.

Scotland has led the way in giving a democratic voice to our young people through the enfranchisement of 16-17 year olds in the Independence Referendum. This is a strong endorsement of the respect and confidence we have for our young people's opinions. Positive engagement with young people in the process led to 16-17 year olds now having a vote in Scottish Parliament and Council elections. The youth work sector played a key role in promoting participation in the referendum vote and this is a good example of where it has made a national impact.

It is the flexibility and range of activity that characterises the strength of youth work. It provides a place for informal and out of school learning, where young people can engage at their own pace contributing to their development in terms of confidence and sense of value.

According to Canadian academic, **Professor Shirley R Steinberg PhD**, Scotland is a great model for youth work in practice and the empowerment of young people. Shirley is currently Director of the Institute for Youth and Community Research at the University of the West of Scotland.



## An international perspective

My past year in Scotland has become one of amazement, not just for the hills, the lochs, my colleagues, and the culture, but for the commitment I have seen first hand to the empowerment and engagement with young people. Scotland leads in the way that young people are celebrated, included and respected, and the Expo was a packed day doing exactly that.

A country that sustains and supports its young people is a country destined to succeed and thrive. This is an easy concept to understand, but few nations believe in the urgency and importance in sustaining our youth. My day at the Youth Work Expo gave me hope; it gave me power, and made me recommit myself to youth work. I have always been committed, but found myself working in countries where young people were discussed in terms of being: marginalised; at risk; a problem; a deficit; impossible to lead; lazy, and/or a challenge. The conferences and expos I have attended in the past focused on what they perceived as a societal breakdown, a threat, and a management issue, a need to control the youth population.

The strength and reach that YouthLink Scotland has achieved as the national agency for youth work is a sign that the Scottish people have indeed got it right. My own speech that day was centered on the notion of 'Keepin'

it Real', a phrase borrowed from the international hip hop culture of youth. It demands that we do not work on youth, we do not research youth, and we do not try to change youth. Instead, we keep it real by working with, researching with, and facilitating youth. We do not judge nor determine what needs to be changed. We work with the evolution of a healthy youth population. We see young people as partners in our desire to create a sustainable and safe world, and that can only be done with and by our young people.

Through societal and cultural arrogance most societies indulge in the notion that adults, by definition, are correct, including the wielding of power and decision-making. However, there is seldom a dialogue as to how to create a partnership with those who will take up the next generation. The youth work sector in Scotland is serious in creating those much needed conversations and spaces in which to include young people in society and the decisions that affect them. Good youth work is not about a need to maintain an often failing status quo, but to demand that our young people are nurtured, believed in, and supported to become good citizens and our next leaders, which in turn will take us to a more humane and socially just world.







# Contribution to health and wellbeing

**Gregor Smith, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Scottish Government, believes youth work is an essential part of the preventative agenda.**

Early in 2016, I attended the Youth Work Expo to talk about the contribution youth work makes to health and wellbeing in Scotland. I heard a wide range of people talk about their experience and how it had made a difference to their lives; it was impressive stuff.

My role as DCMO includes shaping the direction of Scotland's future health policies and leading medical and public health professionals in driving forward improvements to ensure a health service fit to meet the challenges of the future.

The CMO launched her first Annual Report in February 2016 with a call for a debate with doctors on how we can improve shared decision-making; ensure we deliver person-centred care; reduce unnecessary variation in treatment and outcomes; as well as reduce harm and waste (including over-treatment) for the people doctors treat.

Doctors are well placed to help provide these answers but they are not the only ones who can help the health and wellbeing agenda. For the NHS to be an organisation which realises its potential – not just to treat illness – it must also promote health and wellbeing as a means of preventing illness.

Youth work has a key role in that: by building communities who can take interest in others' health and wellbeing, encouraging healthy choices and promoting health improvement.

Scotland is now in the midst of challenges brought about by a growing and increasingly elderly population with more complex illness. Youth work has a key role to play in turning this around - it needs to act as a role model, continuing to display all the kinds of behaviours it is so respected for. With your support there are so many advances youth work can make in population health, particularly for young people.



If there is scepticism from parts of the health and social care system about why we should spend so much time trying to get the health and wellbeing of the child right, then the impact of dealing with the physical and psychological fallout of poor health is a very sound argument for this policy approach.

Three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder and nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression.

There is still a huge stigma around mental health which means children and young people are not getting the support they need. So many of the organisations who deliver youth work deliver benefits by:

- helping young people engage, overcome barriers and build their social interaction skills including inter-generationally.
- building communities of support and providing the links to employment and positive volunteering opportunities as part of that community structure.

A child brought up in a stable and nurtured environment is better placed to succeed in life than a child from a less secure background. For many young people that stability is not there and youth work can and does make a suitable intervention that can prevent impacts to health and wellbeing.



As a teenager, Shannon Carter's life was a terrifying, white knuckle, drink and drug ride that almost ended in her death. This is her story.

# Strengthening our communities

Growing up wasn't great. I didn't have much confidence in myself. I struggled with school as I never thought I was capable. I always felt people were better than me. I had constant feelings of anger towards everyone, especially teachers and my mum. My upbringing wasn't great but it wasn't awful.

When I became a teenager my anger spiralled out of control. I lived in a continual cycle of using alcohol and drugs to block things out and cope. I had a great social circle of friends, none of whom drank or took drugs, and my grandparents were amazing. But I couldn't see that I was just too wrapped up in myself to see the effect my decisions were having on those around me.

I had continued support from youth work while in school around my anger issues, the youth worker Jane often just let me rant or talk, but I wasn't in a good place, so was never truly able to utilise the skills she was trying to teach me. I was also hanging about the streets a lot, drinking and taking drugs, there I came into contact with various youth workers from 'Word On The Street'. It actually reached a point I would look forward to meeting them.

We'd have a laugh but they'd also listen and try to help me, but again, I just wasn't in a mental state to be helped or take it on board.

My behaviour started to get really bad at this point. I was committing various petty crimes and pushing everyone away that meant anything to me. I was charged for various things and became well known by the police. Eventually I was up in court and was looking at a three year sentence. Luckily I had a lawyer who noticed all of my offending behaviour was due to alcohol and he managed to persuade the judge to put me into a detox programme. Again I just wasn't ready and dipped in and out for years and continued to abuse my body despite the help I was receiving.

My turning point was ending up in hospital after taking an overdose. My grandparents came to my bedside distraught. My gran begged me to stop killing myself. She told me she loved me and couldn't continue to watch me in this vicious self-abusive cycle. She approached the hospital and asked to get me a detox bed in Kershaw.

She told them if they didn't organise it, I wouldn't be alive in a week's time. There was nothing they could do as there were no beds available.

I was discharged on the Saturday and started taking drugs straight away. I received a phone call Sunday to say they had managed to get me a bed for the Monday. I was there five days and was clean. Something just clicked, the image of my gran begging me resonated in my mind and I knew I had to do this. I finally believed in myself and I finally wanted this for me not just for others.

A year into sobriety I approached the I Youth Zone in Greenock. I spoke to the youth workers who used to do the detached youth work on the street, the ones who had previously tried to help me but I had refused to take that help. I thought they would laugh at me



Inverclyde  
council





when I asked to volunteer but their support was overwhelming. When my disclosure came through I thought they would never allow me to work with young people but they did. A year later I've worked in partnership with the police and youth work to run arts-based programmes for young people. I also volunteer twice a week at the local youth club, helping various young people, supporting them in the way I felt youth work supported me.

To this day I don't blame anyone for my actions. I am entirely responsible for the decisions I made, the people I hurt and the things I did. I take full responsibility for who I was then and the person I am now. I have confidence in my ability, I have a job, a car, a home and I help to make a difference to other young people's lives. Life's a journey, not a destination, and I firmly believe youth work changes lives.



## Shannon's story - Hugh's perspective

Hugh Scott, Youth Work Manager, Inverclyde Council, tells us his thoughts on Shannon, and how youth work made a difference to her.

When I first met Shannon, she was a 12 year old hanging around on the streets of Greenock, a very chatty and direct individual, but full of fun. Shannon was no angel and sometimes a pain in the backside but unfortunately, as for many young people, school and home life were not great, which influenced the direction she would take. As things got more difficult to deal with, she was missing school, being aggressive and taking part in risky behaviour.

Recently I was speaking to Shannon about her experience with my service. She has fond memories of engaging with detached workers, Lauren and Gavin, and also her school youth worker, Jane, who became a very close influential person in her later years. Shannon felt that we were all the best because we listened to her, whereas other professionals at that time were causing her to be concerned and anxious, which led to her to become more involved in criminal behaviour, resulting in the breakdown of relationships with those around her. I remember meeting Shannon in one of our local communities where she was under the influence and had just been assaulted. She asked if we could continue to support her, which of course we did. The following week Shannon attended court with her grandfather, his first time in court.

Shannon also mentioned to me in our recent discussion how youth work had helped her through the darkest times in her life but not necessarily in a direct way. During those difficult times, she did often reflect on the good times she had engaging with local youth work. Shannon lost contact with her family and community, moved away to another town to try and find a different path, during this period she received a letter from Jane, her former school youth worker, stating how they still thought of her and hoped she was well. Shannon still treasures this and this helped her to refocus her life and turn things around.

Shannon is now an inspiration to me and my team focusing on how youth work changes lives through offering engagement, support and respect to all young people, no matter their background or issues facing them.

In Inverclyde at the moment youth work is doing very well because it is supported by our senior management and local councillors, and ultimately that support ensures a strong youth work presence, crucial to young people who have stories similar to Shannon's. Despite local and national recognition for our youth work service team, our biggest highlight of the year was seeing Shannon at the Youth Work Expo as a very confident and positive role model for other young people.



# Youth work and sport

**Douglas Samuel, Chief Executive of Spartans Football Academy on why youth work works, both on and off the pitch.**



## Why does Spartans place so much importance on youth work?

As a community based organisation with social aims and objectives, we exist to deliver services for our local and wider community. As an organisation which works with and supports lots of young people, it made perfect sense for our charitable arm to deliver youth work services.

One of the ways in which our £5M sports facilities can be best utilised is by providing young people with a safe, clean, modern facility where they can play for free each day. Our youth work 'up against the fence' model (created and used to deliver 'Street Football in a Safe Place') quickly developed into something bigger with the creation of other programmes such as our 'Friday FooTEA', a youth club which has been replicated and rolled out in other parts of the country. We aim to play a meaningful part in helping

young people to develop and grow at their own pace by providing them with lots of opportunities to experience new things. Football provides us with a motivational hook which enables us to engage with young people, to build healthy relationships with them.

## Is there a need to incorporate youth work across all policy platforms?

At its core, youth work is young person led, is driven by their interests and needs. It has a key part to play in creating an environment which provides young people with as many opportunities as possible to have fun, to learn from doing, to be willing to have a go. Crucially, it's also about helping young people to think about taking responsibility for the choices they make in life and understanding the consequences of their actions on themselves and others. Recognition of the role youth work has to play in the development of young people is increasing, and schools are working

much closer with CLD partners and agencies. Youth work is but one piece of a jigsaw, a jigsaw that includes other things such as physical health and activity, mental health, diet (food poverty) and support for families living in deprived areas.

## What would be your message to our politicians with regard to the future of youth work, raising attainment and ensuring all our young people have equality of opportunity?

To recognise that 'one size doesn't fit all'. Youth work encourages young people to lead healthy lives as part of a wider and larger community of people whilst remaining an individual. It can take time and it will not be the same experience or pace for everyone, however, I believe youth work can help to reveal to young people their hidden talents and set them up for a lifelong journey of learning.



Time to Shine. Photo: Drew Farrell

# Creativity of purpose

**Joan Parr, Head of Creative Learning at Creative Scotland, talks about the special synergy between the arts and youth work.**

## The value of youth work

Looking at the youth work outcomes and at what we want to achieve at Creative Scotland through 'Time To Shine', our youth art strategy for young people, there is real common purpose and shared approach. We all want to support and empower young people to be confident individuals, to have the opportunity to contribute and have their voice heard, to have fun and to be responsible citizens. We at Creative Scotland know that arts can effectively bring about these outcomes and that partnership with the youth work sector extends and adds value to what we do.

## The benefits of youth work and the arts working together

In order to deliver high quality programmes that achieve the best outcomes for young people partnering with the youth work sector is crucial. Both youth workers and artists bring extensive skills and expertise to bear that can transform the lives of

young people. Working together they can achieve more than they could separately. The value of professional collaboration is clear at every level, from looking at the similarities in desired outcomes in youth work strategic documents and youth arts strategic documents, to seeing the impact on young people taking part in youth arts activity. We are particularly pleased at the increase over the last few years in the levels of youth empowerment in decision-making.

## Shared ambitions

The ambition of 'Time To Shine', our youth art strategy, is that all young people in Scotland have access to high quality arts experiences and we believe very strongly that equality underpins all that we do. We want every young person in Scotland to have access to those opportunities and to have that enrichment in their lives. I think it's that partnership between ourselves and the youth work sector, with our shared ambitions, that can really achieve that.

## Case Studies

**Artcore (Edinburgh)** - have worked to develop a youth training initiative which builds on the 'Out of the Blue Drill Hall' cafe training model. 16 young people will undertake training and work experience integrated into #artcore programmes. The project is aimed at the most excluded groups who face the most barriers to involvement in the arts, and capitalises on the work of the #artcore project partners throughout the city, specifically with the Thistle Foundation who work with people with disabilities to support their independence. The first Thistle Foundation supported trainee started in March 2016. A bespoke training programme has been designed for the young person's needs.

**FreshCreations** - this project offers free travel and workshops for all. They work closely with other youth organisations and services to target some of the hardest to reach/disengaged young people in West Dunbartonshire. They work in partnership with children's units (Prep For Life) and alternative educational services (The Choices Programme), to work with young people at risk of anti-social behaviour or isolation. They are also using the 'Y Sort It' youth project bus to travel to smaller communities to deliver art workshops in more isolated communities.



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

# Youth work and mental wellbeing

**John Loughton** is founder and CEO of leadership development social enterprise, Dare2Lead. He is an internationally recognised youth leader and campaigner, as well as being a past winner of Big Brother. His childhood has shaped and fuelled his passion for youth work, he tells us why youth work is a game changer.

It is absolutely right that Scotland aims to be the best country on earth to grow up in. We have our rich education system, open politics, a thriving youth sector, state of the art sports and music venues, employment rules promoting work/life balance and our awe-inspiring natural scenery. Scotland is a tremendous springboard from which to launch our future lives and careers. However, our country fails too many young people. And nowhere is this more evident than in the health and wellbeing of today's generation – especially mental and emotional wellbeing.

Many young people are battling depression, self-harm, eating disorders, anxiety, loneliness, stress, unhappiness and abuse. Statistics also show that mental health issues amongst young Scots are on the rise. There are numerous and complex reasons for this and while diagnosis is improving, research shows that these problems disproportionately impact young people in areas of deprivation and lower income households. (Mental Health Foundation, 2015)

I know how real this is having struggled with mental health issues myself as a teenager. It took me till my 20s to feel confident enough to 'admit' and talk about it. I grew up in a very



chaotic family, within a very deprived community. Life when I was young felt like living in a pressure cooker. The cocktail of poor role models, serious drug abuse, violent crime, bullying, family breakdown and abysmal housing all drove me to self-harm. It seemed to be my only way to get attention or 'vent'. It's never the solution.

Luckily, I found youth work, and it changed my life. Not overnight, and not in a material way. But youth work can be the little bit of light for the future, even when all your past has been darkness. Access to quality, local, joined up and caring youth work is a game-changer – it's the best way to offer social capital to young people who otherwise are written off or left behind. As our NHS continues to be seen as a ticking time bomb, with massive mental health service waiting lists and as we all live longer, it's the innovation and capacity

of interventions like youth work that promotes healthy lives daily behind the political arguments and shock headlines.

Dr Harry Burns, former Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, says "properly functioning families are the key to making Scotland healthier." However where there is no positive role model in the family, youth work often provides that positive adult influence and helps young people find their own voice.

We must all realise that investing in youth work ensures that we build healthy children, instead of trying to fix 'broken' adults years down the line.



*1 in 7 young people in Scotland are taking anti-depressants.*  
NHS Scotland 2012

*UK wide research discovered that 10% of young people (aged 5-16) have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem.*

**Mental Health Foundation, 2015**



# Helping all young people achieve success with The Prince's Trust Scotland

## Introducing The Prince's Trust Achieve Programme

From August 2016, The Prince's Trust Scotland will launch Achieve, a new programme aimed at 13-19 year olds who are disengaged and struggling in education.

Since 1998, the youth charity has been supporting those underachieving in formal education through its xl Fairbridge programmes. Currently working in partnership with local authorities, 110 schools and youth centres, it supports 2,000 young people each year in Scotland who are at risk of not achieving their full potential.

By bringing together the best of these two programmes, Achieve will provide young people with an improved educational offering relevant to their ever-changing needs.

## The need for alternative education offers remains clear:

- More than half of young people in Scotland do not achieve 5 National Fives
- Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are twice as likely to not achieve any Higher qualifications as their peers

- 73% of British businesses believe there will be a skills shortage in the next 3 years highlighting the need for an increase in industry experience

## How it works

Designed to complement Curriculum for Excellence, the programme provides young people with the opportunity to learn vital skills for learning and life, achieve The Prince's Trust PDE Qualification and explore topics across five modules:

- Personal and social development
- Life skills
- Community project
- Enterprise project
- Preparation for work through enhanced industry taster days

Young people can access the programme through schools or further education providers, run in partnership with delivery partners. In addition, it will be delivered through Prince's Centres in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee as a NEET prevention tool. By providing one-to-one support, life skills, raising motivating and confidence, it will support young people to make positive steps for their future.

## Prince's Trust Qualification

One of the biggest benefits of the programme is the new Prince's Trust qualification in Personal Development and Employability (PDE).



The Prince's Trust is a recognised SQA awarding body in Scotland. The qualification is delivered at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5; it is recognised on the Scottish Government's 'Insight' benchmarking tool.

It provides learners with the opportunity to:

- Develop their literacy, language and numeracy skills
- Develop their STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and maths) skills
- Build essential skills for employment and working life
- Prepare for progression into further training, apprenticeships or other work-based learning

# Success Stories

## Chloe

Glasgow



**Chloe was part of the Winter Leaver programme at Rosshall Academy. Disengaged with her school subjects, she didn't know what she wanted to do as a future career.**

Chloe was part of the Winter Leaver programme at Rosshall Academy. Disengaged with her school subjects, she didn't know what she wanted to do as a future career.

She joined the Future Starts course, an enrichment opportunity of the Achieve programme's Preparation for Work module, which offers young people practical experience through specific industry taster sessions.

She completed various industry tasters in retail, childcare and beauty. However, it wasn't until she joined the hospitality course with Premier Inn that she soon discovered her passion.

During the course, Chloe had the opportunity to get the industry insights into how a hotel is managed by taking part in a wide range of practical and engaging sessions across the departments - housekeeping, restaurant and reception.

On the course Chloe's motivation, confidence and communication skills increased and Premier Inn were so impressed with her that she was offered a full-time job.

*"Without The Prince's Trust, I would have no idea about courses and opportunities available to me and I wouldn't have found them otherwise."*

## Tommy

Dundee



**Before Tommy's 16th birthday, he had fallen in with the wrong crowd. He was taking drugs, had been charged with various offences and was excluded from school.**

He was referred to the Fairbridge under 16s programme, which works with the hardest to reach young people who are not in formal education. A youth engagement course, it offers group sessions and one-to-one support to build young people's confidence and motivation needed to move forward with their lives.

During the programme Tommy worked on a range of skills which improved his confidence and his ability to deal with stress and manage his feelings. Tommy has now stopped his offending behaviour and is working towards his National qualifications. He is still being supported by The Trust and other local organisations to help improve his employability.

*"As a young offender I was struggling to take any opportunities that came my way. Without the help of The Prince's Trust, I don't know where I would be. They helped me think more positively about my future."*





# Raising attainment for all



**Every young person should have the chance to succeed, and at The Prince's Trust Scotland, we work with the voluntary, public, and private sectors to ensure that young people like Chloe and Tommy have the opportunity to achieve the future they deserve.**

We have been in existence for 40 years and we know that formal education is not always the most suitable option for all young people. This is particularly true for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and who lack support at home.

This is where youth work can play a vital role in saving young lives. Tommy, like so many of the young people we meet every day, saw his life spiralling out for control. Alarmingly he thought he would be dead or in prison if it wasn't for the help from our Fairbridge programme. After getting confidence and motivation, he is working hard to build a future he wants and deserves.

But it's the journey of how young people like Tommy get to that stage that's crucial for long-term success. We need to create a nation of young people who are resilient, confident, and have the self-worth and self-believe to achieve their goals. And if they don't believe in themselves, we must.

Every young person deserves a second chance. We have seen young people like Chloe and Tommy transform their lives. However, there is a danger of the gap widening between young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. They are twice as likely not to gain a Higher qualification and

more than half do not believe they can achieve 5 National Fives.

Educational underachievement is a critical issue across Scotland. That is why we have launched Achieve, a programme, which helps young people to re-engage and succeed in education. It offers life skills, enterprise and community and volunteer projects, and personal and social development activities. Young people can also gain our accredited qualification to help them progress further in training or work.

By working in partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities, and other voluntary and private partners, we believe Achieve offers a new opportunity to support closing the attainment gap for all young people.

**Craig Wilson,**  
**Senior Head of Programmes -**  
**Education, Training and Development,**  
**The Prince's Trust Scotland**

# The Prince's Trust Scotland

Every young person should have the chance to succeed. We help young people in Scotland get into education, jobs and start businesses.

## Why we are here

Too many young people are not achieving their full potential. With the right support we can help those who face the biggest barriers gain success in education, work or business.

## What we do

Our core programmes support every step in young person's journey from school through training and into work or self-employment.

**Get Started** - short courses run by professional tutors in sport, music and creative arts for 16 to 25-year-olds.

**Development Awards** - cash awards for 14 to 25-year-olds to help make getting back into work, education or training even easier.

**Team** is a 12-week personal development course for 16 to 25-year-olds, offering work experience,

qualifications, practical skills, community projects and a residential week.

**xGet into** - a short vocational course that develops young people's skills in a specific sector for 16 to 25-year-olds.

**Enterprise programme** - helps unemployed young people aged 18 to 30 with support and funding to work out if their business ideas are viable and whether self-employment is right for them.

**Fairbridge programme** - works with young people aged 16-25, giving them the motivation, self-confidence and skills they need to change their lives.

**Achieve** - From August 2016 The Prince's Trust will begin delivery of a flexible programme that brings together the best of our existing xl and Fairbridge under 16 programmes.

## Find out more

The Prince's Trust Scotland is a youth charity that exists to help disadvantaged young people get the confidence and skills they need to get into work, training or business.

Many of the young people we help are in, or leaving care, facing mental health issues or homelessness, or have been in trouble with the law.

If you are interested in running an Achieve programme in your school or in a centre, please contact Craig Wilson, Senior Head of Education, Prince's Trust Scotland

[craig.wilson@princes-trust.org.uk](mailto:craig.wilson@princes-trust.org.uk)

Visit The Prince's Trust Learning Hub for teaching resources, session plans and activity ideas: [princes-trust.org.uk/learninghub](http://princes-trust.org.uk/learninghub)







# The youth work trend

**Colin Mair, Chief Executive, Improvement Service, tells us that Scotland faces challenging times. The economy is growing more slowly than the rest of the UK, welfare reform is affecting some of our most vulnerable citizens and further austerity is biting into our public services. He says it would be possible to get gloomy about it all but, as he explains, there is much to be positive about.**

One of the pleasures of participating in the Youth Work Expo was just how upbeat, confident and focused everybody was, despite the pressure on youth work as a so called “non-statutory” service.

This is partly because the focus of policy and service reform is moving in youth work’s direction: a focus on getting it right for those marginalised and failed by mainstream services; a focus on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities for the most vulnerable; a focus on young people as empowered participants and co-producers, not passive recipients of pre-packaged services. Both the Community Empowerment Scotland Act and the new Education Act express and, importantly, require the changes noted above. Without much of a leap of imagination, they could be seen as providing the statutory basis for youth work.

If we are going to improve outcomes for young people in Scotland, and reduce inequalities between them, we cannot carry on doing the same old things. As Einstein noted, endlessly repeating a failed strategy on the assumption it will eventually succeed is madness, but this means we have to be willing to ask hard questions: about choice and compulsion in education and learning; about young people’s agency and adult control; about the balance of teaching and self-directed learning; about fitting people to the economy we have or developing people who will create the new economy and thrive on change. These are not easy questions, and answering them honestly will challenge established interests.

For example, young people who struggle with a standard school, classroom, teacher-led model in the first place are unlikely to be greatly empowered by more of the same. They do not just need better equipped classrooms and more teachers, they need treated differently, as co-creators of their own learning.

Youth work has a great track record of engaging and advancing such kids. Should youth work be seen as integral to all of our schools, rather than an out of school alternative? Should youth work’s pedagogy and collaborative leadership practice be a focal point in teacher training?

When people start to ask a lot of questions in articles like this, it generally means they haven’t a scooby about the answers. That is true here, but maybe we need to explore creating contexts where committed people from across disciplines can explore these questions, answer them and improve young people’s lives. A further reason people were upbeat at the Expo was they were meeting friends and colleagues from across Scotland with the same practice, passion and commitment. That’s good but maybe we need to break it up a bit and have classroom teachers, police officers, child health specialists together with us to explore our mutual commitment to improving life for children and young people. Maybe, even, we need to go into their contexts and do the same.

Getting it right for young people has always been an obvious ethical ambition. It is also now a deeply pragmatic one. Given an ageing society and a diminishing workforce, we cannot afford to lose any of our young people’s creativity and talent. We need to support them to feel valued and confident: to shape the future, not simply fit in with it. There is no more important agenda.



# What do employers want?

## Foundations of employability

How much of a priority is thinking about what employers want for a young person dealing with homelessness, or someone who can't even face opening the door to speak to an employability adviser? This is the reality for some of our young people referred for an Activity Agreement.

Some of the most disengaged young people in Scotland are re-engaging, are addressing multiple barriers to participation and are building the foundations of employability through the Activity Agreement (AA) model. 70% of those who leave make a successful direct onwards transition to further learning, training or employment.

The key principles of this approach, which is focused on individualised learning and consistent one-to-one support, allow young people to develop the building blocks of employability and the opportunity to gain accreditation and undertake meaningful experiences of the world of work.

The role of the youth work sector has been crucial to the development of AAs. Many youth work practitioners from local authorities and the third

sector undertake the role of 'trusted professional' for Activity Agreements, providing one-to-one support to young people. This role has been identified as one of the key elements to young people sustaining their participation and progressing to a positive destination, as well as supporting young people to develop the core personal and social skills necessary for employability through a youth work approach.

In West Lothian, CLD Youth Service's HYPE (Helping Young People Engage) project is re-engaging young people with learning through Activity Agreements. For those involved, the key principles of the Activity Agreement approach ensures the development of core skills such as literacy and numeracy is embedded into their experience.

W: [www.youthlinkscotland.org](http://www.youthlinkscotland.org)  
E: [dawn.roden@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.roden@westlothian.gov.uk)

The West Lothian approach is securing and sustaining the engagement of some of the hardest to reach young people in the area – building the foundations of what employers want whilst helping young people discover what it is they want for themselves.



Photo: Kirkcaldy YMCA

## Skills development

The changing pace of our modern economy presents many challenges to employers, notably in the development of skills for jobs today, that had not even been envisaged 10 years ago.

Scotland is well placed to take advantage of some of new industries such as life sciences, technology and gaming. But to do so, we need to ensure that our young people have the right combination of skills and attributes to compete on the international stage. The

same is true for our more traditional industries and service sectors. The respected business organisation, CBI Scotland, recently published a report, 'Delivering Excellence: A New Approach for Schools in Scotland', which talked plainly about the need to develop young people who are determined, optimistic and emotionally intelligent. The report highlights the following attributes, desirable for both work and life in general.

- Grit, resilience, tenacity
- Self-control
- Curiosity
- Enthusiasm and zest
- Gratitude

- Confidence and ambition
- Creativity
- Humility
- Respect and good manners
- Sensitivity to global concerns

The youth work sector in Scotland has a key role to play in supporting the development and exploration of these attributes right across Scotland.

We need to unlock the talent, creativity and confidence of our young people to ensure they and their children will prosper in our modern, digital age.



W: [www.reconomy.org](http://www.reconomy.org)  
Tw: [@REconomyProject](https://twitter.com/REconomyProject)





## Flexibility

**David Cameron, The Real David Cameron Ltd, is an independent education consultant. He was closely involved in the development of the Curriculum for Excellence and more recently reviewed arrangements for the funding of schools on behalf of Scottish Government.**

I don't want to run the risk of repeating what most of us already know so let me try to be brief and that, as anyone who has heard me will know, is likely to be a bit of a challenge.

Wherever we look the message is the same. Employers are no longer looking for compliance nor for employees who will just do a job. Arguably, there is no such thing as "just the job" any more. Changing technologies, aspirations, demands and structural changes in economies mean that jobs will change and we need workers who can adapt to that. The pressures that businesses and services are under also mean that we need employees who are flexible and can make a far wider contribution than would traditionally have been sought. This creates demand for a broad skills base, for problem-solving, creativity and a willingness to engage and contribute.

All of these points can be reinforced through reports from the OECD and consultants like McKinsey or, if you prefer, from a host of YouTube videos and a seemingly endless succession of TED talks.

The big question for me is what this means for youth work?

The answer, from my standpoint is very straightforward. The demands of employment endorse the core values of youth work. These have always sought to build confidence in young people and to enrich their experience. The best youth work empowers young people, supports them to devise activities, manage facilities and shape provision. It encourages young people to be active in meaningful ways in their communities; it battles against alienation, dependence and disadvantage. It helps young people to be more than they might be. It offers the possibility of them being contributors in work and in their communities. One can only hope that employers recognise its value.

**W: [therealdavidcameron.net](http://therealdavidcameron.net)**

**E: [therealdavidcameron@gmail.com](mailto:therealdavidcameron@gmail.com)**

**Tw: [@realdcameron](https://twitter.com/realdcameron)**

## Resourcefulness

**The WildHearts Foundation has been working across education and youth employment for over six years. Mick Jackson, Founder of Wildhearts Micro-Tyco says that during this time it has become evident that the recruitment landscape is changing.**

Global companies such as Penguin Random House, Deloitte and Jaguar Land Rover are at the forefront of this change, opening up their employment opportunities to a wider, more diverse talent pool and in doing so have transformed their selection processes. For example, Penguin Random House

will no longer consider degree or A-level results when assessing potential employees. Why is this?

Whilst technical skills are on the rise, employers have noticed a gap in softer skills such as resilience, communication, team work and problem-solving. Not only are these skills essential for workplace success, they also produce over £88 billion in Gross Value Added for the UK economy.

However for many, particularly young people, these skills are a barrier to employment. WildHearts seeks to address this via our multi-award winning enterprise training programme, Micro-Tyco. As part of Micro-Tyco young people are provided with 'Inspiration, Knowledge and Networks' to help them learn and practice fundamental business concepts in a safe 'micro' environment.

Micro-Tyco inspires an entrepreneurial environment that unleashes participants hidden talents, whilst fostering creative thinking resourcefulness and team work.

Marion Allison, Head of Community Learning and Development (CLD) Standards Council, is a fantastic supporter of Micro-Tyco after running the programme with Universal Connections in Cambuslang.

"Micro-Tyco is game changing on so many levels. The financial growth of £1 into thousands is exponentially surpassed by the social, educational and employment benefits. Micro-Tyco raises aspirations and creates opportunities for businesses to revamp operations and for young people to revolutionise their lives. The young people in Cambuslang did it, so can you!"

Micro-Tyco is free for schools and youth groups. Simply contact [info@Micro-Tyco.com](mailto:info@Micro-Tyco.com) for more information.



**W: [wildheartsgroup.com/micro-tyco](http://wildheartsgroup.com/micro-tyco)**

**Tw: [@MicroTyco](https://twitter.com/MicroTyco) [@wildheartsteam](https://twitter.com/wildheartsteam)**

Sky UK believe that every young person has potential, they just need the right opportunities to unlock it.

**Nishy Lall**, Sky Academy Manager, explains.



# Digital skills

Sky Academy is made up of five free initiatives.

- Sky Sports Living for Sport – is a schools-based initiative using skills used for sports and sports stars to build confidence and life skills.
- Sky Academy Scholarships - offers mentoring and financial support for emerging talent in sports, arts and TV.
- Sky Academy Careers Lab - full day careers experience for 16-19 year olds to build employability skills.
- Sky Academy Starting Out - work experience, apprenticeships and graduate opportunities at Sky.
- Sky Academy Skills Studios - a half-day interactive experience giving eight to 18-year-olds the chance to come behind the scenes at Sky and make their own TV report, linked to topics they are studying at school.

Through our initiatives we've set ourselves the target to reach out to 1 million young people by 2020.

We're committed to investing throughout the UK and, in March 2015, we launched Sky Academy Skills Studios in Livingston, investing in young people across Scotland to give them an opportunity to come to Sky and participate in this interactive learning experience which is linked to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. Teachers have the choice of 20 different topics for students to create a news report using state of the art technology. Since launching 10,000 young people have benefited from attending Skills Studios. Also, this year in Scotland we will be holding Careers Lab days for 16 to 19 years olds to help further develop skills by giving them the chance to take part in practical workplace challenges at Sky and learn about jobs in media, business and technology.

Young people who take part in Sky Academy tell us it is unique and inspiring. Their experience has both boosted their skills and has improved their understanding of their importance.

Young people also gain confidence to apply these skills, developing them over time, helping to unlock their potential. As well as capturing the stories of their experiences, we're measuring the effects of our initiatives immediately following and then up to six months after young people take part. And we're proud of the positive impacts we're seeing. As an example, more than 80% of those coming to Sky Academy Skills Studios report they have improved at least one of the six chosen skills (planning, communication, resilience, teamwork, creativity and confidence); 90% are more confident in these skills up to six months after their Sky Academy Careers Lab experience; and 90% of teachers report improvements in the teamwork of students who have taken part in Sky Sports Living for Sport.

It's really inspiring to learn about all the youth work being done across Scotland, where many of these key skills are being used to make a positive impact to communities and society. We look forward to continuing the work with the youth work sector to enable more opportunities for young people across Scotland.





We want to work with 1 million young people by 2020. Here's how to get involved.

Sky Sports Living for Sport



Volunteer with your team for a day

Sky Sports Living for Sport Live is a fantastic way to volunteer for Sky Academy in your own community. Join teams of primary school children as they take part in sports, skills and challenge sessions led by world-class Sky Sports Living for Sport Athlete Mentors.

Sky Academy Skills Studios



Volunteer for a morning or an afternoon in the studios

Step behind the scenes yourself to help young people develop skills and support them as they write, shoot and edit their own news report in our purpose built studios in Osterley or Livingston.

Sky Academy Careers Lab



Volunteer for a day in the Sky Academy Careers Lab

Join us at a full-day Sky Academy Careers Lab session in Osterley to support and inspire young people throughout the day as they take part in a series of workplace challenges. And keep an eye out for pop up sessions in Livingston and Dublin.

Sky Academy Starting Out



Offer a work experience placement to a young person

If you think your department would be a great place for a young person to spend time getting work experience, let us know.

Sky Academy Scholarships



Cheer on our Scholars

Track the progress of our Sports scholars at [skysports.com/scholarships](http://skysports.com/scholarships) and [@SkyScholarships](https://twitter.com/SkyScholarships) on twitter. You can also follow all the latest news on our arts scholars at [@SkyAcademy](https://twitter.com/SkyAcademy).

To get involved email [skyacademy@sky.uk](mailto:skyacademy@sky.uk)



# Value of youth work volunteers

## Kerry Reilly, National Secretary, YMCA Scotland

Volunteers make an essential and unique contribution to the landscape of youth work across Scotland. In the YMCA alone, volunteers contribute over 56,000 hours per year to our children and youth work programmes, and that contribution is echoed many times over across the voluntary youth work sector.

Sometimes, when budgets are tight, people mistakenly think that the answer is just to cut staff and replace them with volunteers. However, that approach devalues the role and contribution that volunteers make, which is distinct from, and complementary to, that of paid youth work staff. Volunteering in youth work is philanthropic, it is the giving of an

individual's time and talents for free, because they want to spend time making a difference to young people.

One of our YMCA signature programmes is our Plusone Mentoring. Across the programme YMCA provides 1:1 mentoring for 360 young people, who are at risk of offending, every week.

Some of the young people referred to our Plusone programme have a range of risk factors, chaotic home lives or are looked after and accommodated young people. For some of those young people who are very vulnerable and have poor family and community connections, the key individuals within their lives are all paid professionals: carers, social workers, teachers and

youth workers. What we have found in Plusone Mentoring is that a fully trained and supported volunteer, someone who willingly gives of their time and commitment to a young person, changes that dynamic and gives the young person a sense of self-worth. The volunteer mentor does not devalue the important role that paid professionals play within the young person's life, but complements it by bringing a different dynamic, based on mutual voluntary engagement by both the young person and the mentor.

**YMCA**  
SCOTLAND





# Building workforce capacity

As a key part of the education sector in Scotland, professional training for youth workers is fundamental to achieving great outcomes, as **Marion Allison**, Head of the CLD Standards Council, explains.

High-tops. Baseball boots. Trainers. For young people in Scotland, trainers are important. These are the essential, must-have items, at a stage in life when image, youth culture and personal identity is high on the agenda. How much do they cost, what colour to buy, what brand to wear, and most importantly, what will their friends think? These are just some of the decisions that young people are faced with when buying new trainers. However, despite all of these dilemmas, there is one central deciding factor; are they fit for purpose?

In this respect training shoes are no different to the trainers that we recognise as youth workers. For young people in Scotland, youth workers are also important. Young people can decide what type of youth work they want to engage with and when; outdoor activities, youth clubs, arts, careers and sports - the opportunities are endless. They can also decide with their youth workers what it is that they want to learn and how they are going to do so. Just like training shoes, youth workers accompany young people to where they want to go and simultaneously protect and enable along the way. Like training shoes,

it is essential that youth workers are also fit for purpose.

Political, economic, social, environmental and technological changes in society hit young people hard and fast, and it is youth workers who are often deployed to help manage and alleviate the impact.

#### Young people with nothing to do?

Youth workers can support them to establish a club.

#### Young people concerned about the environment?

Youth workers can challenge them to act.

#### Young people struggling with school?

Youth workers can support them to learn in a different setting.

In a wide range of contexts and circumstances, youth workers apply their professional skills and experience to respond, support and challenge, often at a time when young people are most vulnerable. Just as it is unthinkable to have a lawyer in a courtroom or a teacher in a classroom who isn't experienced or qualified, surely then, it is reasonable to expect youth workers to be professionally trained and supported in a similar manner.

The Community Learning & Development (CLD) Standards Council for Scotland is the professional body that supports youth workers with career learning in order to ensure that young people are served by high quality practitioners. Charged with improving the quality and standard of professional learning, the CLD Standards Council for Scotland maintains professional youth work standards wherever youth workers practice. Employees within charities, volunteers within local authorities, students in social enterprises; the range of organisations demanding youth work practitioners in all shapes and sizes with wide and varied terms and conditions is growing and evolving at an astonishing rate. However, the values, ethics, and youth work approach remains constant and the CLD Standards Council supports youth workers wherever they may be. Just as trainers of all kinds are important to young people, so they remain a wardrobe staple for every youth worker across the country.



# Building the volunteer workforce of the future



**Demi, 16, attends Aberlour Youthpoint in Moray where she is now a peer mentor, helping other young people. Youthpoint is an example of an early intervention service, which takes action as problems are emerging, to prevent long term poor outcomes for children and young people. Here she tells her story.**

I first started having suicidal thoughts when I was eight. That's also when I first came to know Aberlour Youthpoint, the service was helping my brother, but I had no intention of coming myself.

I made myself seem really happy on the outside. Too happy for how I was really feeling. No-one saw because everyone was so focused on my brother. My mum had a lot on her plate because she had him to deal with. He had mental health problems but hadn't been diagnosed at that point. He was also drinking and taking cannabis. I thought she had enough on her plate.

By the time I was 12, I had a new baby sister and mum wasn't coping very well. I felt like I was an autopilot. My mental health didn't matter. All I kept thinking was 'I'm not trying hard enough' or 'mum doesn't love me enough, because I'm not doing all that I should'. So I kept my feelings a secret until I was 12. That's when I came here and everyone saw what I was really like.

My brother was being helped by Anne, a young people's worker at Youthpoint. She got to know our family and could tell that I needed help. Then my sister and I were referred too.

At Youthpoint I started to open up and feel better, but then my stepdad just left. My mum slipped into depression. Some days she couldn't get out of bed. This sounds creepy, but I used to go into her room and watch her breathing, just to make sure she was OK.

I had to look after my two year old sister and my other sister. I felt like I had to make sure my brother didn't go off on a tangent, and I was also making sure the house was OK, by doing the cooking and cleaning. Even with all that, I still managed to get top grades at school. The school didn't see I was struggling and neither did mum, she was so blinded by her own pain.

She did manage to haul herself out of that and she went to a parenting

group at the service and things started to calm down. Then I tried to commit suicide because it all got too much. I don't recommend it. The hospital makes you drink charcoal and it makes you really sick. It was horrible.

I was coming to Youthpoint but still hadn't opened up. I felt I needed to protect my family. I still didn't realise at that point that this was a place you could come and tell them anything. They would only want to help me.

After that, I told them everything.

The support here has helped my whole family. Before you could walk in and feel the hostility, but now it's calmer. My mum has learned to stand up for herself. My little sister is going into primary two now, and thankfully she was too young and innocent to remember the bad times.

I started going on training courses to become a mentor myself because I want to help others. I want to be someone that is so positive, because I was so negative in my life before. Hopefully I'll go to college to get an HNC in social care and one day I can be a youth worker too and help others, the way I've been helped.







# The social and economic value of youth work in Scotland

A study by Hall Aitken published in January 2016 put the value of youth work at around £656 million, with a return of £7 for every £1 of public cash spent. The report, commissioned by YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work, also contains a You Gov poll which found that 450,000 adults in Scotland said youth work has been very important in achieving their life goals.

HALL  
AITKEN

Parkhead Youth Project Glasgow

Report author Jeremy Wyatt told us of the significance of this research to the youth work sector in Scotland:

*“The last decade has seen a reduction in youth work funding across the UK. In good part it would seem this is because there’s limited recognition of just how much difference it makes. Which is strange when, for example, employers regularly highlight the value of the sort of soft skills youth work develops. And our survey suggested one in ten adults believe youth work made a major difference to their lives. I hope we can build on this research to get the recognition for youth work it really deserves.”*

This area of research is complex, and the team at Hall Aitken identified a number of challenges in conducting this study. Particularly the limited youth work research based in Scotland, as well as the diversity of approaches to youth work creating differing levels of impact at different costs.

Although this is an initial assessment, it does provide us with a starting point for debate, discussion and dialogue – and helps the youth work sector to better understand its value – a key ambition of the National Youth Work Strategy.

## What did the study do?

The study includes findings from three research components; desk research, qualitative survey and original quantitative research.

## What did the study find?

The initial assessment of the social and economic value of youth work estimates that youth work in Scotland delivers at least £7 in value for every £1 it costs.

In a survey of over 1000 adults, a significant minority (13%) identified youth workers as very important in achieving their life goals. This is a fairly significant proportion of the population given the relatively small amount of time spent with these people (by comparison to friends, family or teachers, for example).

The confidence and motivation that youth work develops is rated by 85% of employers as ‘very important’ compared with 27% rating qualifications this way.

## Conclusions and Reflections

The research concludes that there is good evidence that youth work does deliver considerable value, and that a return of £7 of value for every £1 of cash spend seems a reasonable minimum, however the impact could be much greater.

Commenting on the findings of the new study, YouthLink Scotland CEO Jim Sweeney said:

*“This new research reinforces what we as a sector have been seeing for years, that youth work has a significant effect on people’s lives for the better. We believe that universal youth work, available to all, provides the greatest opportunity in terms of preventative spending, as it can reduce the need for higher-cost targeted interventions later on in a young adult’s life. Youth work does change lives but it is crucial that we broaden the understanding and support for what this sector delivers for our young people.”*

# Creating an evidence base



The National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19 aims to 'Recognise the Value of Youth Work'. The key actions around this ambition include exploring the potential for commissioning research to demonstrate the role and value of youth work.

YouthLink Scotland, working with a range of partners, has set up the 'Scottish Youth Work Research Steering Group', which includes representatives from the youth work sector, academic institutions, Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland, Education Scotland, and the CLD Standards Council. Chair of the group, **Dona Milne** (Deputy Director for Public Health, NHS Lothian) tells us why hard evidence will ensure a sustainable youth work sector for the future.

We heard about some of the fantastic youth work taking place in Scotland at the first Youth Work Expo. We heard some personal testimonies from both young people and youth workers about the very real differences that youth work has made to the lives of young people. For many, this has been profound and way beyond the impact of any formal education they have participated in. Yet, we continue to be questioned by policy makers, politicians and funders about the impact of youth work and what it really can achieve.

We have managed to convince many that the impact is potentially significant at an individual and community level and we now have evidence from our review of the literature that youth work can impact on health and wellbeing, educational attainment and employment. But we know it can contribute to so much more than that. However, we didn't find the evidence to support that in the review.

Without a strong evidence base, investment will reduce and this will

have a direct impact on provision. With ever decreasing resources, the money will follow the evidence and despite our best intentions and however many personal stories we share, it will not enable us to protect youth work.

That all sounds a bit gloomy, but it doesn't have to be. We have a vibrant youth work sector in Scotland and a strong history of collaboration. Let's put that to good use to create an evidence base for youth work. Following the initial literature review, we have formed a steering group to help create a research programme for youth work in Scotland. We have identified some opportunities for longitudinal research over the next 5-10 years that could help demonstrate the impact of youth work. We plan to use routine, well established, young people's surveys alongside a more qualitative component that captures the very essence of what youth work is, does and the outcomes it can achieve.

Whilst our priority is to create a longitudinal research component for

youth work, we also want to gather together research and evaluation of youth work in Scotland into a central place. The sector can make use of this to generate interest in conducting research locally and to offer support to those interested in doing this to ensure that the research is as robust as possible. We can also ensure that any future research commissioned is answering the important questions for youth work in Scotland.

Finally, I would like to send a huge thank you to those of you who have pledged some financial support to creating this research programme. When I asked at the Expo for contributions, I really wasn't sure what kind of response I would get, but many of you pledged support and we now have pledges of almost £25k. This money will be used to employ a researcher to undertake a feasibility study into the longitudinal research and will (hopefully) help us to secure further funding for our research programme for the next 3-5 years.





# Contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence



**According to Professor Brian Boyd, Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Strathclyde, youth work should be seen as an equal partner, and funding for the sector should be an integral part of the education budget.**

Closing the gap in educational attainment is at the very top of the Scottish Government's wider agenda to create a fairer and more just society. It is, perhaps, understandable that the focus tends to be on the statutory sectors; after all, schooling is compulsory and 'attainment' usually refers to success in tests or exams. So, where does youth work fit in?

Huge numbers of young people choose to come together in youth work settings, every week, in every part of Scotland. They do so voluntarily, sometimes gaining nationally recognised qualifications, sometimes simply contributing to their local communities. But what they gain personally and what they contribute to the wellbeing of their communities is not always acknowledged.

It's worth remembering that our aim in Scotland is to ensure that all young people become successful learners, effective contributors, responsible citizens and confident individuals. What has never been admitted is that schools, as currently set up, cannot do this by themselves. Put simply, schools

need youth work to offer many young people opportunities to succeed.

The reasons for this are both historical and complex. As a young teacher in a junior secondary school in 1970, my first encounter with youth work was helping with the school's youth club, two evenings a week. The young people had been 'selected' at the age of 11 or 12 and were deemed incapable of benefiting from an academic education. Within weeks of having started my teaching career, it was clear to me that, in many cases, an injustice had been done. Selection was then, and is now, a blunt instrument. And when these young people attended the youth club, they blossomed; they were mature, promoting charitable causes and interacting with staff. Later in my career, I worked in two schools in Renfrewshire which had Youth Wings, managed by a Depute Head (Community) who was a member of the school senior management team. Philosophically, it was a visionary approach. Lack of funding, however, was its nemesis.

However, despite setbacks, youth work has survived and has gone from strength to strength. The challenge now is how to build it in to the national goal of creating a fairer, more just society. What can youth work offer? While many schools, to their great credit, continue to try to educate the whole child and develop so called "soft skills", these things can be seen as a luxury when high-stakes exams dominate.

It is imperative that we look for a Scottish solution to closing the gap, and one that looks at the young person as a whole. Youth work should be seen as an equal partner, and funding for youth work should be an integral part of the education budget. The local authority should have an enabling role, ensuring equity and fairness, and holding professionals accountable. This bringing together of the statutory and the voluntary as equals would be underpinned by a philosophy, namely to educate the whole child and to promote collegiality and equality.

Youth work's contribution would be to promote those community-based activities that complement the work of the schools in helping all children and young people to achieve their potential. If we are to recognise wider achievement and not just narrow, test-based attainment, the experience which youth work has of empowering young people and giving them a voice will be vital.



# Case Study - Louis's journey

**Louis Pashley** shares the story of his educational journey, not a conventional tale by any means but one that demonstrates the power of youth work in learning.

Life growing up was good, my family and I did a lot together and we are a strong family unit. I have always had an interest in sport from an early age as my dad is a very sporty person. We especially love football.

I went to a village primary school which was okay. Then I went into the Academy. Initially, I made new friends easily and the first year was really fun and exciting because everything was new. Although if I'm being honest, the friends I chose probably weren't the best for me – troublemakers! This made it very hard for me to concentrate and stay on track. When I entered second year, things started to deteriorate because I was getting picked on by other boys - I don't know why this happened. It started off with name calling and then progressed into physical abuse with pushing and even stabbing me with pencils.

The bullying or fear of it became so bad that it stopped me from socialising because I was scared to go out. I felt so unsafe all the time, thinking I might see the boys and they would threaten me. This happened on a day-to-day basis for a number of months.

My mum had a friend who was able to introduce me to a youth worker to be a point of contact at the school if I needed to speak to anyone. I did speak to her a couple of times which helped by removing me from the situation for that hour. My parents went up to the school a number of times to speak about the bullying but sadly it persisted. Eventually they made the difficult choice to remove me from school and educate me at home. This made me very anxious as I was worried about my future. I knew I needed qualifications to allow me to study at college to become a personal trainer. So without school I thought I wouldn't be able to achieve my dream.

Through the youth team I worked with two local youth workers and was able to complete the Youth Achievement, Duke of Edinburgh and Volunteering awards which helped me massively with my confidence. I really enjoyed doing the volunteering award because I was able to coach football to P1-P3 pupils. Although this helped with my confidence, I realised it wouldn't enable me to get into college.

What really turned my life around was when I had the opportunity to work with the Youth Literacies Worker who helped me achieve Intermediate 1 in Communications, Numeracy, IT and Exploring Wellbeing. We would meet twice a week and work on numeracy and communications and Tracy would give me lots of work to do at home.

Last year I successfully completed level 5 sports and fitness and this year I am working on level 6. I have joined a semi-professional football team and am doing volunteering work coaching football at the college with level 5 students. My future goals are to continue learning, I would like to go onto HNC and HND courses and start my own personal training business.

Being part of the youth work project gave me the support I needed at a really difficult time. Most importantly it helped me feel more confident about myself. I know I can achieve anything if I put the hard work in. The youth work project has really changed my life and I'm very grateful.





# Ensure Scotland is the best place to grow up

Vice Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament, **Katie Burke MSYP**, gives us her thoughts on the kind of society young people need in order to flourish.

Ensuring that Scotland is the best place for children and young people to grow up is fundamentally about ensuring that their rights are protected and upheld.

As the Vice Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is always central in my mind as I campaign for the views of young people. SYP recently released our 2016-2021 youth manifesto, *Lead the Way*, and in it 76% of young people said that 'The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' (UNCRC) should be fully incorporated into Scots Law, and the rights of children and young people should be protected and promoted.

Young people want fairness, and we want our rights to be protected and upheld by our nation and our communities. Youth work is central in

this mission, and central to ensuring that young people are at the heart of the decisions that affect them. The YouthLink Scotland Youth Work Expo was a great showcase of the work being done all over the country to empower and engage young people, particularly those who are most vulnerable. It challenged decision makers and stakeholders alike to rethink the way we see young people and youth work as a profession, and to take a closer look at the impact their work has on wider society.

However, this achievement is not to be met with complacency; there still exists major challenges for young people

to grow and thrive in Scotland today. Child and youth poverty is at a record level, those suffering from mental health conditions continue to face great stigma, and whilst 16 and 17-year-olds are allowed to vote in Scottish elections, they're still being denied at a UK level. Ensuring that our country gives everyone a fair chance has to be at the heart of everything we do.





# Measuring our impact

**At the beginning of 2016, YouthLink Scotland launched the Youth Work Outcome Model. The development of youth work outcomes emerged from an initial discussion at a meeting of Local Authority Youth Work Managers (LAYWM) and National Voluntary Youth Work Organisations Scotland (NVYOS) in June 2014, about the need for 'shared outcomes for young people through youth work'.**

The development of the Outcome Model was sector-led, building on the Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work and influenced by publications from leading think tanks and European institutions. An initial draft of an Outcome Model was created following a workshop that included representatives from across the YouthLink Scotland membership. This document was then widely circulated for comment and revisions.

## About the Outcome Model

The Outcome Model has at its foundation the need for high quality youth work practice. This is illustrated by the inclusion of the nature and purpose of youth work, CLD competences, ethics and values, and national occupational standards. It is with these building blocks that the conditions exist for the seven youth work outcomes to be achieved.

They are a suite of outcomes that can be achieved in a range of youth work contexts and practices. They are not interdependent nor found in every context, but neither are they mutually exclusive. The youth work method recognises that outcomes for individual young people come as a result of a negotiated process between the young

person and youth workers as partners in a learning process, and therefore the seven outcomes can be supplemented with learner-identified outcomes.

There was a sense of feeling from the sector that the outcomes for young people through youth work should contribute to national policy and frameworks. It is for this reason that the model shows an upward flow from the outcomes into these policies, and not the other way round. It should be recognised that this model and this set of outcomes co-exist along with other outcomes such as those within Curriculum for Excellence and other indicators within Getting it Right for Every Child.

A significant factor within the model is that the outcomes are fully encompassed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The value of rights and youth work's role in protecting and promoting the rights of all children and young people is made evident with the wrap round of the UNCRC to the outcomes model. It's through the inclusion of this international declaration that the model and our youth work practice ensures the right to non-discrimination (article

2); the right for adults to act in the best interests of the young person (article 3); the right to life, survival and development (article 6); and, the right to participation (article 12).

## The Future for Youth Work Outcomes

YouthLink Scotland will publish a supporting document to the Youth Work Outcome Model later in 2016. This will include a suite of Youth Work Outcome Indicators. The indicators have been developed by our members and have undergone a period of sector consultation. It is anticipated that, together, the Outcome Model and Indicators will help youth work organisations to plan and evaluate services, as well as to support individual young people to realise their potential through youth work. This will build evidence of the impact of youth work and demonstrate further that youth work changes lives.





# #youthworkchangeslives

**National Outcomes**  
 Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens  
 Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed  
 We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society  
 We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk  
 We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others

**National Youth Work Strategy**  
 (Our ambitions for young people in Scotland)  
 Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in  
 Put young people at the heart of policy

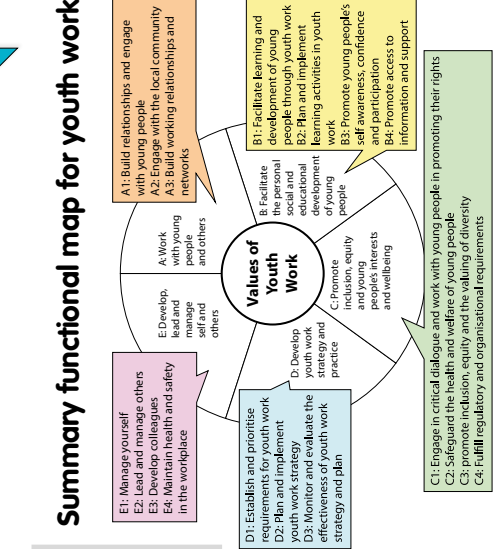
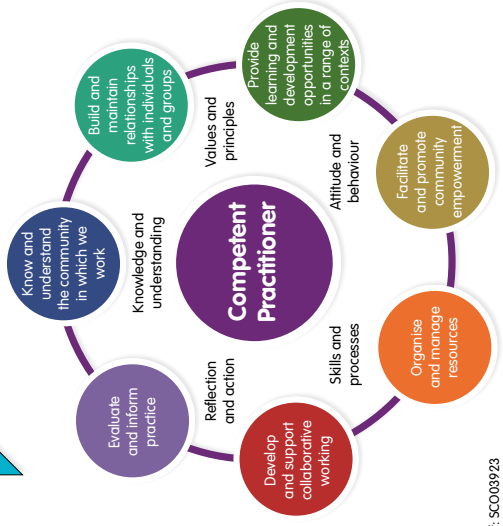
**Curriculum for Excellence Capacities**  
 Successful Learners  
 Confident Individuals  
 Effective Contributors  
 Responsible Citizens

**National Practice Model - Wellbeing Indicators**  
 Safe  
 Healthy  
 Achieving  
 Nurtured  
 Active  
 Respected  
 Responsible  
 Included

**Youth Work Outcomes**  
 Young people are confident, resilient and optimistic for the future  
 Young people manage personal, social and formal relationships  
 Young people create, describe and apply their learning and skills  
 Young people participate safely and effectively in groups  
 Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control  
 Young people express their voice and demonstrate social commitment  
 Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

**Nature & Purpose**  
 Young people choose to participate  
 The work must build from where young people are  
 Youth Work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in a learning process

**CLD Competences & Youth Work Standards**



**Values & Ethics**  
 Self-determination  
 Inclusion, equality and diversity  
 Empowerment  
 Working collaboratively  
 Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity



# Measuring our impact

## Youth Work Outcome Model

**Director of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scotland, Barry Fisher and Bill Miller, Youth Work Manager for Stirling Council were both instrumental in the creation of the new youth work outcome model. This is their shared vision for the sector.**

The development of the Youth Work Outcomes by both the Local Authorities and National Voluntary Youth Work Organisations Scotland represents a shared common focus on supporting the development of learning opportunities for the young people we seek to serve.

This has been a shared agenda from the outset and the commonality of purpose and focus has been a feature of the discussions. By themselves these outcomes are meaningless without the creativity, determination, commitment and passion of the thousands of youth work leaders across Scotland who work directly with our young people every day, every night and every weekend throughout the year.

The outcomes are a starting point to describe the importance of the opportunity youth work can bring to young people but also to describe the contribution that youth work can make to a range of policy areas and to our communities. The next stage will be to illustrate how these outcomes for young people are being met up and down the country and across a whole range of different organisations and settings.

Scotland has a proud history of a diverse range of youth work opportunities and organisations. We are looking forward to hearing from our youth work leaders about how

their work in the universal or targeted provision, in uniformed and voluntary organisations, within themed work around arts, sport and citizenship, describes their contribution to these outcomes.

These outcomes present a tremendous opportunity to give youth work a greater profile to a wider audience, to ensure that more young people have opportunities to take part and engage in purposeful activity within their communities. The opportunity to demonstrate how a youth work 'approach' does bring real value to engagement in education, skills and personal development should ensure that young people can have their learning delivered in a broad context.

In that way these outcomes will be able to explain how youth work really does change young people's lives.







# #iwill

## Supporting young people to make a difference

[iwill.org.uk](http://iwill.org.uk)

Do you already support young people to make a difference to their communities? Would you like to do more to encourage and empower young people to volunteer, campaign and fundraise?

We invite you to join us, along with over 500 organisations across society that have made a pledge to be part of the #iwill campaign. This UK wide campaign, initiated by HRH The Prince of Wales, aims to encourage and empower more young people to make a difference.

Young people in Scotland are leading the way and are already making a significant impact. Last year 45% of young people in Scotland engaged in social action, higher than the UK average and higher than the 27% of adults who volunteer.

**"No one should be a bystander. If I can make even one person feel more comfortable then I have helped make a better society."**

Jordan Abernathy  
Scottish #iwill ambassador

Making a pledge to the #iwill campaign is a way to showcase your organisation's contribution to a better society:

- Offer high quality volunteering opportunities to young people
- Commit staff volunteering time to support activities e.g. youth groups
- Offer training to the Scottish #iwill ambassadors
- Commit to promote the campaign through your media channels and networks
- Support research into young people's involvement
- Offer venues, tech support, catering for #iwill campaign events

E: Liz Green - [iwill@youthlinkscotland.org](mailto:iwill@youthlinkscotland.org)  
T: 0131 313 2488



# National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019

## Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people

*"All young people, in every part of Scotland, should have access to high quality and effective youth work practice."*

To achieve this we will:

- Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in
- Put young people at the heart of policy
- Recognise the value of youth work
- Build workforce capacity
- Ensure we measure our impact

[www.youthlinkscotland.org](http://www.youthlinkscotland.org)

[#youthworkchangeslives](https://twitter.com/youthworkchangeslives)

