



EIJB Funding Cuts in Edinburgh

Statement from YouthLink Scotland

YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work, is deeply concerned by the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board's (EIJB) decision to cut funding to third-sector organisations supporting young people and vulnerable groups.

While we acknowledge the financial strain on all councils, young people must remain a priority. Youth work services have been crucial to helping young people recover and thrive, especially after the coronavirus pandemic, which has had a well-documented impact on their mental health, education, and prospects. These services are essential, not expendable, as they offer support that reduces the need for more intensive and costly interventions later.

These services are invaluable in preventing issues before they escalate, addressing young people's needs early on, and helping them build resilience. Removing this support risks shifting these young people into more complex, high-cost support needs in the future—making this the opposite of a cost-saving move, despite how it may appear on paper.

At a time when young people's needs are so great, cutting these essential supports only leaves them more vulnerable. Local councils and national governments must honour their responsibility to young people, recognising that their futures depend on the safe spaces, essential support, and opportunities youth work services provide.

The organisations impacted by these cuts have delivered life-changing support for thousands of young people in Edinburgh. Many rely on core grants to operate and secure additional funding. Losing these grants threatens these critical services and leaves young people without the necessary key services.

YouthLink Scotland calls on the EIJB to reconsider this decision. It urges councils nationwide to collaborate with third-sector partners to find sustainable solutions that protect these vital services. Investing in youth work is not just about immediate support but a strategic choice for a healthier, more resilient future for young people and communities.