



**INVEST IN YOUNG PEOPLE
INVEST IN YOUTH WORK**

What you can do to support
our young people



The Why

Ongoing cuts to youth work provision have contributed to the youth mental health crisis, poor attainment, lack of employment prospects, social isolation, youth violence and anti-social behaviour, bullying and risk-taking behaviours.

The cuts to youth work budgets have resulted in increased pressure on other services such as social care, mental health services, social work, the NHS, the police and the criminal justice system.

Our young people are facing a triple threat to their future life chances. Increasingly issues of poverty and inequality, and limited employment prospects are having a significant impact on young people in the long-term, all affecting their mental health and wellbeing.



UNISON asked respondents from the youth work sector how they felt cuts in youth services and other relevant services were having an impact on young people:

- 80% said they thought young people feel less empowered
- 71% said it was now harder for young people to stay in formal education
- 65% said young people were finding it harder to get jobs
- 77% reported increased mental health issues among young people, and 70% rise in alcohol and substance abuse
- 83% reported increased crime and anti-social behaviour

Young people need a commitment to the continuation and enhancement of vital youth work services that support them. This is especially important after many difficult years during the coronavirus pandemic. **They deserve better.**

We are calling on politicians of ALL parties to work alongside the sector to restore youth work budgets and strengthen the legal basis for providing youth work services.

What our young people need

Resilient, Resourceful and Reimagined, is a manifesto to secure crucial support for Scotland's 80,000 youth workers and the 350,000 young people they work with. The sector asks politicians, local and national, to commit to three key policy asks:

A right for all young people to access youth work opportunities

- Strengthen the CLD regulations to prevent cuts to youth work provision and ensure further investment.
- Ensure all young people have the right to access youth work opportunities, including universal, targeted and outdoor learning provision.
- Take a maximal approach to incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law, ensuring more young people have access to youth work opportunities

Investment in youth work services at national and local level

- Commit to increasing investment in the youth work sector at local authority level.
- Ensure youth work services and organisations have access to school facilities to strengthen the positive impact of Youth Work in Schools.
- Find a long-term sustainable solution to the lack of access to indoor spaces and facilities for youth work.

Formal recognition of the positive impact of youth work across public policy areas

- Ensure there is formal recognition of the positive impact of youth work within the strategies and policies of your party, locally and nationally.
- Children and young people should be at the heart of policy. Encourage a participative approach to service design and budget spend at national and local level.
- Commit to a preventative approach to policy and service design for young people, with youth work as an integral delivery partner.

What you can do to support our young people

NATIONAL POLITICIANS

Whether in parliament or in your constituency, we ask you to help us bring about change:

- ❑ Commit to increasing investment in the youth work sector and support our young people's right to access youth work.
- ❑ Ask the Scottish Government to demonstrate how they will fulfil their manifesto commitment to strengthen the CLD regulations to prevent cuts to youth work provision and ensure further investment.
- ❑ Ensure youth work services and organisations have a right of access to the school estate, as part of our education system and find a long-term sustainable solution to the lack of access to community indoor spaces and facilities for young people.
- ❑ Make sure there is formal recognition of the positive impact of youth work within the policies of your party, and involve young people on the issues that affect them.
- ❑ Challenge the Scottish Government to collect and publish data on youth work budgets at local authority level separate to or as an appendix to Community Learning and Development budgets, to ensure transparency of youth work spend.
- ❑ Include youth work representatives in committee evidence sessions on all issues that relate to young people and make sure youth work is prominent within the business of the Scottish Parliament.
- ❑ Work with us and be the catalyst for change for ALL our young people, get involved in our movement [#InvestInYouthWork](#)




COUNCILLORS

Councillors are helping deliver essential services, making difficult decisions and acting often as the first point of contact with children, young people and families who need help and support.

In this administration, we ask you to work with us to improve the lives of children and young people:

- ❑ Commit to increasing investment in the youth work sector at local authority level.
- ❑ Work to make sure youth work services and organisations have a right of access to the school estate, as part of our education system and find a long-term sustainable solution to the lack of access to community indoor spaces and facilities for young people.
- ❑ Ensure there is formal recognition of the positive impact of youth work within the strategies and policies of your council.
- ❑ Ensure youth work budgets at local authority level are published separate to or as an appendix to community learning and development budgets, to ensure transparency of youth work spend.
- ❑ Children and young people should be at the heart of policy. Encourage a participative approach to service design and budget spend.
- ❑ Work with us and be the catalyst for change for ALL our young people, get involved in our movement [#InvestInYouthWork](#)



You are essential
to the community
to which you belong.

Your voice has power.

GRASSROOTS

We ask you to use that voice to put pressure on your politicians to ensure that every child and young person has access to youth work services. Community-based youth work, whether provided by charities or local authorities should be for all, including targeted services that support those most in need.

Help us to make the change:

- ❑ Speak to your local politicians to find out what are they doing to support youth work services in your area.
- ❑ Talk to your children and young people about what they would like to see in their community. Encourage them to find out more about the services, youth work projects and information available to them.
- ❑ Support children and young people to get involved in local youth forums and youth work projects.
- ❑ Engage with local youth work organisations and voluntary agencies that support young people, perhaps you have skills they would find valuable.
- ❑ We know that youth work in schools makes a big difference to mental and emotional wellbeing and attainment, is your school working in partnership with youth work, ask them.
- ❑ Child poverty, the mental health crisis, poor attainment and youth violence are harming the life chances of our young people. We ask you to challenge your local and national politicians to act and make sure youth centres and youth work services are available in your area.
- ❑ Work with us and be the catalyst for change for ALL our young people, get involved in our movement [#InvestInYouthWork](#)



#InvestInYouthWork

www.youthlinkscotland.org



YouthLink Scotland, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5EZ
T: 0131 313 2488 | E: info@youthlinkscotland.org | W: www.youthlinkscotland.org

YouthLink Scotland is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in Scotland No: 16457. Charity Ref: SC003923