



**YouthLink
Scotland**



Manifesto Statement from Scotland's Youth Work Sector

#YouthWorkManifesto

Introduction

Youth work in Scotland plays a crucial role in shaping the lives of young people, offering them opportunities for personal and social development, and empowering those involved to become active and responsible citizens.

The positive social and economic impacts of youth work are undeniable. However, the sector faces ongoing challenges, including persistent underfunding.

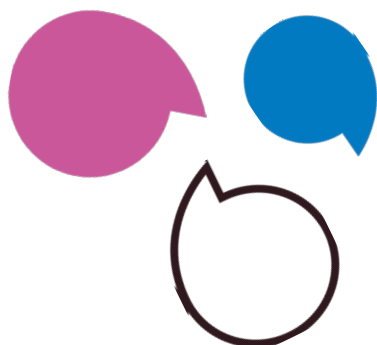
This manifesto statement reaffirms our commitment to addressing these issues and outlines our vision for a robust, well-supported youth work sector.

Key Asks

1. A Legal Right to Youth Work for all Young People

2. The Publication of a New National Youth Work Strategy

3. Protected Investment for Youth Work



1. A Legal Right to Youth Work

Every young person in Scotland should have the right to access youth work opportunities, regardless of their background or status. To achieve this, we call for:

- **Legal Right to Youth Work:** Enshrine the right to youth work in law, guaranteeing that all young people can benefit from youth work services.
- **Updated Statutory Regulations and Guidance:** Revise CLD statutory regulations and guidance to reflect the importance of youth work and outline the responsibilities of local authorities and other stakeholders in delivering youth work services.

2. The Publication of a New National Youth Work Strategy

A comprehensive National Youth Work Strategy is essential for guiding the development and delivery of youth work across Scotland. This strategy should:

- **Ensure a Fully Funded Youth Work Sector:** The success and continuation of the youth work sector requires secure investment.
- **Align with National and Local Priorities:** Ensure consistency between national objectives and local delivery, supporting a unified approach to youth work.
- **Growth Strategy for Workforce Development:** Include a clear plan for growing the youth work sector, including volunteers, with clear career pathways and specific targets for workforce expansion and diversity.
- **Commit to Equalities:** to ensure that the principles of equality and inclusion are at the heart of this strategy so all young people can access youth work.
- **Youth Voice and Participation:** Prioritise the involvement of young people in decision-making processes, ensuring that their voices shape the future of youth work.

3. Protected Investment for Youth Work

Resource in youth work services at both national and local levels is crucial for ensuring that all young people can access quality youth work opportunities. We call for:

Protected Budgets: Ensure that funding for youth work is protected, providing stability and sustainability for services.

Investment in Workforce

Development: Commit to ongoing investment in the development of the youth work workforce, both paid and volunteer, and promoting diversity within the sector.

UNCRC Incorporation: Recognition of youth work's primary role in the delivery of incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Supporting Colleagues Across the UK

We stand in solidarity with colleagues in other nations of the UK, recognising that the challenges facing young people and the youth work sector are shared across borders. Collective action and mutual support are vital for overcoming these challenges.

This manifesto statement reaffirms our dedication to advance the interests of Scotland's youth work sector. The outlined key asks and supporting proposals provide a clear and actionable blueprint for the future. By committing to a legal right to youth work, a new National Youth Work Strategy and protected investment, we can ensure that all young people in Scotland will benefit from high-quality youth work services. This statement sets out a clear path for our immediate and ongoing advocacy and policy efforts. Leading up to the Scottish Parliament Elections in 2026, we call on all politicians to join us in making this vision a reality.

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