



Archie – age 13

YMCA TAYSIDE

Building Self Belief

I started coming to the Y a year ago because one of the committee members told my mum about it. It's a chill place to come after school. After I'd been coming to the centre for a while, one of the youth workers asked me if I'd like to volunteer as Secretary on the Committee. He talked about how the role on the Committee would suit me and helped me understand what to expect. I felt like: he knows me really well and he's seen what I can do. I could see he believed in me, and it gave me confidence to say yes.

In my role as a volunteer I've learned skills that are helping me in school. I was quite a disorganised person before – now I plan things much more carefully in advance. And my experience of decision-making as a volunteer is helping me in other ways: like making decisions about Nat 4 and 5 subjects next year. I've been bullied a lot at school and that's been really hard at times. Having my volunteering here has changed how I feel about that, and how I feel about myself – I look forward to coming to the Y at the end of the school day. It's been hard for me to come out of my shell, but my belief in myself has grown.

I've seen how bad experiences in life can mould people in a negative way. All young people should have the opportunity to have opportunities like these that help them work out what they are good at – if they did, it would solve a lot of problems