

Youth Work and Young People's Mental Health

Save the date: Monday 2nd to Sunday 8th November 2026!

This Youth Work Week, help us show how youth work supports young people's mental health and wellbeing across Scotland. Share what happens in your project, what young people value and the difference your work makes. One story, photo or social post is enough to get involved.

The week begins with [YouthLink Scotland's National Youth Work Conference](#) on Monday 2 November. Throughout the week, we will continue the conversation by shining a light on youth work in communities across Scotland. You can take part whether or not you attend the conference.

Why this theme matters

Young people face pressures including anxiety, trauma, loneliness, poverty, digital pressures and family stress. Youth workers are often trusted adults who listen, build relationships and provide support before needs escalate. Youth work offers places to belong, opportunities to connect and help to access further support when it is needed.

This week is an opportunity to show that contribution, share learning and make the case for youth work to be recognised and included in national and local mental health planning.

Get involved in three simple steps

1

Choose one thing to share: a photo, a young person's quote, an impact statistic, a short story or a partnership example. You can use something you already have.

2

Tell us how it supports mental health and wellbeing. Focus on one clear example and the difference it makes for young people.

3

Post on social media between 2–8 November. Use **#YWW26** and **#YouthWorkChangesLives**, and tag us **@YouthLinkScot** so we can find and share your contribution.

Find us on:      

Messages to share

Use these messages in your posts, blogs, newsletters and conversations with partners. Add an example from your own work to bring them to life.

- **Trusted relationships matter.** Youth workers offer consistent, non-judgmental support and time to listen.
- **Safe spaces support wellbeing.** Youth work helps young people feel welcome, build friendships and develop a sense of belonging.
- **Early support matters.** Youth workers help young people talk about worries, build confidence and find support before difficulties escalate.
- **Partnerships strengthen support.** Youth work, health, education and community services can work together to make support easier to access.
- **Youth work belongs in mental health planning.** Its contribution to prevention and early intervention needs recognition, sustainable funding and a place in national and local plans.

Let young people shape the conversation:

Ask what helps them feel connected and supported, or what makes your project a welcoming place. They could create a poster, poem, short video or group display. Taking part can stay within the group; public sharing is optional.

Share your practice and partnerships:

Describe an approach that works well, a piece of learning or a partnership with health, education or community services. Explain how it helps young people and what would strengthen it.

Invite decision makers to see your work:

Invite a local councilor, MSP, funder or service partner to a session. Give young people the choice to share what matters to them. Ask for a practical next step, such as including youth work in local mental health planning or supporting a partnership.

Tell your story locally:

Send a short positive story to your local newspaper or radio station. Explain what your project does, include an agreed quote and describe the difference it makes. You could also share it through a partner newsletter or community noticeboard.

Contribute to the National Impact Hub:

Share a case study, report, statistic or quote to help build the national picture of youth work's impact. Send your contributions to media@youthlink.scot.

Social posts you can use

Copy and adapt these posts. Replace the text in square brackets with your own details and add a photo or graphic if you have one. The short versions can be used on X; the others work well on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Launch post

It's #YWW26! We're sharing how youth work supports young people's mental health and wellbeing. At [project], [one example of your support]. @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

Trusted relationships

Having someone who listens can make a difference. At [project], our youth workers [describe how you build trust and offer support]. This #YWW26, we're celebrating the relationships that help young people feel heard and supported. @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

Safe spaces

A place to feel welcome. People to connect with. At [project], [activity or space] helps young people [outcome, such as build friendships or feel a sense of belonging]. #YWW26 @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

Partnerships

Working with [partner], we [describe what you do together]. For young people, this means [practical benefit]. This #YWW26, we're showing how partnerships can make support easier to access. @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

Impact

What difference does youth work make? [Insert one verified outcome or statistic, including the period and group it covers]. Behind this is [briefly describe the support you provide]. #YWW26 @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

A call for change

Youth work supports young people's mental health through trusted relationships, safe spaces and early support. It needs a place in national and local mental health planning, backed by sustainable funding. #YWW26 @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

Conference reflection

One thing we're taking from today's National Youth Work Conference is [learning]. We'll put it into practice by [action]. #YWW26 @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives

Short post

This #YWW26, we're celebrating the trusted relationships and safe spaces that support young people's mental health and wellbeing. @YouthLinkScot #YouthWorkChangesLives