

UK YOUTH

Youth Work as a Solution

The Government says that it wants to support young people.

To do this, it **must invest in youth work.**

Young people face increasing challenges to their mental health, safety and future prospects. Yet since 2010, local authority spending on youth services has fallen by 73% in England, forcing half of youth centres to close and the loss of a third of the workforce.

Youth work is not a luxury – it's essential.

Evidence shows:

It helps empower young people to thrive and contribute at every stage of their lives.



Every £1 invested in youth work has a societal ROI between £3.20 and £6.40



Teens who participate in youth work become happier, healthier, and wealthier adults than their peers who did not have access to youth work

Every £1 cut from youth services, nearly £3 is lost in education and crime-related costs



(Untapped Report, UK Youth and Frontier Economics, 2022)

(Youth Provision and Life Outcomes, UK Youth, SQW and DCMS, 2024)

(Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2024)

About UK Youth

UK Youth is a leading charity working to ensure that all young people are equipped to thrive and empowered to contribute at every stage of their lives. Through a network of over 9,000 youth work organisations we reach more than four million young people across the UK. We focus on:

- 🔧 **Designing and testing new programmes** in response to young people's urgent needs;
- 🔧 **Collaborating across sectors** to better join up support for young people – helping evidence meet action; and
- 🔧 **Driving research** and thought leadership to strengthen the impact of youth work.

We're also working the Government on the National Youth Strategy, both directly and through the Back Youth Alliance (BYA).



'UK Youth is more than just a youth organisation... it helps us to have our say on the problems we face.' - Young Person, aged 19

We're here to support you

You can help us achieve these goals by championing services and advocating for young people. We're here support you by:

- ✔ Organising visits to youth organisations in your constituency
- ✔ Facilitating engagement with young people to inform policy development
- ✔ Providing up-to-date research and insights on youth work and the sector
- ✔ Offering expert advice on policy and service delivery

Together, we can help ensure all young people are able to access the life-changing opportunities that youth work provides.

We're calling on government to

- ✔ Commit to **sustainable, long-term investment** in youth services and workforce development
- ✔ Deliver a **cross-government National Youth Strategy** with clear metrics, outcomes and accountability;
- ✔ **Embed youth work's preventative role into key government policies**, like the Youth Guarantee and the Young Futures programme;
- ✔ **Recognise youth workers as professionals** essential for implementing effective policies for young people;
- ✔ **Involve young people** in designing new policy initiatives that affect them;
- ✔ **Support and invest in Outdoor Learning**, for its proven and often lifechanging benefits to improved physical and mental wellbeing

For more information, please visit ukyouth.org or get in touch at policy@ukyouth.org