



IMPACT REPORT

2020-2021



INTRODUCTION



**CHARLINE
KING**

London Youth
Trustee and Head
of Children and
Young People's
Services, Rathbone



What a year it has been. Yet, in spite of the challenges Covid-19 brought to youth organisations and young people, we have seen exceptional growth and impact within London Youth and the wider youth sector. Through the ongoing support to bolster grassroots youth and community organisations, many have been able to weather the storm, emerging stronger and more unified.

As a member of London Youth, we were supported with essential training that made us resilient enough to get through a particularly tough year. Tapping into their vast array of training - from developing robust risk assessments to mental health first aid for young people - strengthened our ability to offer safe and essential youth provisions.

At our club, I have been fortunate to experience first-hand the visible impact of London Youth's programmes. Throughout the year, we've seen three former self-harming young women develop coping strategies and build positive relationships through the Good for Girls programme, and more than 15 inactive, socially isolated young people with disabilities engage in weekly sports through the Getting Active programme.

Not only am I proud to be a member of London Youth, but also a trustee. It brings me great joy to be a part of the exceptional work that London Youth do on a daily basis and knowing the huge impact it has on the lives of young Londoners. Bringing youth sector stakeholders together through networks, encouraging and enabling collaboration, and developing partnerships only adds to the valuable role they play.



**AMINA
MESHNUNI**

London Youth
Young Advisor
and Youth Board
member



As young people in London, especially in the past year, we have had a lot of I-can't-explain thoughts and I-am-fine-but-not-really days that we find difficult to talk about. - things simply feel out of our control.

When I first joined London Youth, I was within my comfort zone. Since then, I have learnt to listen and understand the 'adult' issues young people must face - poverty, housing, safety, wellbeing, mental health, gender equality, education opportunities, climate change, and a pandemic.

To me, London Youth is a safe space where you can openly discuss issues that concern you, attend different sessions and make use of the enriching opportunities that have opened so many doors for me. London Youth has also given me a platform to take action on what I believe.

Without the support and care of the Youth Action team at London Youth and youth workers from Shpresa, I wouldn't have my little bubble of safety, where the rush of the world cannot get to me. However, I am aware that a lot of young people don't have an Allia, a Shaz and a Sophie in their lives. Someone to give you a call 'just to check how you're feeling' and tell you that 'you should be proud of yourself'.

The past year has taught us more than ever, how crucial a support system is, and for many young people that is a youth club or caring youth worker. I am very thankful to all youth workers who have dedicated their time, experience and opened their hearts to us, so young Londoners can feel a little safer, a little happier and a lot more inspired.



ROSEMARY
WATT-WYNESS

CEO

Reflecting on the year 2020-21, the word that leaps to mind is 'challenging'. For young people, the pandemic has created soaring levels of isolation, mental distress and increased inactivity. And those from poorer backgrounds - particularly families of colour - have been hard hit by higher levels of illness and bereavement in their communities.

The response from our membership has been amazing. Youth workers have strived to keep contact going, adapting and finding creative approaches, such as online sports sessions, and sometimes going doorstep to doorstep just to speak with lonely young people.

I have also been amazed by what our team has done to support them. We quickly moved as much activity as possible online and trained and supported more youth workers than ever before. People needed somewhere to turn to and the chance to connect with others facing similar challenges. This is what London Youth is there for and the demand for our role has never been more apparent.

In a normal operating year, 20,000 young people attend our centres, but due to the pandemic our centres were unable to open for most of the year. We believe passionately in the profound impact that outdoor learning and adventure can have for young people, so being closed was a big loss; it was a joyful moment when we gradually started operating again.

Our journey to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation has also been an important one. Young people were pivotal in leading the movement that followed the murder of George Floyd. Young Londoners are the most culturally diverse group in the country, and we know how strongly structural inequalities impact their lives. So it's crucial that our programmes continue to help them to overcome these barriers and we support their voice in demanding change.

We are using data in our monitoring, evaluation and learning practice to improve the way we work and to be accountable to you - our members and supporters. We're proud to present the ways we deliver opportunities, drive impact and demand change for the youth sector and for young people in this report.

I would like to thank profoundly our chair, Stephen Moss, our Trustee Board, our youth board, and our staff team for their incredible contribution.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

From 2020-2021 we worked with over

600

member youth organisations who've supported more than

575,000

young Londoners.

We've been supporting members for

135 YEARS

Each week, over

83,000

young people attended activities run by our members.

17,500

young people from

294 MEMBERS

take part in our programmes and outdoor centres activities.

149

training sessions were delivered to over

1,000

youth professionals.

Our two thriving outdoor education centres provided over

9,000

young people with the opportunity to experience the outdoors.

16

programmes were run across areas such as employability, mental health, social action, and sports.

Our programme participants



47%

identify as girls and young women



1%

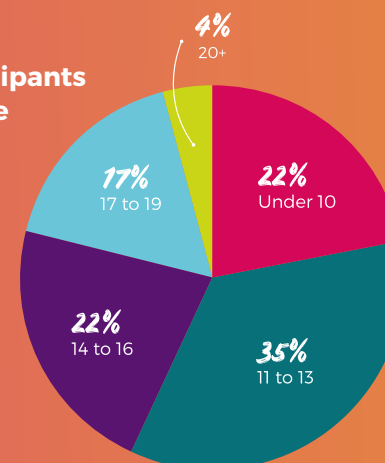
identify as trans, intersex or other



52%

identify as boys and young men

Participants by age



11%

of young people on our programmes have a mental and/or physical disability.

73%

of young people on our programmes are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities

402

youth sector organisations attended at least one of our network sessions.

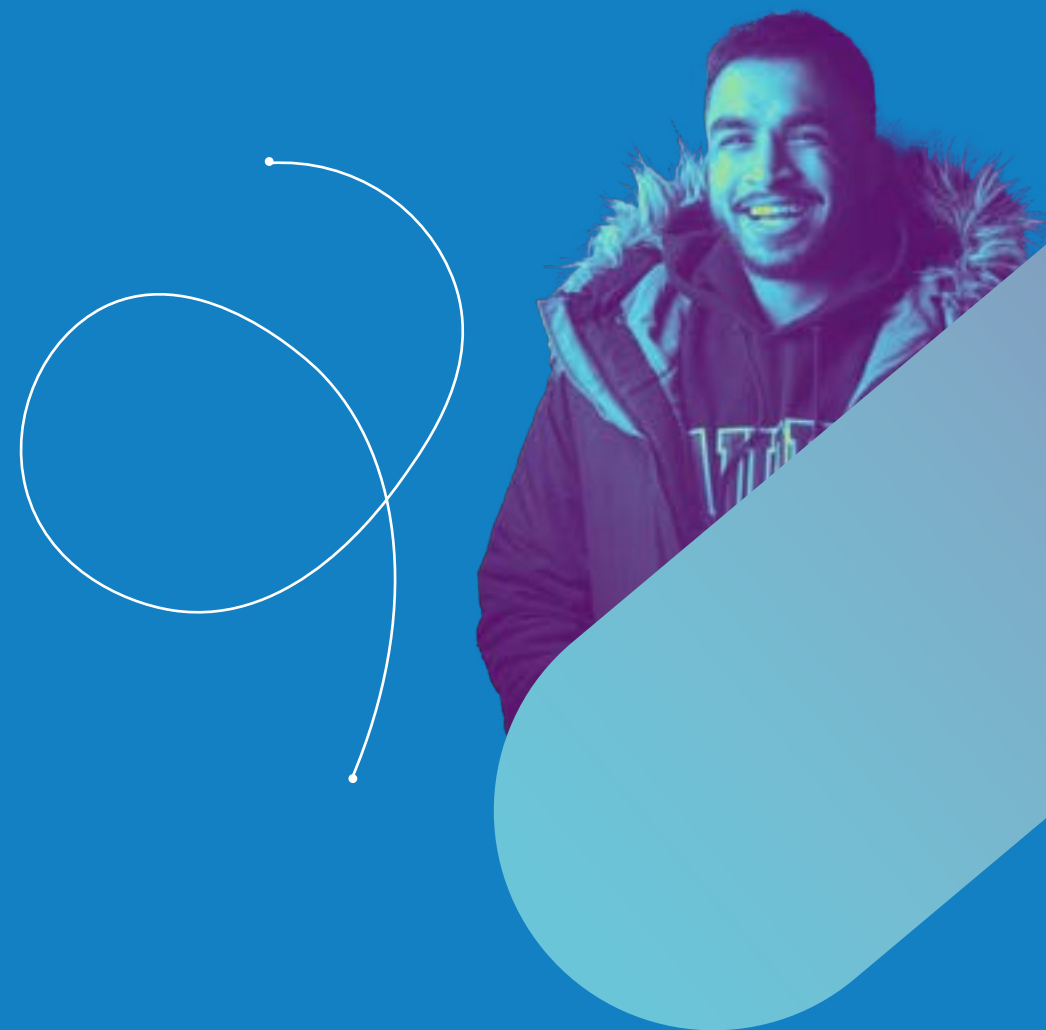
TOGETHER, WE'VE MADE LONDON BRIGHTER FOR MORE THAN 575,000 YOUNG PEOPLE

WORKING ACROSS THE WHOLE OF LONDON

Our community and youth organisation members are active in every single London borough. We bring them together to share knowledge and experience, to voice their perspective on London's youth sector, and to discover new ways of working - providing high quality youth work.

SMALL ORGANISATIONS WITH A BIG IMPACT

We work with many of the capital's smallest, grassroots organisations - half of our members' income is less than £250,000. They provide critical support to young Londoners, right where they live. In the midst of a tough year, our members have helped young people to reconnect with each other and their community, and feel proud and passionate about their part of London.



BUILDING RESILIENCE

We support members to provide young people with opportunities they may not otherwise have. We've helped them to increase what they offer, diversify it and improve its quality. But this year, we also did everything we could for them to keep the lights on.

FACING THE PANDEMIC

We were able to be flexible and adaptive during the pandemic. We enabled members to connect in different ways and provided a range of support throughout our diverse offer, which made them able to listen to the needs of the young people they serve and respond.



OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

With youth organisations facing huge financial challenges, we spoke out about the vital support needed in our sector, and highlighted the importance of young people's access to strong and inspiring community youth organisations

DELIVERING OPPORTUNITIES

We work with our members to give young people inspiring opportunities through employability, sport, arts, and youth social action programmes and visits to our outdoor centres.

During 2020-21, we ran **16** programmes with **256** members, in which **8,434** young people took part, and our outdoor centres were visited by **9,197** young people.

SPORT

We want every young Londoner to have opportunities to get active in their community.

We've been supporting the youth sector to work flexibly with young people to improve their physical and mental health. This allowed young people to get active and discover new opportunities both virtually and in-person, participating on their own terms in a fun way.

OUTDOOR CENTRES

Many young Londoners have limited opportunities to leave the city for a day trip, or overnight stay. Getting into the countryside can have a profoundly positive effect on their personal and social development. At our two outdoor learning centres young people learn and have fun, developing lifelong skills and confidence.

After reopening their doors following lockdown, our centres hosted day visits and residential for schools and youth groups, as well as delivering off site sessions. Since then, we've supported **11,090** young people visit days at the centres.

90%

of young people felt their connections to others and their community had improved.

YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION

We are passionate about young people taking action on issues that are important to them, shaping decision making across London. Our social action programmes help youth workers guide young people to have the skills to make a difference in their communities.

In 2020-21, **755** young people took part in these programmes and events, with projects including a social media campaign on anti-racism, mood boxes with wellbeing resources, and work with local conservation rangers. We also provided one-to-one support and seed funding to embed our members' youth involvement approach.



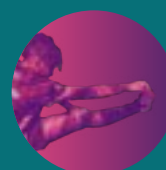
"I loved every part of this project ... the time I spent here I was able to stay carefree and relax ... I was able to concentrate on my skills and learn how to make them better." – **Billie, young person**

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE FUN

OUR PROGRAMMES ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TRY SOMETHING NEW AND HAVE FUN...

...SO THEY ALWAYS FEEL ABLE TO TAKE PART AND ENJOY THEIR TIME WITH FRIENDS.

DELIVERING OPPORTUNITIES



"The coaches made it adaptable for me to take part. Normally people just give up or don't know what to do, but they talked to me... Asked me what worked for me... I did not have to hide." – **Sophie, young person**



91%

of young people said they enjoyed taking part in our programmes, felt a sense of achievement and received the right support from our member organisations.



"I've never really had an opportunity to help my community that much on a local scale since Covid began and I thought this was a good opportunity to start up." – **Mo, young person**



"[I've worked] as part of a team, deepening bonds and gaining new skills all whilst helping the community." – **Billie, young person**



BRINGING YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

WE WANT OUR WORK, AND THE YOUTH ORGANISATIONS WE SUPPORT, TO INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTION IN THEIR LOCAL AREA...

...SO THEY FEEL PART OF THEIR COMMUNITY AND CAN TACKLE THE ISSUES THEY CARE ABOUT.

ARTS

Taking part in creative activities and spending time with friends are crucial to help young people re-engage with trusted adults and refocus following disrupted education and heightened anxiety.

Our arts programme gave young people a safe outlet to explore and express themselves and develop a lifelong passion for the arts. We worked with our partners in the creative and cultural sector, and supported member organisations to build their capacity to deliver high-quality, sustainable arts activities for young people.

KEEPING YOUNG LONDONERS CONNECTED

DURING THE PANDEMIC WE SUPPORTED YOUTH ORGANISATIONS TO ADAPT TO VIRTUAL DELIVERY OF THEIR SERVICES DURING LOCKDOWN...

...SO YOUNG PEOPLE STILL HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SOCIALISE, DEVELOP NEW SKILLS, MAKE FRIENDS AND SPEND TIME WITH PEOPLE THEIR OWN AGE.



DRIVING IMPACT

Youth organisations play a critical role in communities across London. We help our members to further their impressive work by building skills and resilience, and making sure their voices are heard. We've also supported our members through grants, the Employee Assistance Programme, leadership development programmes and direct support.

Through our work to support members to become more sustainable and resilient

71%

said that we had a positive impact on their compliance and governance.

From 2020 – 2021, our membership consisted of over **600** organisations, collectively employing over **10,500** staff. Throughout the year we ran **149** training sessions to over **1,000** youth professionals. We delivered 11 network sessions, and supported over **242** members on their Quality Mark journey.

“

“Over the pandemic, London Youth have been absolutely amazing...the tailored support over last year has been fantastic.” – **Amari, youth worker**

MAKING YOUTH ORGANISATIONS MORE SUSTAINABLE

WE HELPED YOUTH ORGANISATIONS TO KEEP THEIR DOORS OPEN...

...SO YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A SAFE LOCAL SPACE FOR THEM TO GO TO, WHERE THEY CAN LEARN AND GROW.

65%

of our members say we helped improve the quality of their services.



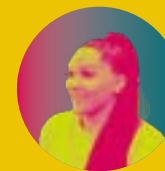
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“We attended training that as a small organisation, we wouldn't have been able to afford... It meant we could offer a wider programme of activities to the young people we support.” – **Jamie, youth worker**

CREATING OUTSTANDING YOUTH SERVICES

WE SUPPORT YOUTH WORKERS TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO THINK DIFFERENTLY AND CHALLENGE THEMSELVES...

...SO THEY CAN TRY OUT NEW EXPERIENCES, FEEL BRAVER ABOUT STEPPING OUTSIDE OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE, AND UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S IDEAS, PERSPECTIVES AND INSIGHTS.



“

“Through the Quality Mark we assessed internal policies, procedures and implementation; overall increasing the standard of the services we provide. We were able to access extra funding for our youth services so it's great!” – **Natasha, youth worker**



BUILDING A YOUTH SECTOR FOR THE FUTURE

WE WANT TO SEE THE YOUTH SECTOR CHALLENGE ITSELF, AND WE ENCOURAGE THEM TO REACH THEIR GOALS BY WORKING TOWARDS OUR QUALITY MARKS...

...SO ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS RUN SAFELY AND TO A HIGH STANDARD, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO SHARE IDEAS AND FEEDBACK ABOUT THEIR SERVICES.

DEMANDING CHANGE FOR YOUNG LONDONERS

For over 135 years, London Youth has brought together the voices of the capital's youth sector to speak as one. Through our networks and Policy Advisory Group, youth workers share their expertise on the issues affecting young people and youth organisations, to create positive change.

Our Youth Board and Coming of Age programme offer young people a way to develop their confidence, public speaking skills, and address the issues that matter to them, so they can become the campaigners of the future. We do this so that youth workers and young people can inform decision-making at both local and national level.



“We have made good links with other youth clubs as a result of our participation in London Youth programmes.” – **Ramzan, youth worker**



“Through the International Women's Day campaign, I was able to talk about life as a woman. Things like that helped me to get my voice heard and also inspire other young people.” – **Kalliyah, young person**

91%

of young people on our youth action programmes were inspired and enabled to make a positive contribution to their communities.

AMPLIFYING YOUNG VOICES

WE GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE PLATFORMS
WHERE THEY CAN SPEAK OUT...

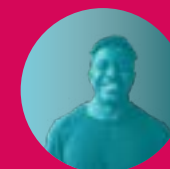
...SO THAT THEIR NEEDS AND
IDEAS ARE SHARED WITH DECISION
MAKERS IN LONDON AND THEY
CAN INSPIRE OTHER YOUNG
PEOPLE TO DO THE SAME.



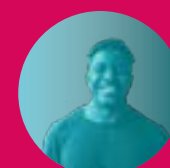
REPRESENTING LONDON'S YOUTH WORKERS

LONDON YOUTH UNITES THE
VOICES OF YOUTH WORKERS...

...SO THEY CAN SHARE THEIR
KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE INSIDE
AND OUTSIDE OF THE YOUTH SECTOR,
AND CHALLENGE DECISION MAKERS TO
MAKE CHANGES THAT SUPPORT THE
YOUTH SECTOR AND YOUNG PEOPLE.



“If our sector is to thrive once again, we must do all we can to unify and collaborate, share practice and back each other up!” – **Amir, youth worker**



“Being part of a local network of youth focussed organisations is extremely useful - especially in times such as these when our sector has been under extreme pressure and scrutiny.” – **Amir, youth worker**

70%

of our members scored us between 8 and 10 (out of 10) when asked how well we'd advocated for the youth sector in the last year.

TAKING ACTION FOR LONDON

WE MAKE SURE YOUNG
PEOPLE HAVE A SAY IN
LONDON YOUTH'S WORK...

...SO THEY CAN SHARE IDEAS
ABOUT WHAT'S OFFERED TO
OUR MEMBERS AND INFLUENCE
THE WORK WE DO.

OUR YOUTH BOARD

We've been consulting young people through our youth board since

2007

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental health and wellbeing is a priority that cuts across all of London Youth's work - whether that's equipping young people and youth workers with the tools to improve their mental health and resilience, or making sure they know how to get help when they need it. Throughout the pandemic, our programmes and our members' activities have been a lifeline for nearly 5,000 young people, and often the only contact they had with people of a similar age.

GIRL IT OUR GOOD FOR GIRLS PROGRAMME



Our wellbeing programme Good for Girls enabled **29** youth organisations to support, encourage and empower **600** girls and young women through sport, art and other wellbeing activities. We delivered a huge **547 HOURS** of training to youth workers, building their skills and knowledge in mental health and wellbeing. **100%** of the youth workers on the programme have a better understanding of the mental health support young people need and what they need to do to provide this.

OUR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING NETWORK

Through our network, youth workers formed strong relationships and shared valuable knowledge and experiences of issues affecting young people.



CREATING SAFE SPACES

WE HELP YOUTH ORGANISATIONS TO CREATE SAFE SPACES WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN OPEN UP...

...SO THEY KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR HELP AND DON'T FEEL AFRAID TO SHARE THEIR FEELINGS.



"The training enabled me to gain skills such as being able to facilitate and create a safe space for young people to feel they can open up about mental health."
- **Alexa, youth worker**



"What I most enjoyed is that I could speak freely without getting embarrassed or feeling unsafe."
- **Sian, young person**



After taking part in our programmes

90%

of young people said their mental health and wellbeing improved.

MAKING LONDON SAFER

We make sure youth workers and their organisations feel confident playing their part in preventing violence in our communities. We give them the opportunity to connect, develop skills and share their expertise and experience with others. Together with our partners, we've delivered specialist training, run an empowering Rise Up leadership programme, and connected organisations with decision makers through our Tackling Youth Violence network.

Rise Up

OUR RISE UP PROGRAMME

Rise Up was created for youth workers who've experienced the impact of violence. It provided 82 participants with training, coaching and mentorship - meaning they have the skills and confidence to handle conflict and spot the warning signs.

THE TACKLING YOUTH VIOLENCE NETWORK

Our network gives youth workers the opportunity to share their knowledge and expertise with government, funders and those making decisions that impact young people - so they can create positive change in the capital. They also said it keeps them up to date with current issues relating to young people, through peer-learning and discussion.

"Innovative programmes like Rise Up and London Youth's leading practitioner network, support and empower those tackling violence on the frontline, and reinforce the Mayor's belief that violence is preventable, not inevitable." - **Violence Reduction Unit**

OPENING UP THE CONVERSATION

AT LONDON YOUTH, WE ADVOCATE LISTENING...

...SO YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO SHARE THEIR CONCERNS, AMBITIONS AND IDEAS, AND TALK ABOUT THE CHANGES THEY WANT TO SEE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

"I have learnt how to have conversations, start conversations and listen more. Also, how to have sympathy, empathy, and compassion for our young people's situations."
- **Sofia, youth worker**



"I've changed how I think about conflict management. You think it's young people fighting. Actually, it's much more than that - it's about what leads to that." - **Trey, youth worker**



By the end of our Rise Up programme

90%

of the youth workers said they felt well-equipped to handle conflict.



77%

of youth workers at our Rise Up training said it had made them better listeners, with a greater sense of empathy, who'd built stronger relationships with young people.

"I am able to challenge the things I do not believe to be correct - I will try to influence change." - **Sam, youth worker**



GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

WE SUPPORT YOUTH WORKERS TO HANDLE CONFLICT...

... SO THEY CAN HELP YOUNG PEOPLE RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND UNDERSTAND THEY DON'T NEED TO LASH OUT.

MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

WE'RE GIVING YOUTH WORKERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THEIR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MAKING LONDON SAFER..

...SO THEY ARE ROLE MODELS FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE THEY WORK WITH AND CAN SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE WITH COLLEAGUES.

YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY

We know young people feel comfortable at youth organisations – that's why it's often where they turn for advice and guidance.

Our employability programmes support young people via their youth organisations, so they can find positive career paths, gain work experience and improve their employment prospects.

Young people often face multiple and complex employment barriers, such as long-term unemployment or racial discrimination. So, we make sure they have the skills and confidence to face what lies ahead, are encouraged to progress with their education, and feel inspired to achieve their goals

From 2020 to 2021, **805** young people from **28** member organisations took part in our employability programme and 106 young people took part in one-off events.

"As a teenager, you are forced to make decisions at a very early age... But career paths are extremely fluid, building new skills and always learning is not a one-off decision. That's why the fantastic work that London Youth do in helping young adults get on the career ladder is so important." - **Dave, financial services**

INTRODUCING POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

WE CREATE LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR POSITIVE ROLE MODELS TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AT INSPIRING EVENTS...

...SO THEY CAN SEE OTHER PEOPLE FROM THEIR COMMUNITY REACHING THEIR POTENTIAL AND FEEL MOTIVATED TO PURSUE THEIR GOALS.



"Projects like this give you a guideline, it also shows that there is someone you can talk to and someone to help you." - **Manu, young person**



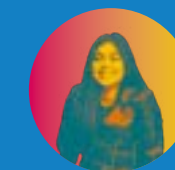
ACCESSING OPPORTUNITIES

OUR PROGRAMMES GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO GO ON WORK EXPERIENCE...

...SO THEY KNOW THEY HAVE OPTIONS AND CAN WORK TOWARDS THEIR FUTURE.



"I feel more confident and I have gained new skills that I can use in the future" - **Jada, young person**



"That experience really opened my eyes to the theatre... It opened my eyes to all the different opportunities, not just being on stage." - **Neesha, young person**



Across our programmes

93%

of young people feel better equipped to engage with potential job or career opportunities.



"...I think the young people will use these tools for the rest of their lives." - **Kia, youth worker**



78%

of young people across our programmes have gained skills, knowledge and networks to identify career and other goals and work towards them.

SKILLS FOR LIFE

WE KNOW IT'S IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO DEVELOP SKILLS FOR LIFE AND FOR YOUTH WORKERS TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE THIS LEGACY OF LEARNING FOR THEM...

...SO THEY ARE ENCOURAGED TO STAY POSITIVE AND AIM HIGH, AND HAVE THE TOOLS TO NETWORK.



THANK YOU

At London Youth, we want to say a huge thank you to all of our members, young ambassadors and advisors, funders and supporters, and to our team, for working to build the resilience of London's youth organisations in the face of immense challenges. We couldn't have done it without you!

The Federation Of London Youth Clubs
Charity Registration: 303324

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londonyouth.org

The information contained in this document is based on monitoring and evaluation data from 2020-21

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