



71 College Road
Maidstone, Kent ME15 6SX

01622 693459

enquiries@ylf.org.uk

www.ylf.org.uk

Dear Volunteer

Thank you for your interest in the Leaving Care Mentoring role with the Young Lives Foundation. I trust this pack will tell you everything you need to know in order to decide whether this might be the role for you.

This pack comprises the following:

- Information about the Young Lives Foundation (YLF)
- Young person's story
- About this role
- Where your role fits in the bigger picture
- Application process

More than 30 members of staff and over 170 volunteers work for YLF and together we aim to make a difference to the lives of young people across Kent and Medway. If you are excited by the possibility of joining our team, then please apply.

If you would like to have an informal discussion about any aspects of the role or the information provided in this pack, then please contact Neil Vickery on 01622 693459 or via enquiries@ylf.org.uk

For further information about YLF please visit our website at www.ylf.org.uk

We look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes

Stephen Gray

Chief Executive Officer

About the Young Lives Foundation

Our Vision

Our vision is that every young person in need shall have access to the resources and opportunities needed for them to achieve their potential and lead fulfilled lives.

The Young Lives Foundation (YLF) works towards achieving this vision by supporting young people through times of difficulty and distress, enabling their voices to be heard and assisting young people to achieve their potential.

Our Foundation

YLF is an independent children's charity established in 2007. We are dedicated to delivering quality services that include mentoring, befriending, advocacy and positive activity programmes. Our services are tailored to ensure we achieve effective outcomes in the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people across Kent and Medway.

Our Support

YLF supports the following groups of people:

Looked after children / care leavers

Young offenders / those at risk of offending

Vulnerable adults

Families in need of support

Children in need / on the edge of care

Young people disengaged in education

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

Children who have been adopted

YLF have over 170 volunteers committed to supporting our services and our young people.

34,000

Voluntary hours are given per annum

3,500

Vulnerable people supported each year

Our Values

At YLF, we believe that staff and volunteers should have:

Passion ...to be helpful, friendly, non-judgemental and understanding

Principles ...to be respectful, a good listener, and a good time-keeper

Integrity ...to be trustworthy, open minded, reliable and consistent

Innovation ...to be creative, a good team player and someone who thinks outside of the box

Who We Help



Rachel's Story

Rachel lives in an isolated area and the family do not drive. Rachel used to have a good relationship with her brother but as he had got older he didn't want to spend time with her and could be quite nasty to her. Rachel had also previously had problems with her peer group at school and could feel very lonely. Rachel's grandfather had also recently died.

It was felt Rachel would benefit from increased confidence by developing different interests outside of home; support with accepting her older brother not wanting to spend time with her and encouragement to feel more positive about things. Rachel was referred by the family Support Worker and then matched with a YLF Mentor.

"Six months ago Rachel would never have had the confidence to join in an activity with others especially a climbing activity" Sally | Parent

The Mentor worked with Rachel to increase her confidence and social skills and introduced her to swimming lessons which was something Rachel had wanted to do. Towards the end of the arrangement Rachel was referred to our Positive Activities and she

attended a Climbing Activity. YLF was able to support with transport, enabling Rachel to participate, and she has been offered the opportunity of future activities.




The Mentor was able to listen and offer support and give guidance around her relationship with her brother, whereby Rachel became more accepting of her brother's need for his own space. Rachel also started to maintain good

friendships with her peers at school, with fewer arguments or upsets. At the end of their time together Rachel was

"Rachel was less negative and nervous about things and has shown a more happy and positive side and approach towards things" Faye | Mentor

able to reflect on how positive having a Mentor had been for her by recording her journey through a picture story, something that she could keep to remind her of her own ability to achieve and develop and feel more positive about things. YLF was able to signpost the family to some support groups for children with additional needs as the family had still not received a diagnosis for their son.

www.ylf.org.uk

 facebook.com/ylf.org.uk
 twitter.com/ylfcharity
 instagram.com/ylfcharity

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"I'm really grateful for the help I had with completing my food hygiene course online as it really gives me a lot more options to find work"

Dan | Care Leaver

""My mentor stood by me through the transition of leaving care, helped me move into my new accommodation, always had an ear to listen and even went as far as buying me the most annoying alarm clock to make sure I got out of bed for work in the morning! I couldn't be more grateful, because without my mentor and YLF's support, I don't think I would have completed my apprenticeship. If you ever need evidence that young people leaving care need help - I am it! Having people like this in my life over the past 4 years, has helped me massively because I've been able to feel something I've never felt before; Happiness, pride in myself and self confidence."

Karleigh | Care Leaver

"Having a Mentor has helped me find a club to join in my area and to get on better at home."

Jay | Young person

Role Description

Volunteer Leaving Care Mentor

Responsible to

Designated Mentoring Coordinator

Role

Care leavers often lack a consistent adult role model in their lives. Some are also required to move into independent living much sooner than other 18-25 year olds.

A Leaving Care Mentor can provide the consistency and stability that these care leavers are missing out on, and provide them with support on how to start to live independently. It is widely agreed that it is in the care leaver's best interests to have somebody special for them who is independent from social services and any other services that may be involved. The purpose of a Leaving Care Mentor is to give a care leaver an independent person to talk to, to have listen to them and to be a stable adult in their lives. This enables the care leaver to develop social skills and the ability to work at long term relationships, as well as building their self-esteem and resilience, giving them confidence to try new things and have access to opportunities needed for them to achieve their potential. Care leavers are required to think about living independently much earlier than other's their age, and may not have the support of their family around them to deal with the challenges of living on your own.

Leaving Care Mentors are trained volunteers who motivate, guide and assist care leavers who are at risk of offending, social exclusion or in need of support to start to live independently.

In order to provide consistency and stability all Leaving Care Mentors must commit to a minimum of 6 months to 1 year of Mentoring.

This is an important role requiring a genuine commitment to improving the lives of young people. A Leaving Care Mentor must be a positive role model for young people; a champion of their needs, interests and aspirations; and also a champion of the charity's values and an effective ambassador for the work and the organisation.

Training and Support

Training and on-going support is provided to help you in the role and the service prides itself on the welcoming and friendly style in which it operates.

YLF delivers a thorough training course to all applicants. One session will focus on the Core skills required to be a volunteer, another will focus on Safeguarding and a third and final session at your accreditation interview will focus on your role specifically.

Formal and informal supervision is made available to all volunteers. Additionally, we also provide an open door policy to volunteers and invite you to visit us at our hubs at any time.

Expenses

YLF reimburses all authorised expenses and mileage.

Main Responsibilities

- Be able to commit a minimum of 6 months to the role
- Visit, advise and guide a care leaver into independent living
- Arrange visits with the care leaver and share in quality one-to-one time with them
- Take time to assist with any problems, issues and concerns and empower the care leaver to problem solve for themselves
- Take an interest in and contribute to the care leaver's general welfare, including promoting the care leaver's social, emotional, educational and cultural needs
- Encourage the care leaver to exercise their rights and to participate fully in the decisions that are made on their behalf
- Advocate for the care leaver if they request you to, and accompany them to any meetings, appointments, etc.
- Be open minded and prepared to raise questions about decisions that are made, in the interests of the care leaver
- Ensure that you maintain good and open communications with YLF and work within the guidelines set

General Requirements

- Maintain regular contact with the care leaver via visits, phone calls, emails etc.
- Visit the care leaver on a basis that is required for their level of need for a minimum of 6 months
- To develop and maintain effective liaison with the Young Lives Foundation
- To attend training sessions focused around Safeguarding, Core Skills and Mentoring
- Report any concerns or written reports to enable YLF to support the development of the friendship
- To take part in supervision with your Coordinator
- To keep accurate records of visits you have made with the care leaver
- To keep within the budget of £15 and complete expenses form in a timely manner
- To uphold the values and adhere to the policies and procedures of the Young Lives Foundation

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience	Essential	Desirable
General knowledge of issues affecting care leavers		X
Some experience of working with young people		X
Skills		
Ability to motivate, guide and support young people	X	
To manage time effectively in order to meet young person on a monthly basis	X	
Ability to maintain accurate and up-to-date records	X	
To be able to communicate effectively	X	
Personal Characteristics		
Good understanding of own feelings and life experiences and how these may affect relationships and reactions to situations	X	
Recognition of the importance of professional boundaries in terms of relationships, communication and conduct	X	
Approachable and non-judgemental	X	
A high level of integrity, reliability and to be trustworthy	X	
Energy and sense of humour with a willingness to engage in activities	X	
Enthusiastic and positive attitude	X	
Collaborative team player	X	
Have a genuine interest in the wellbeing of young people	X	
Other Requirements		
Commitment to, understanding of, and maintenance of the sensitive nature of our work and values in all communications	X	
The post is subject to an YLF Safer Recruitment Process and an Enhanced Disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service	X	

This role description does not form a binding contract and can be amended, as the needs of YLF and the volunteer require. All amendments will be discussed with the volunteer. The role description set out above is intended for guidance only. The role is subject to YLF's Safer Recruitment Process, a satisfactory DBS check and a successful accreditation.

Application Process

How to Apply

Please complete and return an application and safeguarding form (there is also an optional equal opportunities form).

You can apply directly online or download these forms from our website:
www.ylf.org.uk/resources

If you require hard copies, they are available upon request.

Applications are then submitted online automatically or can be sent by:

Email | volunteering@ylf.org.uk

Post | YLF Volunteering, 71 College Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6SX

DBS/Referees

All volunteers are required to complete an enhanced DBS form; we also seek a reference from your current employer and two others (whom you have known for over 5 years).

Further Info

Please visit the volunteering pages of our website for further information and frequently asked questions at www.ylf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteer/ or feel free to call us with any questions on 01622 693459