

YOUNG LIVES

FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT

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STORY**

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**A BIG THANKYOU TO
OUR VOLUNTEERS!!**

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Introducing YLF

WHAT WE DO

- Support young people through times of difficulty and distress
- Enable young people's voices to be heard
- Assist young people to achieve their potential

HOW WE DO IT

- Mentoring and Befriending
- Positive Activities
- Advocacy and Children's Rights

WHO WE SUPPORT

- Looked after Children and care leavers
- Children on the edge of care or in need
- Young offenders or young people at risk of offending
- Young people disengaged from education or employment
- Vulnerable adults
- Families in need of support
- Children who have been adopted
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups



YLF in Numbers...

34,000

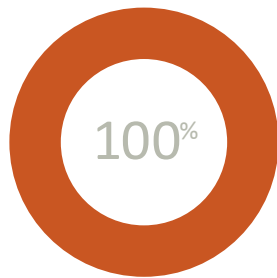


Voluntary hours per annum



937

Attendances of YLF Positive Activities Programme

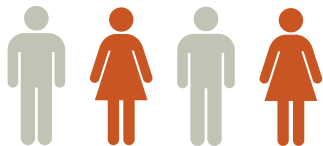


100%
of the activities offered are
fully supported by fundraised
money



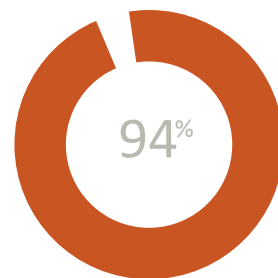
£170k

is generated by fundraising each year



3,500

vulnerable people supported across
Kent and Medway each year



94%
of service users felt supported and
listened to

A message from our

CEO

It is a privilege to be in the role of CEO here at The Young Lives Foundation.

The Charity continues to grow and venture into new areas where our services can reach out to more young people. Now over 3,500 vulnerable people a year receive support from YLF support services and the dedication and professionalism of our staff and volunteer teams ensure the support they receive is effective and leads to positive outcomes.

The challenges we face as a locally based Charity are to ensure that there is resource and capacity to meet an ever growing demand and need. As the gap between 'those who have and those who have not' widens in our society, so does the number of families and young people requiring additional help. Our partnerships with Kent County Council, Medway Council and other voluntary sector

groups ensure we can deliver effective services and plug any gap in provision. As a Charity we can complement the work of the local authorities and public sector, offer targeted, additional support where it is needed and leave no individuals or groups without the help they often desperately seek.

Fundraising in order to meet demand remains a crucial strategy for YLF and the rapid

Now over 3,500 vulnerable people a year receive support from YLF

growth in the last five years means we need to raise more funds than ever before. As we look to raise over £200,000 each year from voluntary income, it is reassuring to see our corporate partnerships expanding and to receive invaluable support from individuals, community groups, business (both national and local) and other voluntary groups.

The other key area for



development is adding to our wonderful team of volunteers. Over 34,000 hours of front-line work delivered each year by our team of volunteers demon-

strates the invaluable resource our team of volunteers are. With their success comes further demand and we look to double the size of our team in the coming 24 months to ensure we have capacity to meet demand, whilst maintaining the highest standards that they set.

So as we celebrate 12 years of making a difference to Kent and Medway's most vul-

nerable children, we also look to develop a long term strategy for the next 10 years, as sadly it appears almost certain that there will still be a demand for charities like YLF. I will do all I can to ensure the Charity is flexible to meet changing needs, has capacity to continue delivering effective support services and retains a strong child centred ethos in shaping our service delivery.

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone for the unbelievable support YLF has received.



*Stephen Gray /
Chief Executive*

A message from our

Chairman

I feel privileged and proud to have been Chairman of this wonderful Charity for the last three years and to be Chairman in our 12th anniversary year. I can genuinely say I believe wholeheartedly in the vision of YLF and the tremendous work we undertake – making a difference to over 3,000 vulnerable people a year, and doing so where it is most needed.

The last three years have seen considerable growth in demand, which has presented its challenges. These have mainly been around ensuring the capaci-

ty and resource is in place to do as much as we can for as many as we can. We have achieved this through hard work and commitment. I would like to thank our dedicated team of staff and wonderful team of volunteers who reach out to over 3,000 people a year through our Advocacy, Befriending, Mentoring and Positive Activity Programmes. I am humbled by the stories I hear (some of which are included in this report) and the time and energy our people give and of the difference they make to some of the most vulnerable children across Kent, offering them a voice



when they need it, a consistent person in times of transition and someone to talk to and who will give support during difficult times. Our unique and invaluable services truly make a difference, and demand continues to increase. Partnerships and support from Kent County Council, Medway Council, BBC Children in Need, various national and local businesses, organisa-

tions, trusts and the local community all play a vital part in ensuring YLF's work can reach those who need it the most, supporting our ambitious and robust strategy which ensures the Charity is sustainable and remains effective for the next 10 years!

*Geoffrey
Dearing
| Chairman*

Going into foster care

A poem by a care leaver

"A shadow of doubt
A hint of fear
Everything's a daze
Why am I here?
Moving around
House to house
No-one around
Quiet as a mouse

A broken home
A broken heart
Taken away
A brand new start
Living with strangers
Making new friends
Starting to feel
At home again

Before you know it
You're smiling once
more
Your future now
Is an open door
You're happy again
You've completely for-
gotten
How you felt back
then."

Advocacy Programmes

YLF provides Advocacy Programmes to assist children and young people across Kent and Medway who are in need, in care, leaving care or subject to child protection proceedings. These programmes include one-to-one advocacy and the Medway Children in Care Council.

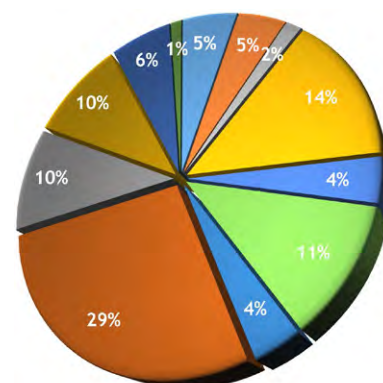
Advocacy can greatly improve a young person's experience of the care system by supporting them to express their wishes and views to professionals and have them taken into consideration during decision making processes. When this happens effectively The Young Lives Foundation has observed that young people's relationships with professionals can greatly improve, as can their positivity about their futures and willingness to engage in services, thus promoting positive futures.

YLF has a team of Independent Advocates, combining an extensive range of skills and experience to support the individual needs of young people accessing the service.

YLF expects the demand for Advocacy support to continue and predicts that more than 450 young people will be supported in the coming year.

Each year Advocates support young people resolve over 730 issues.

Issues affecting young people who are referred for Advocacy support



- Child Protection Conference
- Contact with Family
- Disability Support
- Education
- Family Group Conference
- Finance
- Health
- Housing/Placement
- Age Assessment Challenge/Immigration
- Social Worker/Personal Adviser
- Support at Meetings
- Transition to Adult Services

'I want to thank you for your help. I really appreciate what your organisation has done for me. If it wasn't for your help, I wouldn't be at university now and I wouldn't have had the support'

CHILDREN'S 1-2-1 ADVOCACY

YLF Advocates support young people in a variety of ways to have their voices heard about issues or concerns regarding their care. This includes supporting young people to know their rights and entitlements, find ways to help them communicate how they are feeling, raise complaints or compliments about their care and offer independent support at meetings. Advocates aim to help resolve issues quickly and positively and equip young people with skills to self-advocate for the future.



'I always find the spirit of cooperation of the advocacy team to be of a high standard which in my view allows for a very good working relationship in supporting the issues and challenges that young people face'

'I have found your service really helpful and accommodating throughout and I feel you went above and beyond to help me, for that I am really grateful, I didn't get the result I wanted from the complaint but having support made the whole thing less daunting and challenging'

450

YLF supported approximately 450 young people with over 730 issues.



Michael's Story

Michael asked for Advocacy support from YLF because he felt that his wishes and feelings were not being heard by the professionals making decisions about his Care Plan.

Michael wanted to move placements and was not engaging in education. When Michael met with his Advocate he was able to explain how he was feeling confidentially and without any judgement. He said that his life experiences caused him to have nightmares and he wanted to move to a new place that he thought that would help them stop. The Advocate discussed with Michael how he felt most comfortable explaining this to Social Services and he decided that with the support of his Advocate he would like all professionals involved in his life to have a meeting with him. The Advocate communicated

this to professionals on his behalf and a meeting was quickly arranged. Initially Michael did not understand why Social Services wanted him to remain in his placement. Professionals tried to reassure him that he was well looked after, and suggested giving himself a little more time to settle in, and to engage with education first. Michael's Advocate helped him to understand this information so that he was able to consider his options and make an informed choice. Michael said that he was happy that he had been properly listened to, and agreed to try and give things more time.

Michael asked his Advocate to attend his next Child in Care Review where his Care Plan was discussed. On the day, with his Advocate by his side, Michael felt empowered and confident to speak up for himself. He said that he loved his school, had made good friends, and spoke positively about his placement, where he felt settled and happy. As a result of the Advocacy support offered Michael felt that his voice was heard and taken seriously; he now feels confident to self-advocate at future meetings without the support of his Advocate.

50
.....

Over 50 meetings,
activities and events
involve the CiCC
every year.

YLF Apprenticeships

YLF is now in its third year of offering Apprenticeships to young people who were not previously in employment or training. The ambitious scheme provides opportunities for young people to learn and develop new skills, in a safe and supportive environment, whilst contributing significantly to the Charity. As well as working for YLF, Apprentices will undertake an NVQ at level 2 or 3 and when the time has come for them to move on they do so with a qualification, new skills, confidence, experience and a practical helping hand onto a new job/opportunity.



Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is made up of young people and represents over 400 young people who are in the care of Medway Council, ensuring their voices are heard by those who make decisions affecting their care.



YLF's Participation Apprentice, who is working towards an NVQ Level 2, supports the work of the CiCC, enhancing the service to reach more young people and engage them in innovative ways. The CiCC offers young people in care and care leavers the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns, improve, influence and change services, educate, interview and train professionals and work with Medway Council's Corporate Parents to ensure the views of the children they look after are valued. There are three different age groups of the CiCC to ensure a broad range of young people can contribute.

The young people have the opportunity to meet with the Director of Children's Services, the Corporate Parenting Group and other senior managers at regular meetings and also have the chance to enjoy team-building and educational activities.

The CiCC REALLY MAKES A DIFFERENCE and has made a positive impact across Medway by:

- Making history by having the first young person ever address a Full Council Meeting
- Setting a number of Challenges to Medway Children's Services who have adopted these as their pledge to children in care:
 - Treat children/young people as individuals not a case number
 - Reduce the number of Social Worker changes
- Allow children/young people to appraise their Social Workers
- Get up to date with technology
- Provide more choices of supported accommodation for care leavers
- Working with Medway Practitioners to produce fostering guides and films for young people
- Lobbying the Council to 'drop the label' for children in care
- Improving the 'Leisure Pass Offer' for young people

And that's not all...



The CiCC 'Stigma' campaign was re-launched in 2017 following concerns raised from young people that they still experience stigma and discrimination due to being a child in care. Medway Council and YLF have re-launched the hard-hitting film produced by CiCC members to tackle this issue

and educate others so the unnecessary suffering that can result from being stigmatised can be avoided. Watch the film on YouTube by searching 'YLF Tackling Stigma'.

.....
'When there is NO difference, it makes ALL the difference'



'Being part of the CiCC has offered me such an opportunity to make a difference for others.'

I have had good and bad experiences growing up in care, which I'm sure is just the norm, but my hope is that by making sure our voices are heard and listened to, I can prevent another young person feeling the upset, distress and hardship I did at times. It's a privilege to be part of it'

'Working with the CiCC has changed my life, I have learnt so much, have the confidence to say how I feel and I know I have the support of everyone around me and feel part of a team achieving great things'



Inside India

Nine CiCC members participated in an overseas volunteering opportunity in India as part of an Inside India Experience. This life changing experience involved teaching English in a village school and volunteering in an orphanage.

'This opportunity will definitely help us all throughout our entire lives. The skills we have learnt and the places we have been, we will never forget. We thank you for the journey we have been on and wouldn't change it for the world.'

'Inside India' Team

Voluntary Services

Over 180 Volunteers Delivering

34,000

voluntary hours per annum which equates to...

£255,000

At minimum wage across Kent and Medway supporting over...

2,500 Vulnerable People

The voluntary services department has supported 2,500 vulnerable people across Kent and Medway

NCVO's Approved Provider Standard Mentoring and Befriending Award 2017-2020

The National Quality Standard for Mentoring and Befriending Projects



YLF successfully renewed the NCVO Mentoring and Befriending Approved Provider Standard Award. This is awarded to YLF until 2020. This is a fantastic achievement and one YLF is very proud of. The award provides an external accreditation highlighting the excellent support YLF gives to its volunteers, young people and staff.



'YLF is able to offer several areas of added value to the mentoring and befriending it provides. It is an ASDAN accredited provider, meaning that young people can work to achieve a qualification. For young people who have been out of education, this can be a significant achievement. It also offers an advocacy service and group activities'

NCVO Assessor

Make A Difference



Volunteer Support and Retention

Volunteers are supported in a number of different ways; formal and informal supervision both face-to-face and remotely, and expenses fully reimbursed. YLF has an online secure reporting and monitoring system 'Better Impact' which enables volunteers to submit report forms and is a very effective way of consistently monitoring large numbers of arrangements.

'YLF is offering an excellent service which is constantly evolving to meet the changing needs to the young people it supports.'

Based on evidence provided, interviews with staff, volunteers and service users, the assessor has no hesitation in recommending the independent visitor service, schools and community mentoring schemes for re-accreditation, and has identified a number of key strengths'

NCVO Assessor

Befriending Programme

YLF's volunteer Befrienders, otherwise known as Independent Visitors, visit, advise and befriend young people in care across the County. Independent Visitors take a long term and independent interest in the young person's welfare and development. Independent Visitors are often the most consistent and stable adults involved in the young person's life.



Gary's Story

Gary and Jane have been matched for the last three years. Gary has experienced some turbulent times recently which has involved him moving placements. Jane has been there for him during this time and has had several telephone calls from Gary when he has been in difficult situations. The most recent one occurred when Jane was on a train going to London with her family. Gary was quite upset asking if he could see Jane. Jane returned home and arranged

to meet with him. The issue was concerning a new relationship and he had been upset about a decision the foster carers and Social Worker had made regarding an overnight stay. Jane was able to talk it through with Gary and returned him to the foster carers a lot calmer. Gary later phoned Jane to say that he had apologised to his foster carers and felt happier about decisions that had been made.

Aiden's Story

Aiden and Marion are a new arrangement. Aiden is very keen on fishing and so their first visit was to the fishing lake. When

his foster carer feel that fishing is some kind of safety net for Aiden as this seemed to be all that he wanted to do.

'Marion is gradually helping Aiden to experience new activities'

they arrived Aiden said to Marion that they couldn't speak as it would scare the fish. This did not last long as Aiden was soon chatting away. They were there for five hours and caught nothing, but had a fantastic time! Marion and

Marion is gradually helping Aiden to experience new activities. They attended the Brighton trip and have since been swimming. Marion reports that Aiden is very quiet at first but once he gets to the activity he is fine and enjoys it.

Mentoring Programmes



YLF Mentoring Programmes are delivered by trained volunteer Mentors who motivate, guide and assist young people who could be at risk of offending, or social exclusion or are in need of support.



Mentors support young people towards the achievement of positive goals. YLF has specialised Mentoring

goals such as improving relationships within the home, better communication skills, reducing anti-social behaviour, higher ed-

‘Young people can expect that Mentors will be positive role models’

Programmes in partnership with schools and the Local Authority. Mentors meet with the young people on a weekly basis at their school, home or in the local community, encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour. Mentors support young people and their families to achieve

educational attainment, joining a club or taking part in positive activities. Young people can expect that Mentors will be positive role models. Mentors are there to help build confidence and self-esteem, listen and to encourage achievement.

‘Alfie looked forward to seeing his Mentor, he said that while he was being home schooled, it gave him something to look forward to and broke up the week for him. The mentoring was a positive experience for him because he felt a sense of achievement when completing the activities/tasks that they worked on together and was very eager to speak about them to us’

Tanya | Parent

‘The mentoring has made such a difference and Kelly is back to her old self again. She loves her Mentor and is going to be sad when the mentoring comes to an end but the Mentor has been preparing her. Kelly is so different at home now and her behaviour is so much better. The Mentor is wonderful and brilliant. She has been brilliant with Kelly’

Sarah | Parent

‘I take my hat off to you for what you have given Freddie. You gave him stability when NO-ONE else could. You can’t put a price on that. Well done to you!’

Freddie’s teacher

130

130 young people received the support of a Mentor either in school or in the community.

Rachel's Story

Rachel was referred by the Family Support Worker who was supporting the family around the impact of Rachel's older brother who has a diagnosis of OCD and an eating disorder, and was being assessed for ASD which was all impacting on the family.

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.

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 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.



'6 months ago Rachel would never have had the confidence to join in an activity with others especially a climbing activity'

Sally | Parent

'Rachel was less negative and nervous about things and has shown a more happy and positive side and approach towards things'

Faye | Mentor

Reece's Story

At the time Reece was referred for a YLF Mentor he was at risk of permanent exclusion from his school, under a behaviour agreement with the police and working with other agencies on substance awareness.

There were also concerns that Reece was engaging with gang-related activities including anti-social behaviour, substance abuse and shoplifting. Reece's parents were

to be made and that he wanted to do well in his future and not be associated with crime. Reece was supported by his Mentor for six months in the community. During this time

reduced and Reece was arguing less with his parents – resulting in there being no further police call-outs. Reece also completed several ASDAN projects with his Mentor,

completed with YLF. Reece made a positive start to his new school, is focused on his future and is on course to achieve his GCSEs and finish his final year before further education.



in support of him working with a YLF Mentor, however, were concerned about his initial engagement – due to the number of professionals working with Reece. The initial meeting went ahead and Reece engaged very well with the support offered. Reece identified that there were changes that needed

Reece was able to talk through his issues with his Mentor and felt comfortable doing this knowing that they were independent of other services and agencies. Reece was able to do positive activities with his Mentor and enjoyed the positive time and one-to-one attention. Over a few months, reports of anti-social behaviour

including a project involving bike mechanics and another in carpentry. Reece was awarded a certificate for his efforts and stated how proud he felt about himself and his achievements. Reece started his new school in September and his parents felt that his transition into his new school was assisted by his achievements

Feedback from parent:

'The support from YLF really helped Reece over the past few months to give him some focus particularly when he was off school, I know that he enjoyed the Mentor's company and felt good about his achievements. I don't see him slipping back to where he was before, I think he's come too far for that to happen'

Feedback from school:

'I'm really pleased how well Reece is doing now, it's been such a difficult time for him and his family and to see he is finally turning a new page is so uplifting'



Appropriate Adults

The Appropriate Adult Service supports both juveniles and vulnerable adults detained in Police custody across the Kent Police Area.

Appropriate Adults are trained volunteers and dedicate approximately 11,000 volunteer hours every year to the service. YLF was delighted and incredibly proud to receive The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS). The Appropriate Adult Service became a winner of this prestigious award in June 2015 and was presented

with a crystal award by The Viscount De L'Isle MBE, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Kent. The QAVS is the highest award given to local volunteer groups across the UK to recognise outstanding work in their communities - equivalent to an MBE.



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

'As Her Majesty's representative in our County I'm delighted to be here today to present The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service won by this marvellous group. What I am presenting today is not a run-of-the mill award, it is the MBE of volunteering.'

Her Majesty rates the importance of recognising the wonderful work organisations like yours do in the community very highly indeed'

The Viscount De L'Isle MBE | Her Majesty's
Lord-Lieutenant of Kent

2,325

2,325 vulnerable people have been supported by an appropriate adult across the Kent police area

11,000

Over 11,000 voluntary hours

17%

17% increase in demand

YLF ensures volunteer Appropriate Adults demonstrate high quality and professionalism in their role by providing training that meets National Appropriate Adult Network (NAAN) standards and that ongoing training seminars are delivered to certify that all volunteers have an up to date understanding of any changes in legislation or practice.

Kent Police welcomes input from YLF in training sessions for new Custody Sergeants to ensure a good understanding of YLF and the role of the Appropriate Adult and the service YLF provides. YLF believes that a multi-agency approach constitutes an effective and efficient service delivery and will continue to sustain excellent relationships with all agencies including the Police, NAAN, the NHS and the Youth Offending Service.



A volunteer attended Canterbury Police station for a juvenile. The Custody Sergeant explained to the young person that the Appropriate Adult was a volunteer. After the interview the young person asked the volunteer why she is an Appropriate Adult as she doesn't get paid, to which the volunteer replied, 'because I care about people like you, in situations like this'.

A juvenile was being taken back to their foster placement and asked if the Appropriate Adult was going with them. The volunteer explained that she wasn't, but that she hoped everything goes well for them in the future. The young person ran over to the volunteer and hugged her. He said, 'thanks for doing this, no one has ever done anything for me unless they are paid.'

'I can say with some certainty, that being an Appropriate Adult saved my life! This is not an exaggeration! I was really low and struggling to accept a life of slippers and tea watching daytime TV. Volunteering gave me a new lease of life and something to live for! I would like to thank YLF for giving me this interesting and valuable role.'

Peter | Appropriate Adult

95%

95% of YLF Appropriate Adult requests are attended, across eight Kent Police custody suites.

ACCOMPANYING ADULTS



4,000

Over 4,000 voluntary hours

The Accompanying Adult has a non-judgemental approach and is able to exercise discernment and objectivity.

- Kent has faced unprecedented challenges as a direct result of the refugee crisis and large numbers of young people arriving in Kent through the port of Dover, many of whom have been age disputed.
- Age assessments are complex and in-depth pieces of work which will usually take a number of appointments in order to be fair and lawful with a number of different stages to the assessment process.
- In the meetings the role of the Accompanying Adult is crucial being an impartial set of eyes and ears on the process to ensure the assessment is being carried out fairly and that the young person understands what is happening and why.

- In circumstances when a young person feels anxious the presence of the Accompanying Adult can offer reassurance and support.

'The Accompanying Adults approach is highly valued by professionals and young people. While they only meet a young person on a few occasions, these are very significant days for them.'

Age Assessor | KCC

'The accompanying adults are compassionate, understanding and work hard to ensure our young people feel cared about and supported.'

Age Assessor | KCC

'I feel that Dennis' presence helps create a relaxed atmosphere for the young person in the assessment.'

Age Assessor | KCC



INDEPENDENT SERVICES

YLF has been commissioned to provide an Independent Person Service and Independent Return Interviews. Both services are a new stream of work for YLF and the Charity is delighted to be offered the opportunity to support more people across Kent by offering this additional support.

'The IP was professional, kind and unbiased throughout all dealings with us. The report was balanced and nuanced and we felt the IP had understood the nature of our concerns. We could not recommend the IP more highly.'

INDEPENDENT PERSON SERVICE

An Independent Person (IP) is appointed to oversee the process of a Stage Two Complaints Investigation about Kent Children's Services.

An IP is not an Advocate for the complainant. The role of the IP is to work alongside the Investigating Officer (IO) to provide an independent and objective view to the investigation of the complaint.

YLF's IPs are self-employed to avoid conflict of interest and comply with timescales for completion (up to a maximum 65 working days) in line with the requirements of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure Regulations and Guidance, 'Getting the Best from Complaints'. IPs provide a written report on the investigation written in plain language.

Up to 35 complaints are investigated by YLF Independent People every year.

INDEPENDENT RETURN INTERVIEWS

When a young person goes missing, an interview is offered and conducted when they return home. This return interview is an opportunity for young people to talk independently of the Police or a Social Worker about their missing episode.

YLF listens to the young person's experience, offers further support or signposts them to other supportive services that may be of benefit to them.

The information that is collected from the young person is recorded and forwarded to Specialist Children's Services and may be used to support further investigations around the missing episode.

Over 70 young people are reported missing every month across Kent.

Positive Activities



937

937 Attendances

225

Supported 225 young people

95

Carried out 95 activities

16

16 Asdan Certificates

Young people reported:

86%

Increased confidence

100%

Felt staff listened to them

97%

Said they enjoyed the activities they went on

94%

of carers said they felt the Positive Activities Programme had given their young people new experiences.

Comments from young people:

'I found out how to be brave and how fun it is to fly on an aeroplane'

Ryan | Young Person

'When I was worried about something, the staff helped'

'I feel that staff always listen to all of our views, such as when I said I would like to go to Stubbers again, we went :-)'

'You work your socks off to make young people happy. You're so inspirational'

Liam | Young Person

100%

100% of the activities offered are fully supported by fundraised money.

What have we done?

- Given young people the opportunity to:
- Have new experiences
- Take part in educational opportunities
- Gain ASDAN certificates
- Broaden horizons
- Build self-confidence and self esteem
- Learn new skills
- Make new friends
- Meet up with old friends
- Have fun
- Work in a team
- Made activities accessible to all i.e. transport, low or no cost

How did we do it?

- 225 young people supported
- 95 activities/group meetings
- 937 attendances
- 4 residentials
- 16 Asdan certificates
- Established a new group

Feedback from carers:

'I just wanted to tell you how much Rhys has loved coming to the Young Lives Foundation weekly group. He has enjoyed all the activities, especially the residential. I have noticed he has grown in confidence since coming along to the group, he really looks forward to coming to the group every week and always has a big smile on his face when I pick him up'

'Thank you so much for all the activities you have supplied us throughout the year. You have given so much joy to these children and I must say that I thought the Thomas Cook flight trip was an amazing thing to do'



Sophie's Story

Sophie was referred to Positive Activities to meet new people and boost her self-confidence.

Sophie has faced many challenges in her life, moved into care and suffered bullying in and out of school. Sophie had had little opportunity to try new activities, found it hard to engage with young people of her own age and had low confidence and self-esteem. Sophie has been regularly attending the weekly group and our activities programme. She says that coming along to the groups/activities has helped her to boost her confidence and self-esteem, helped her to de-stress, overcome bullying and has given her the opportunity to socialise with

others. Sophie said that if The Young Lives Foundation wasn't there for her she would be more stressed.

Our start and review outcomes sheet which Sophie completed, showed that Sophie felt that coming along to Positive Activities and groups had increased her opportunity to have new experiences by 60%, increased her self-confidence by 40%, increased her opportunity to make new friends by 40% and increased her educational opportunities (developing skills) by 40%.

Experiences & Quality



'It was an honour to be the chosen charity to attend Downing Street with some of our young people to address supporters of global's 'Make Some Noise'

Steve Gray | CEO



VOLUNTEERS



YLF's volunteers demonstrate how valuable the gift of time can be and well over 2,500 people benefit from that gift every year. YLF continues to recognise the importance of ensuring the team of over 180 volunteers is trained and supported in delivering quality frontline support to achieve the high standards the Charity has set. YLF's volunteers give

over 34,000 hours of frontline support to vulnerable people each year. When calculated at the minimum wage this equates to over £255,000 salaried hours. YLF is grateful to all its volunteers for the valuable role they play in ensuring a difference is made to the lives of the County's most vulnerable people. Many approach volunteering as an opportunity "to

give something back" and find that they too have benefited.

YLF is delighted to have been awarded the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation Approved Provider Standard and the NCVO Investing in Volunteers Award. This demonstrates that YLF is a supportive organisation to volunteer with and that there are effective systems in place for keeping

volunteers and service users safe.

'Young lives have been exceptional and I see first-hand the work they do to make a difference to young people's lives. Having a Mentor has been wonderful, and I now know how it can help more people just like me'

Danielle | Young Person

STAFF

YLF's dynamic and diverse staff team offers various levels of experience, expertise and specialisms. Their flexible approach alongside a dedication and willingness to go over and above exists for one common purpose – to make a difference to as many people as possible.

YLF is committed to ongoing staff development and training, ensuring everyone is best equipped to meet the needs of vulnerable people in an ever changing environment.

'Thank you to everyone involved in Young Lives for the fantastic work you do. Hayleigh loves being a member'

Sue | Foster carer

'Thinking back over the years fills me with happiness. I am proud to have achieved so much and had the chances I've been given from YLF'

Dan | Young Person

TRUSTEES

YLF is governed by a Board of Trustees drawn from a range of backgrounds with a breadth of knowledge and experience. The Board has overall responsibility for the effective governance of the Charity and for setting the long-term strategy. They review and evaluate the Charity's objectives and activities to ensure best practice is met when planning for the future.

For a list of our current Trustees please visit our website www.ylf.org.uk



Founding chairman Clive Emson receiving the prestigious Kent Invicta Award for his contribution to Kent.

94%

In YLF's annual survey for service users, 94% of people stated they feel listened to, supported and have their views and opinions taken seriously.

Funding & Fundraising

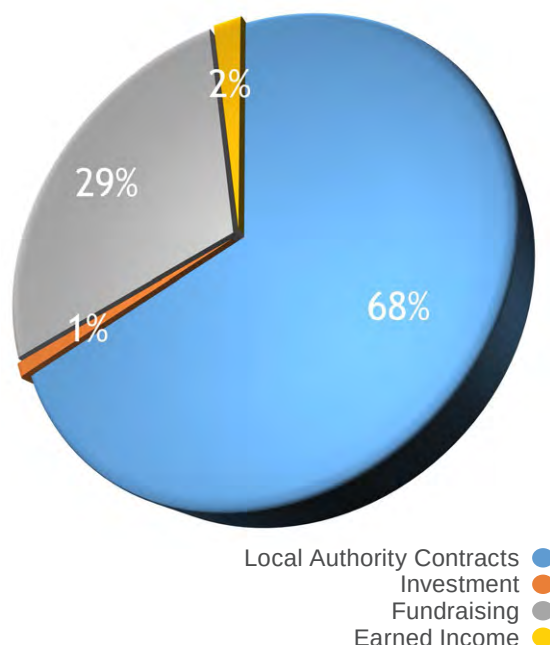
FUNDING

The Charity's principal funding comes from Local Authority contracts for commissioned services and activities. However, with an increase in demand for YLF's services and a decrease in Local Authority funding, YLF has the added challenge of generating other sources of income. Fundraised income has increased in the last year and is a com-

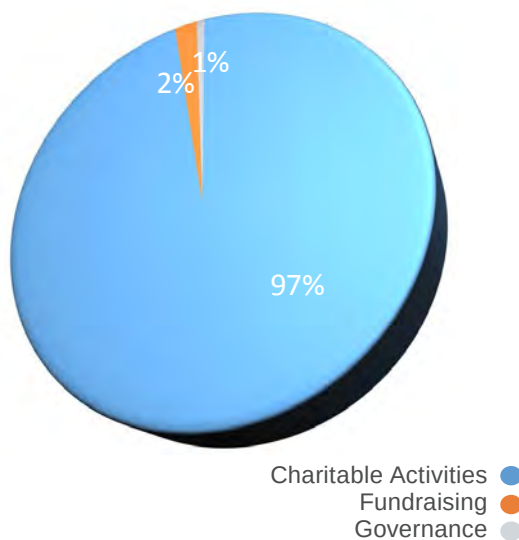
bination of fundraising events, individual donations and grants from Charitable Trusts and Foundations. Money held in investments and a range of training resources for professionals generate some earned income.

YLF is continuously exploring ways of reducing costs and making efficiencies. Value for money is something YLF is proud to be delivering.

YLF Sources of Income



Operating Costs



'I was introduced to this Charity by a hard-working, loving person and that resonates through the YLF team. Young people's lives matter and The Young Lives Foundation look to be a group set to help that fact. I look forward to supporting their movement!'

Harry Reid | YLF Ambassador

'Hollywood Bowl Maidstone are thrilled to announce a partnership with the Young Lives Foundation. The Foundation undertakes both short and long-term projects designed to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people. For us, it feels like a very natural fit. We pride ourselves on creating positive energy and happy memories in our centre, especially for children and families, and the work the Young Lives Foundation do is all about ensuring young people receive the positivity and support they need. We couldn't be happier to name them our Official Charity Partner.'



YLF relies heavily on donations from the public, trust funds and fundraising events to continue making a difference to disadvantaged young people in the local community.

A HUGE thank you to all clubs, businesses, individuals and grant making trusts who have donated or supported YLF over the year. The Charity are sincerely grateful for your goodwill and for affording us the opportunity to continue making a difference to those who are in need in our local communities.

A variety of fundraising events take place each year including skydiving, dinner events and marathons. YLF is very grateful to all the individuals who have participated and sponsored in aid of YLF.

In addition, YLF is the selected Charity of the Year for:

Alpaca Annie | Spitfire, West Malling | Dog at Wingham, Canterbury | Kings, Rochester | Wrotham Heath, Rye and King's Hill Golf Clubs | Music on the Green, Bearsted | Rotary District SE 1120 to name a few.



Charity Partnership

Hollywood Bowl, Maidstone

Supporters

Global Make Some Noise, BBC Children In Need, Thomas Cook Children's Charity

YLF also thanks all of its static collection tin site holders in venues such as offices, cafes and newsagents.

For a full list of our supporters please visit our website.

£2k

Over £2,000 is generated every year through venues placing static collection tins.

£170k

Over £170,000 is generated through fundraising each year.

Moving Forward

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Young Lives Foundation is dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of practice throughout its work with vulnerable young people.

The input and feedback given by partners, professionals, staff, volunteers and most importantly, the young people we support is valued. YLF aims to develop and enhance its services to meet the needs and demands of beneficiaries each year whilst ensuring positive outcomes are delivered.

'YLF has had a huge impact on the emotional wellbeing of my kids. To be able to meet with other young people in similar situations to themselves has given them a sense of belonging. The various services YLF offer are always engaging and interesting for the young people. Huge thanks to YLF for offering their services – long may it continue!'

Sally | Foster Carer

Plans for the coming year include...

- Developing school-based Mentoring Programmes within and between primary and secondary schools
.....
- Recruiting, retaining and training sufficient volunteers to meet increasing demand
.....
- Increasing the proportion of our income generated through fundraising
.....
- Extending our Positive Activities programmes to reach more young people
.....
- Promoting and enhancing learning opportunities through ASDAN education
.....
- Developing new strategies with Local Authorities for young people leaving care and living in supported accommodation
.....
- Enhancing Independent Return Interviews for children who have been missing
.....

Impact Summary

YLF is committed to making a difference and improving outcomes in the lives of vulnerable people. In summary, YLF contributes to:

- Reducing inequality of childhood opportunities
- Giving people an understanding of their rights and influencing policy and practice
- Ensuring children and young people can use their voice to improve their lives and those around them
- Enriching learning, wellbeing, life skills, potential and experiences of disadvantaged young people
- Building a positive and supportive future for children with their families, carers, friends and communities
- Giving back to the local community through volunteering opportunities
- Allowing families to become self-sufficient by providing early intervention programmes that can minimise the demand on public and Local Authority services
- Reducing anti-social behaviour and promoting positive and healthy lifestyles

'The Young Lives Foundation has done so much for me. I wouldn't be half the person I am now. I have been and seen so much. Thanks to them I had the chance to plan a group trip to Scotland to find Nessi! I have even been involved with recruiting new staff and volunteers. I never got the chance to say thank you before, so here it is – Thank you!'

Naomi | Young Person





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