



# The Young Lives Foundation **Welcoming Volunteers**



LISTEN -SUPPORT-EMPOWER

“

She made me a better person. We became a team... we became friends. Thank you YLF for opening my eyes and heart and allowing me to become part of the family.

”

Jade, volunteer






# Hello from the CEO




Join our team and help us to make a difference across Kent!

"I am thrilled when I hear we have new people interested in joining our team, as our volunteers are the heartbeat of this charity. The contribution that our volunteers give to the charity and the children we support is invaluable and I am sure you will gain as much as you give, should you join us.



Your contribution will assist in the charity's vision; We want all young people to live in communities where they are heard, are safe and supported; with opportunities to thrive.

I am confident you will be fully supported in any role you wish to take on and would be delighted to hear from you as you embark on your volunteering journey. I very much hope to meet you soon at the various events that my team will be organising and to thank you personally for your invaluable time, dedication and contribution.



The Young Lives Foundation could not operate without volunteers so I thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer and for all that you will achieve in making a difference to those who need our support."

**Stephen Gray**  
CEO





# About YLF



## OUR VISION:

**We want all young people to live in communities where they are heard, are safe and supported; with opportunities to thrive.**

## OUR MISSION:

**We aim to support young people to thrive through highly effective and accessible programmes where they:**

- **are given a voice, heard and empowered**
- **are supported by consistent adults through times of challenge and change**
- **have opportunities and resources to be happy and thrive**



## OUR IMPACT:

**34,000** voluntary hours given per year

**3,500** vulnerable people supported each year

**94%** of people feel listened to and supported

**£500k** of fundraised income every year





# Helping to get Young Voices Heard

**Karleigh is one of our young people who has been helped by YLF and the amazing volunteers we have.**

Karleigh's journey with YLF started when she was seven years old. Karleigh and her three siblings were supported through difficult times and in her words, **"YLF have given me something my Mum and Dad never gave me - my childhood"**. All four of them are now very successful, confident young people and are continuing to develop and grow as individuals in their personal and professional life. When Karleigh turned 18 and became a care leaver, she was in the process of completing her Apprenticeship with YLF. At the same time she was moved into independent living. She couldn't wait to be a 'grown up' but then struggled living alone. Thanks to her Leaving Care Mentor, Karleigh was able to complete her Apprenticeship, settle into independent living and become a YLF Youth ambassador!

"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."



“

Thank you to my  
volunteer for all she  
has done. I do not  
know where I would  
be without her  
alongside me  
supporting me.

”

Tyler, young person





# Volunteer Roles



## MENTORING:

YLF's Mentoring Programmes provide young people aged 10-21 with a wide range of support over a 6 month period working on things such as building resilience, supporting emotional wellbeing and prevention from exploitation and harm. Our mentors provide 1-2-1 mentoring in school, in the community or in small groups, depending on young people's needs and preferences.



## BEFRIENDING:

Befriending is a programme supporting young people in the care system by offering a long-term stable, consistent and reliable adult that the young person can turn to. Often this is the only stable presence in their life. As a befriender you will meet your matched young person monthly to carry out activities in the community such as coffee catch ups, ice skating, shopping or park walks, all of which give the young person the chance to grow in confidence and socialise.



## LEAVING CARE MENTORING:

LCM is a 6-12 month programme supporting young people in Kent and Medway who are leaving care. A leaving care mentor can support a young person through weekly or fortnightly visits which are targeted towards easing the transition into adulthood. As a mentor you will support a young person with budgeting, cooking, independent living skills and job applications alongside offering a supportive and listening ear.

# Volunteer Roles



## APPROPRIATE ADULTS:

Appropriate Adults volunteer in police custody when a vulnerable young person or adult has been arrested. As an AA you will ensure that all processes are being carried out fairly in order to avoid incorrect sentencing or a miscarriage of justice and to promote the welfare of the vulnerable person. AA's are needed for processes in custody such as Interviews, DNA swabs, ID parades and more.



## ACCOMPANYING ADULTS:

Accompanying Adults support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children through Age Assessments. They ensure that the rights and welfare of the child is being protected at all times. Age is crucial in our society as it determines your birthday, schooling, accommodation and support available. Accompanying Adults attend age assessments to ensure they are being carried out fairly and can advise the young person on the next steps following this.



## LEGENDS ACTIVITY PROGRAMME:

YLF provides an engaging and vibrant activity programme for young people aged 6-25 (not at the same time!) Legends is aimed at young people in care, children in need and care leavers with the aim to build social skills, offer new opportunities and experiences and build emotional resilience and confidence in a fun, safe and nurturing environment.





# Your Volunteer Journey



**Apply Now**



**Apply to  
volunteer**

**Receive your Welcome  
Pack Information**

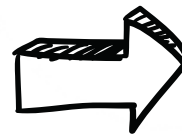
**Our team will apply for  
your references**



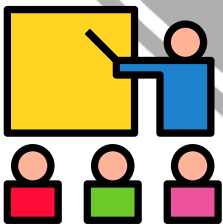
**Meet our team face to  
face so we can get to  
know each other and  
learn about your  
interest in volunteering  
at YLF**



**Complete our  
Online Training**



**Your in-house  
training with our  
team begins!**

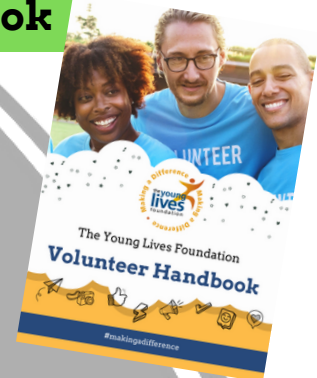


**Get familiar with your  
Volunteer Handbook**

**Accreditation time!  
You are officially a  
YLF Volunteer!**



**Raring to go??  
Complete the pre-  
accreditation  
essential  
Safeguarding  
training online as  
soon as you receive  
your welcome pack!  
(See our Volunteer  
Training Tree for  
details)**



## YOUR JOURNEY AWAITS... ENJOY!

# Safer Recruitment Process



## Our Commitment

The Young Lives Foundation is committed to the safeguarding and well-being of children and vulnerable adults both in society as a whole and in our own operations and activities.

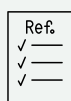
As a voluntary agency working with children and vulnerable adults, YLF form part of a wider safeguarding system as described in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and we work with partners as appropriate, in accordance with our statutory responsibility, to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm.

We complete a full and comprehensive Safer Recruitment Process for all staff and volunteers as part of our commitment to safeguard everyone engaged with activities at YLF.

For full details of YLF's Safeguarding policies please see visit <https://ylf.org.uk/safeguarding/>



Volunteer Application & Safeguarding Declaration submitted online ([www.ylf.org.uk/apply-to-volunteer/](http://www.ylf.org.uk/apply-to-volunteer/)) or hardcopy to [enquiries@ylf.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ylf.org.uk)  
Applicants receive a welcome call from a member of the YLF team, who will be on hand to answer initial questions and provide a Volunteer Welcome Pack.



YLF will apply for references from applicant's nominated referees.  
Applicants are encouraged to start the online modules of the Training Tree whilst awaiting the return of their references.



Once all references have been received, applicants will be invited to attend a face to face Warner Interview and present their ID documents for the Enhanced DBS Application.



Applicants are invited to attend role specific training modules and mentoring sessions (as applicable for the role).



On successful completion of all aspects of the safer recruitment process, applicants are invited to an Accreditation Review meeting. Your application is then submitted for sign off and you are officially a member of the YLF team!

## Frequently Asked Questions



### How long will the process take?

We aim to complete the safer recruitment process within 6 weeks, however this is dependent on an applicants availability and potential delays out of our control, including receipt of references and your new DBS certificate.

### What is a Warner Interview?

Warner interviews help recruiters to understand more about an applicants suitability for a role working with children and vulnerable adults. By understanding more about you, your attitudes, experiences and motivations we can gather a fuller picture of your suitability. It's a chance for us to get to know you, and normally takes an hour or so.

### Why do you need so much information for a voluntary role?

Our programmes support the most vulnerable young people and adults in the county, we therefore have a responsibility to uphold the highest standards of safer recruitment and training in order to safeguard our service users. Our friendly YLF team are always on hand to support you through the process and offer help and advice if you face any barriers completing the process.

### I would like an update on my application, who shall I contact?

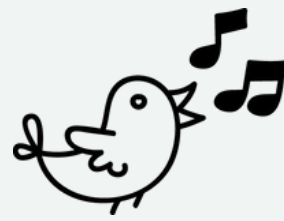
If you have any queries relating to your application please email [enquiries@ylf.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ylf.org.uk) or call 01622 693 459



# YLF Volunteering Training Tree



# What is it like to be a YLF Volunteer?



## ALEX

After volunteering with YLF, I quickly realised that I truly **CAN** make a positive difference to children who have had a tough start to life. YLF gave me the confidence to apply for (and get) a role in a young offenders institute in Kent, where I am now helping children understand how they can turn their lives around, and not re-offend.

**We can all make a difference, and I will always be grateful to YLF for helping me change my life too.**

## LISA

Volunteering with YLF does not just mean that you are helping to support a child in need. It also means that you grow as a person too. There are many situations where you are forced to take a step outside of your comfort zone, whether that be to try your hand at fishing (and fail miserably!), take on new adventures and challenges with your young person or deal with new situations.

**It brings so much more to your life than you could imagine so enjoy every second of your volunteer journey for it will fly by.**

## HEATHER

I myself have had experience being in care and when I stumbled across YLF I knew that I wanted to use this to help young people who are going through similar situations. Being a volunteer has made a difference to me too. I get to do fun things that I wouldn't have the opportunity to otherwise, I have developed some great relationships and being a volunteer has also helped me learn how to tackle different situations and step out of my comfort zone.

**If I had support like this when I was going through the care system it would have made the world of difference, so to have the opportunity to make a young person's life better, felt meant to be.**



# How will I be supported?



Here at YLF we are so grateful for the help and time you are giving as a volunteer. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to us that your mental health and wellbeing is supported throughout your time with us. Some ways that you are supported and communicated with as a volunteer are explained below.

## COMMUNICATION...



### **Better Impact**

Better Impact is a portal used by our volunteers, allowing them to connect with YLF, receive regular updates and information, and submit reports about your volunteering



### **WhatsApp**

WhatsApp is an application that can be downloaded on your phone and used for group conversations with the YLF team and other volunteers! Our staff will add you into relevant group chats to ensure you are kept up to date, can meet new volunteers, and have regular support and guidance!

## OPPORTUNITIES & MORE...



**Regular training opportunities to ensure you can gain new skills and expertise in your role**

**Team members on hand to offer a listening ear when needed. Our team are all Mental Health First Aid trained**

**Invite you to social events where you can meet new volunteers and the YLF team**

**1-2-1 and group catch ups to share experiences, top tips and ensure you are happy in your volunteer role**



The Young Lives Foundation  
71 College Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6SX  
01622 693459  
enquiries@ylf.org.uk

[www.ylf.org.uk](http://www.ylf.org.uk)

**stay connected:**

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-  @ylfcharity
-  company/ylfcharity
-  the young lives foundation

