Listen • Support • Empower

the Young Lives foundation

Advocate - Children & Young People

RECRUITMENT PACK

LISTEN • SUPPORT • EMPOWER

Charity No: 1119528 Company No: 5999166

Advocate Recruitment Pack

Thank you for your interest in this exciting role with the Young Lives Foundation. We trust this pack will tell you everything you need to know to decide whether this might be the role for you.

This pack includes the following:

- **Background about the Young Lives Foundation (YLF)**
- **About this role**
- **Terms and conditions**
- **Application process**

If you have any questions or queries relating to this role, please contact us on 01622 693459 or email recruitment@ylf.org.uk

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

The Young Lives Foundation (YLF) is an award winning children's charity in the South East of England with expertise in Advocacy, Mentoring, Befriending and Youth Programmes. We support over 2,700 young people and families each year including those in care, on the edge of care, care leavers, young offenders and young people disengaged in education.

Our values and impact

OUR VALUES

At YLF we believe that all staff should be:

- **Passionate.** We are a charity that genuinely cares about young people and is driven by our passion and high standards
- **Stable and Consistent.** We offer long term support and a stable presence in our communities and people's lives
- **Honest with Integrity.** We are transparent and honest with strong moral principles and clear about what we do and why
- **Innovative and Flexible.** We are a 'can do' charity. We are agile and adaptable to change, open to new ways of working with courage and ambition. We learn, grow and offer value
- **Grateful.** We recognise and value the contributions and support of others, always saying thank you for the gifts of time, money and support given to us
- **Respectful.** We treat all people equally and fairly

OUR IMPACT

+10,000 voluntary hours given per year

+2,700 vulnerable young people supported each year

94% of young people feel listened to and supported

£500k generated through fundraising every year

DID YOU KNOW... **Our volunteers gave time worth an incredible £127,100 in salary - what an impact!**

> **"You have done an amazing job helping us through a really difficult period, you were a perfect role model we needed to set us on the right path again. I wish every young person could have YLF in their life!!"**

Our People

STAFF & GOVERNANCE

YLF is governed by a Board of Trustees, supported by the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team.

The Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the outcomes, performance and progress of the charity and management of the staff and volunteer team.

Our YLF team is made up of 30 employees and organised as follows:

ADVOCACY PROGRAMMES

- Advocacy & Rights
- Befriending
- Children in Care Council
- Independent People
- Accompanying Adults
- Appropriate Adults

the Young Lives foundation (Listen • Support • Empower)

YOUTH PROGRAMMES

- Legends Youth Hubs
- Corporate Mentoring
- Community Mentoring
- School Mentoring

FUTURES CARE LEAVERS OFFER

- Advocacy & Hardship Funding Support
- Apprenticeships & Training
- Peer Support Groups & Alumni Support
- Care Packs & Campaigns for Care Leavers
- Mentoring & Transition Support
- Drop-in & Participation opportunities

CORPORATE SERVICES

- Governance/CEO
- HR/Legal/Policy
- Finance
- Fundraising/Comms

VOLUNTEERS

Our team of over 200 volunteers are at the very heart of our charity.

They give over 10,000 hours every year, making a huge impact in our community and providing positive outcomes for young people. They help us with...

Mentoring - Befriending - Events - Youth Groups - Support in Custody

FUNDRAISERS & DONORS

YLF aim to raise over £500,000 a year to enable us to continue delivering our youth programmes.

Grant making bodies, businesses, schools and organisations come on board to support the work of the charity. In addition to our partners, we rely on donations from the general public, and also individuals or groups to fundraise for YLF as a fun and gratifying way to raise vital funds and awareness.

There are many ways in which they help, including...

Sponsorship / Grants
Gifts in kind / Legacies
Corporate partnerships
Fundraising events and activities
Friends of YLF
Charity of the Year

Our Young People

WILL

Will has been lucky to have such amazing support from Lisa, which she wanted to continue when he turned 18, and made the transition into becoming a care leaver. Thanks to Lisa's support over the years and confidence building excursions together to the cinema, theatre and bowling, alongside support with interview preparations and CV work, Will has been able to get himself his first paid job upon leaving school!

AJ

AJ joined our Legends programme with a severe phobia of water due to a traumatic event in his past. Over a number of months our team worked with AJ to build up his confidence enough for him to just paddle in shallow water. Soon we progressed to helping him stand up in the swimming pool which he was so proud of. A few weeks later we held a residential trip to Wales where one of the activities was a gorge walk ending in a waterfall. A number of our young people who were strong swimmers opted out of this however AJ took the challenge on not once but three times. We were all so proud of him for overcoming his fear of water and for this phenomenal achievement.

SOPHIE

"I have been a part of YLF since I was put into care. I wasn't able to speak to anyone or go to school and so started attending the YLF groups where I could get out of the house and socialise with other people my own age. I also became a member of the MCYPC and have my very own advocate who is a Legend! YLF soon became like one big family and support network to me. I have grown in confidence and learnt lots of new skills. YLF is my safe place and I don't know where I would be without them."

NATHAN

"My leaving care mentor has helped me settle into independent living. It was a scary thought at first, to live alone, but he was patient and kind and taught me how to budget, cook for myself, get things done and prioritise. I have still got a way to go before I feel fully comfortable with this big change, but with my mentors help I know that I will be there in no time at all. He makes me feel confident in myself and knows how to deal with the things I throw at him. I appreciate this help a lot and don't know what I would do without him."

Your Role

ADVOCATE - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Reports to: Advocacy Manager

Responsible for: Advocacy of Children and Young People

The Role: Sessional advocates support children and young people receiving statutory and non-statutory support from social services, promoting young people's rights and entitlements, and assisting them to be able to make informed choices about what happens in their lives.

JOB PURPOSE

A sessional Advocate will play a vital role in our Advocacy Programmes that supports young people to:

- Voice their concerns about the care and support they receive
- Understand their rights and entitlements and responsibilities
- Make informed choices about what happens in their lives

As an Advocate you will deliver direct advocacy support to a range of young people aged 0-24 across Kent and Medway and occasionally those living out of area, in a range of settings which include the community, residential accommodation, schools, youth detention centres and secure settings.

Under supervision of the Advocacy Manager, you will manage your own case load of young people requiring advocacy support, as well as support the team with cover as required across the service. You will provide an excellent standard of advocacy consistently to all service users, and apply your knowledge of young people's rights and entitlements alongside your ability to maintain effective working relationships with professionals to resolve issues to a satisfactory outcome for young people.

The role is front facing and requires excellent communication, written and organisation skills as well as a coherent understanding of the principles of advocacy and issues affecting young people receiving support from social services.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- To clarify the concerns and wishes of the young person, enabling them to understand how they can make their views heard and what choices they have regarding decisions being made about them
- To apply knowledge of relevant national and local legislation and policies relating to children in care and care leavers to ensure the young person understands their rights, entitlements and responsibilities
- To enable the young person to communicate their views and wishes and to seek a satisfactory resolution to any issues raised in a timely manner
- To make an agreement with the young person about the help they want and agreeing the way in which the advocacy will be provided within the boundaries of the advocacy programme
- To maintain a positive working relationship with staff, carers and other professionals to facilitate the resolution of any issues raised by the young people
- To attend social care meetings with the young person when requested
- To write articulate communications including reports, letters and emails on behalf of the young person as required

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- To assist the young person to make a complaint if necessary, both at the informal and formal stages (Stages 1, 2 and 3) of the complaints procedure and access legal advice where required
- To maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all advocacy cases, using prescribed formats and in full compliance with the Young Lives Foundation's Data Protection Policy
- To actively keep abreast of developments in national and local policy affecting looked after children, children's rights and leaving care to provide up to date and informed advocacy support
- To contribute, as required, to the design, content and administration of websites; the production of publications; and the arrangement of events
- To support the promotion of the service, as required, to service users, professionals and relevant agencies
- To support the production of reports including both quantitative and qualitative data on the performance and outcomes of the service in line with agreed performance indicators

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- To have flexible availability to meet the needs of service users during service operating hours
- To work within agreed timescales and allocation of hours
- To work within agreed quality frameworks and quality standards
- To take part in supervision and appraisal and to meet on other occasions, as required, with the manager
- To comply with the YLF Code of Conduct and ensure Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are followed at all times
- To attend staff meetings, as required
- To keep accurate records of any expenditure incurred and to ensure that such expenditure is within agreed limits and has been duly authorised
- To maintain such other records as may be required for the purposes of monitoring, evaluation and review; and to prepare periodic reports
- To develop and maintain effective liaison with referral sources and with other professionals
- To provide cover or additional support for colleagues, as required
- To uphold the values and adhere to the policies and procedures of the Young Lives Foundation
- To undertake such other duties as may, from time to time, be reasonably required

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Location: Based remotely in the community

Salary: £15 p/h (training and travel rates apply) **Hours:** Zero-Hour Contract

Probation: A period of 6 months

Notice: During the probationary period, 1 week on either side. Following successful completion of the probationary period, one month on either side

The job description and terms and conditions do not form a binding contract and may be changed from time to time to align with the needs of the charity. The job description set out above is intended for guidance only and is not exhaustive. This post is subject to YLF's Safer Recruitment Process, a satisfactory DBS check and a successful probationary period.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Values and Ethos	• A strong commitment to safeguarding young people • An enthusiasm and commitment to our charity values and behaviours • Understanding of a child centered approach to work and co-production
Qualifications	• A good standard of education • An advocacy, social care, counselling, youth work or other relevant qualification *(Applicants with proven experience in related employment for 2 years+ will also be considered)*
Knowledge and Experience	• Working in the charity sector *(desirable)* • Experience of working with children and young people • Experience of Advocacy and/or statutory support to children in care/care leavers *(desirable)* • Knowledge of legal frameworks, legislation, policy and guidance relating to children in care, care leavers, children in need, child protection and children with disabilities *(desirable)* • Knowledge of issues affecting children living in the care system, care leavers and those who require early help interventions *(desirable)* • An understanding of Safeguarding procedures, policy and working to codes of conduct • Experience of working to targets/performance indicators, monitoring processes and reporting • Knowledge of the principles of advocacy, National Advocacy Standards and boundaries of the advocacy role *(desirable)* • Proven experience of working in a complex and at times stressful/demanding role
Skills	• Excellent communication (written and verbal) and interpersonal skills • Ability to quickly build a rapport with professionals and service users • Effective in working with a wide variety of stakeholders ranging from Trustees to service users and employees • Ability to work as part of a team and on your own initiative • Excellent self-management, time keeping and organisational skills • Competent in Excel, Microsoft Outlook, social media platforms and general use of IT • The ability to deal with work pressures, changing priorities and unpredictable demand levels • Ability to engage and effectively communicate with a range of service users with varying needs • Ability to use sign language, speak additional languages or Makaton *(desirable)*
Personal Characteristics	• Good understanding of own feelings and life experiences and how these may affect relationships and reactions to situations • Recognition of the importance of professional boundaries in terms of relationships, communication and conduct • A genuine passion and commitment to making a difference to the lives of young people • Commitment to the delivery of all objectives • Approachable and non-judgmental • A high level of integrity, reliability, to be trustworthy, and to always adhere to YLF policies • Energy and sense of humour with a willingness to engage in activities • A natural leader who is enthusiastic and has a positive attitude • Collaborative team player who will get involved in whatever needs to be done to achieve the charity's aims and objectives • Flexible, responsive and resilient to change
Other	• Commitment to, understanding of, and maintenance of the sensitive nature of our work and values in all communications • Commitment to personal and professional development, working to quality standards • Flexibility to work outside of normal working hours when required

TOP 10 !

A Good Listener
Have at least 1 ear for me

Non-Judgemental
If we are in care does that make us a problem?

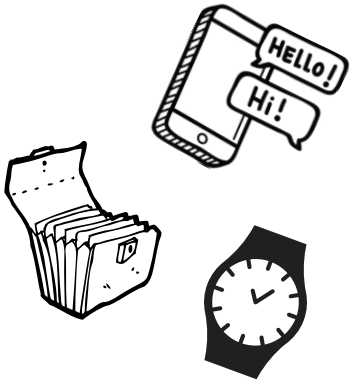
Consistent and Stable
Be there for me, stick by me

Contactable
Can I reach you? Will you make time for me?

Do you meet our Young People's TOP 10 standards?

Understanding
Put yourself in my shoes, don't feel sorry for me

Honest
Don't beat around the bush, just tell me!



Focused
See me for me, I'm not just another number

Realistic
Don't make me a promise you can't keep

Good Timekeeper
It's just good manners!

Resourceful
Be creative, the same approach won't always work!

Your benefits

OUR STAFF OFFER

Working at YLF involves taking responsibilities seriously and delivering high quality work, in what can be, a challenging environment. However the role you undertake will be purposeful and rewarding. We offer career development, promote staff wellbeing, and offer family-friendly employment and flexible working. We support all our staff through a programme of personal development, which includes line management, team meetings and supervision. There is a comprehensive induction and training programme for all staff with regular development reviews, annual appraisals and opportunities to give feedback about you role, the charity and it's programmes.

For sessional staff we also offer:

- Access to lifestyle discount scheme
- Access to a pension contributory scheme (5 per cent employer contribution; minimum 3 per cent employee contribution, after 3 months)
- Employment assistance and wellbeing programme
- Death in service benefit
- Flexible working arrangements and supportive culture

The application process

APPLY ONLINE

Applications:
We welcome applications on an ongoing basis, and shortlisted candidates may be invited to interview as suitable applications are received. We encourage you to apply early, as the position may close once suitable candidates are appointed.

How to Apply:
Please complete and return an application form that can be completed online or downloaded from:

https://ylf.org.uk/recruitment/

You will be asked to provide three references as part of the application form

Diversity Statement
YLF is explicitly and actively committed to inclusivity, equality, and reflecting the diversity of the communities served. Nobody involved in YLF's activities will be disadvantaged on the grounds of age, disability, gender, language, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, social class, religion, political views, marital status or health matters. The charity promotes equal opportunities for all, not only seeking to challenge all discrimination and encouraging tolerance but also appreciating the value of different cultures and lifestyles. YLF particularly encourage people to apply who are from sections of society that are currently underrepresented on the Trustee Board. This includes, but is not limited to, people with a disability, and individuals from ethnic minorities. We would also particularly welcome applications from care leavers or individuals with care experience.

Thank you – we look forward to hearing from you

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