



NEWS RELEASE

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Blueprint for youth work

National strategy to support massive volunteer workforce.

A new national strategy on youth work will build on the dedication of tens of thousands of volunteers and half a million young people across Scotland.

Minister for Children and Young People Aileen Campbell launched the strategy today at the National Youth Work Summit in Edinburgh to help widen access and support and expand the 73,000-strong army of volunteers and workers in Scotland.

Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland was developed jointly by the Scottish Government, YouthLink Scotland and Education Scotland and sets out the key ambitions for youth work over the next five years to:

- Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in
- Put young people at the heart of government policy
- Recognise the value of youth work
- Build the workforce capacity
- Measure the impact of youth work

The plan will also strengthen educational partnerships and record the impact of youth work to demonstrate the true value of the sector for the first time.

The strategy will build on the £6.9 million over two years that the Scottish Government has invested in national voluntary youth work and youth citizenship organisations through the Third Sector Early Intervention Fund, Strategic Partnership Funding, the National Voluntary Organisations Support Fund and Programme Grants.

A further £10.9 million has been invested in delivering youth work activities through YouthLink Scotland and Youth Scotland through the CashBack for Communities Programme since it was created in 2008.



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Ms Campbell said:

“More than half a million young Scots participate in youth work on a regular basis, giving them the chance to develop skills, self-confidence and a sense of connection with others. It widens their horizons and helps them make positive choices in their lives as they move into adulthood.

“We will build on the brilliant work being done by the thousands of volunteers and workers across Scotland to properly recognise the hugely transformative power they have on young lives.”

Research shows that for every £1 invested in youth work there is a potential saving of up to £13 in addressing issues later in life, depending on the activity.

Jim Sweeney, CEO YouthLink Scotland, said:

“This strategy marks a new chapter in the relationship of Scottish Society with its young people and those who deliver youth work activities. It also values the key roles that youth work can play in delivering real and meaningful learning through challenging and exciting programmes.

“The strategy recognises the sector’s contribution to a range of national outcomes and acknowledges the work and support needs of staff and the vast army of youth work volunteers.”

This strategy will ensure that the current and next generation will be able to continue to benefit from organisations like The Boys Brigade, LGBT Youth Scotland, as well as the vast range of youth projects, organisations and local authorities which offer everything from outdoor learning to increasing employability skills.

Alan Armstrong, Strategic Director at Education Scotland, said:

“This strategy places young people at the centre and commits to listening to them so we can develop the high quality services and opportunities that reflect their needs.

“It’s so important we get this right as the development, learning and experiences that young people gain in youth work situations can have a positive impact on the rest of a person’s life and work.”

Ends



National Youth Work Strategy:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/youngpeople/youthwork/strategy/index.asp>

For media enquiries and further information please contact Sarah Paterson, Public Affairs, Media and Communications at YouthLink Scotland on 07741 208625 or 0131 313 2488 and at spaterson@youthlinkscotland.org

Notes to editors

Information about YouthLink Scotland

- YouthLink Scotland is the national agency for youth work. It is the voice of the youth work sector in Scotland.
- It is a membership organisation and is in the unique position of representing the interests and aspirations of the whole of the sector both voluntary and statutory.
- YouthLink Scotland champions the role and value of the youth work sector, challenging government at national and local levels to invest in the development of the sector.
- YouthLink Scotland represents over 100 organisations, including the 32 Local Authority Youth Work Services and all major national voluntary youth work organisations, which support over 300,000 young people in achieving their potential.
- YouthLink Scotland promotes a positive image of Scotland's young people and seeks to promote their value to communities and society.