

campaign
save
our
youth
services
campaign
guide



Save our Youth Services Campaign Guide

2010-2011

Save our Youth Services – Campaign Guide

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Why does BYC think it is important to save youth services?

Young people in our membership have prioritised the need for BYC to campaign to save youth services.

“We believe that as councils are asked to save more and more money young people are increasingly feeling the brunt of these cuts. Thousands of young people rely on services for young people. We are already called the lost generation and cuts to youth services will only make this worse. We believe youth services and agencies aid young people in their personal development and aim to ensure that young people form a functional part of society. Without them our only option is to hang around the streets. Young people need a platform to defend these services and explain to others their life-changing work which often goes unrecognized.

“We do not think that voluntary organisations should be left to pick up the pieces due to a lack of funding to support professional youth services. We believe that existing youth services should have funding priority over new initiatives to ensure that all young people’s services are well funded and are beneficial”. **British Youth Council Manifesto.**

What are youth services?

Youth services are services which support the education and development, both social and personal, of young people aged between 11 and 25 (particularly those aged 13 to 19 years old). Youth services are run by both voluntary organisations and local authorities (your local council). Often your local council might pay voluntary organisations to run specific youth services.

Youth services can include:

- Youth centres/clubs
- Outdoor education
- Mobile provision and street based youth work
- Youth participation such as youth councils/forums/parliaments
- Drop-in advice and information centres/Connexions
- Targeted youth support for vulnerable young people who may be at future risk of further problems such as substance misuse, youth offending, teenage pregnancy and homelessness.

How can I find out what youth services are provided by my council?

Visit the DirectGov site via:
<http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/Start.do?mode=1> to find out who your local council are and their website address.

You can then look at their website and see what youth services they provide for young people in your local area. Details of youth services might be in the sections on ‘Education’ or ‘Young people’.

Why do we need to save youth services?

Spending cuts have affected youth services. On 20 October 2010, the Chancellor George Osborne revealed the Government's plans to make £6.2 billion of savings (cuts to the money the Government usually spends) in 2010/11. Local councils across the UK are being asked to save £1.166 billion. This means certain services are being reduced or cut because are decisions by local councillors to spend less money on certain things, including youth services.

Youth services have been particularly affected by cuts to 'area based grants'. These are grants of money given directly by the UK Government to local councils to address certain policy priorities in Government Departments. There are policy priorities of the Department for Education for local councils to focus on. For example, Bournemouth Borough Council has received £77,678 in 2010/11 to provide positive leisure-time activities for young people as this is a policy priority for the Department for Education.

The Department for Education has reduced area based grants to local authorities by £311 million which means that local councils have less money to spend on policy priorities for children and young people. Other Government Department cuts to local authorities (for example transport, justice) also end up impacting heavily on young people.

In addition, to give local councils the flexibility to concentrate on local priorities, the Government has removed ring-fencing. Ring-fencing means that of the money the Government give councils, certain amounts of it has to be spent on certain things.

The Government removed the ring fence around the £40.8 million allocated to Councils to provide the Youth Opportunity Fund.¹ The overall aim of the Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) is to improve the provision of positive leisure-time activities for young people, by giving them the power to decide how this funding should be spent in their area. Applications were made by young people for YOF to a panel of other young people (often involved in local youth councils) who make decisions on whether applications are appropriate and should receive funding.

The removal of ring fencing of YOF has meant that some local councils have reduced the amount available to young people or cut the scheme. These cuts have in particularly affected youth participation services such as youth councils. Seven out of ten youth councils, 70%, told BYC that they sit on Youth Opportunity Fund panels (research undertaken December 2009 to February 2010).²

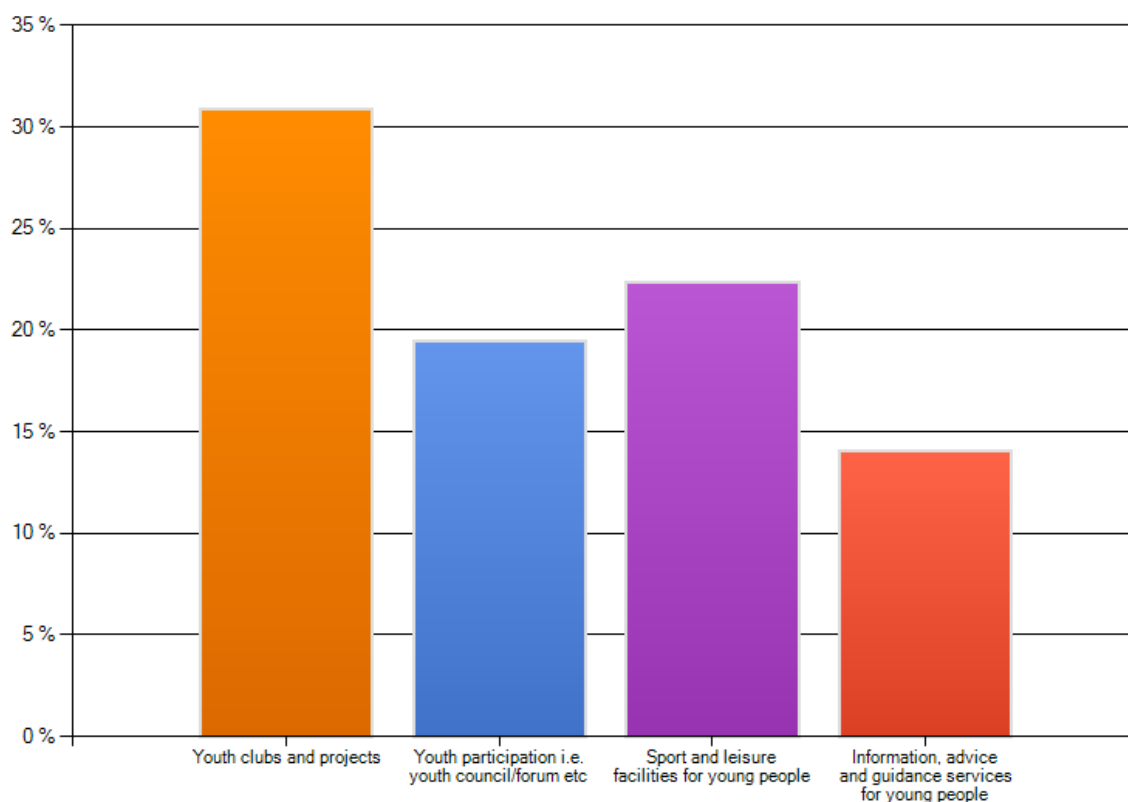
¹ Children and Young People Now, 10 June 2010, *Youth opportunity fund and play money hit by removal of ringfencing*. Available from: <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/bulletins/Daily-Bulletin/news/1009175/?DCMP=EMC-DailyBulletin>

² British Youth Council, 2010, *Young Voices Stronger Together: A report on the local youth council network*. Available from: <http://www.byc.org.uk>
Network.

How are youth services being affected by spending cuts?

- Two-thirds of voluntary and community organisations who provide youth services have seen their income reduced (on average by a fifth) in the last twelve months and three-quarters expect cuts next year.³
- Eight out of ten (82%) Heads of Young People’s Services (people who run youth services in local councils) say they are facing budget cuts.⁴
- A recent survey by the British Youth Council of one thousand young people found that over a third of respondents (37%) had already experienced cuts to youth services in their area. Out of these young people three out of ten (31%) had seen cuts to youth clubs and projects, 22% had seen cuts to sport and leisure facilities for young people, 19% had seen cuts to youth participation such as local youth councils, and 14% had seen cuts to information, advice and guidance services for young people.

Young people’s experiences of cuts to youth services



³ NCVYS and Children and Young People Now Magazine, October 2010, *Comprehensive Cuts: Report on funding changes in the voluntary and community youth sector*. Available from: <http://ncvys.org.uk/UserFiles/Comprehensive%20Cuts.pdf>

⁴ National Youth Agency, *Financial Implications for Local Authority Youth Services*. Available from: http://eazysecure12a.net/nya.org.uk/dynamic_files/policy/NYA%20%20CHYPS%20survey%20March%202010%20AMENDED.pdf

What does BYC think needs to happen?

- We think that any reviews of cuts to youth services need to consider the impact on young people and the quality of the services they use, as well as value for money.
- We think local young people should be decision makers too in how money is both spent and cut from local youth services.
- We believe that funding for existing youth services should take priority over new initiatives.

Who can I contact about this issue?

To raise your concerns about this issue you might want to contact the following decision-makers. The best way to contact those listed below is to go to <http://www.writetothem.com> put in your postcode and you will be able to email them immediately.

If you're a young person living in England	If you're a young person living in Northern Ireland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your local councillors • Your MP • Tim Loughton MP - Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families (who has ministerial responsibility for youth services), UK Government - email ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk (address the email for his attention) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your local councillors • Your MP • Your MLA • Cairtriona Ruane MLA - Minister for Education, Northern Ireland Executive email private.office@deni.gov.uk • Tim Loughton MP - Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families (who has ministerial responsibility for youth services), UK Government - email ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk (address the email for his attention)
If you're a young person living in Scotland	If you're a young person living in Wales
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your local councillors • Your MP • Your MSP • Michael Russell MSP - Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Scottish Government - email scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk (address the email for his attention) • Tim Loughton MP - Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families (who has ministerial responsibility for youth services), UK Government - email ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk (address the email for his attention) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your local councillors • Your MP • Your Assembly Member (AM) • Leighton Andrews AM, Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning, Welsh Assembly Government, email correspondence.leighton.andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk • Tim Loughton MP - Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families (who has ministerial responsibility for youth services), UK Government - email ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk (address the email for his attention)

What questions can I ask decision-makers to raise this issue?

When writing to or meeting decision-makers you could bring up this issue by asking the following questions:

- Do you believe there is currently sufficient funding for youth services to meet the needs of young people in our area?
- How have spending cuts affected youth services in our local area?
- When decisions have been made to cut youth services have you considered the impact on young people and the quality of the services they use, as well as the value for money?
- How have you involved young people in decisions made about youth service funding?
- Do you believe that youth services can help protect young people at risk of social and school exclusion, anti-social behaviour and crime?

Make sure you let BYC know what they had to say by emailing campaigns@byc.org.uk

How can I take action to support the campaign?



BYC wants to hear the stories of young people and youth workers across the UK about cuts to youth services in your local areas and how these are affecting you personally.

You can let us know what is happening in your area by filling in our quick online survey:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/youthservicecuts>

How can you support me to campaign on this issue?



BYC has Regional Organisers who can come and present on this campaign across the UK and support you to develop your local campaigns.

If you are interested in this opportunity, or would like further information, please email campaigns@byc.org.uk

Where can I find more information on youth service cuts?

NCVYS Financial Monitoring Service

A blog with updates on cuts to services for children and young people.

<http://ncvyspolicy.wordpress.com>

TUC Cuts Watch

TUC are tracking cuts in public spending and public services.

<http://www.touchstoneblog.org.uk/category/cuts-watch>

Guardian Cuts Watch

A cuts watch on public services affecting children.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/public-finance+children>

For Youth's Sake

A campaign by the Children and Young People now that is aiming to highlight the invaluable role young people's services play in communities and raise awareness of how such services cannot be lost without consequence.

<http://www.foryouthssake.co.uk>

For more information

about BYC training:

www.byc.org.uk/training

or to download further resources:

www.byc.org.uk/resources

British Youth Council

We empower young people across the UK to have a say and be heard.

www.byc.org.uk

mail@byc.org.uk