



## PEN PICTURE: Inspiring Young Youth Workers (LAYC)

*Inspiring Young Youth Workers* is Lothian Association of Youth Club's (LAYC's) newest programme, funded by The Gannochy Trust, aimed at supporting and strengthening universal youth work organisations across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

LAYC provides advice, support, information and training with the aim of sustaining and championing the youth and children's work sector. Over 500 youth and children's workers participate in LAYC's youth work led training programme each year. This programme known as Developing Essential Youth Work Skills: Healthy Young Lothian works with specialist partners to provide a high-quality training programme covering a range of topical health and wellbeing training sessions; such as emotional wellbeing, mental health, physical activity, alcohol and substance misuse and sexual health. Alongside these topic specific courses other events are offered to explore the principles and practice of youth and children's work. The training programme creates opportunities for youth and children's groups across Lothian to engage in training and learning events relating to the issues children and young people face; as well as providing a setting to share learning and best practice with peers.

LAYC's *Inspiring Young Youth Workers* project offers fully funded training places as part of the wider training programme. This project has been set up in response to the youth work sector's reliance and engagement with volunteer and sessional staff.

A consultation with LAYC youth work organisations confirmed a proportion of the sessional and volunteer work force are young workers (18-25 years) who themselves engaged as young people in universal youth work and experienced the benefit this engagement can have.

*Inspiring Young Youth Workers* is available to all youth and children's workers across the Lothians aged between 18-25 years. LAYC offers support to all participants of this project in the same way that all training participants are supported to share their learning with colleagues and increase the opportunities and activities available to children and young people. LAYC's premise for providing training and particularly to those new to the sector and practice is to strengthen and improve the quality of youth work practice on offer to children and young people. Training courses and sessions combine practical and theoretical learning for all participants, whilst developing skills, knowledge and confidence alongside a commitment to youth work values.

More information on either of LAYC's workforce development programmes – Developing Essential Youth Work Skills: Healthy Young Lothian or *Inspiring Young Youth Workers* from [@LAYC2015](https://twitter.com/LAYC2015)