

National Suicide Prevention Action Plan Youth Advisory Group

Information Sheet

? What is the aim of the project?

In 2022 a new young people's advisory group was launched as part of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan. The group was being set up to make sure young people's views are heard directly by decision-makers, to influence government policy.

The group is for young people aged 16-24 who have tried to take their own life, or who have suicidal thoughts. It is also for people who have experienced suicide (please note that two years must have passed if you have sadly lost someone through suicide for you to get involved) and those who suffer from poor mental health.

The group is an advisory group for the National Suicide Prevention Leadership Group (NSPLG) and is supported by Children in Scotland and the University of Stirling. These organisations also work with the NSPLG to influence policy.

As we go into our second year of the project, we are now looking for new members.

If this sound like something you might want to get involved in, please read on.



? What will it involve?

The group will meet to discuss issues that matter to you.

The aim of the group is to work together to ensure that lived experience informs the development of suicide prevention policy in Scotland. Our work is used to help deliver the Suicide Prevention Action Plan. This plan sets out all the things government, COSLA and the NSPLG are doing to reduce rates of suicide in Scotland.

Some of the meetings will be online, others will be in person. We meet roughly once a month. We will agree the sorts of topics we want to focus on as a group and discuss these.

We also spend a lot of time making sure we all feel happy and safe to share. We do different fun activities together and the group decide what these are.

Members of the group will be involved initially for about 12 months, but you can stay involved for longer if you like.



What have we done so far and what is next?

We have met online eight times and once in person.

- We have also spoken about 'Time, Space, Compassion' which is a term for an approach Scottish Government is looking to use to inform work about suicide prevention. We have produced some short summaries of what the group thinks and have made some postcards for a conference.
- When you get involved we will spend some time working as a group so everyone knows each other
- We will then look at topics that matter to you as a group and discuss these. We will work with decision-makers to try to improve things for young people.

Why should I get involved?

The group provides the opportunity to meet new people and share ideas. It creates a space to talk about how young people can get better support and experience better wellbeing.

Importantly it's a really good chance to be involved in making a change in Scotland and making sure young people's views are heard.



You can make a difference to suicide prevention and contribute to holding the Scottish Government and COSLA to account



Youth Advisory Group Member



Lived experience has been essential within the creation of policies by decision-makers.

Being involved gives you the space to contribute to this by using your experiences to help implement change for people who might be like you.



Youth Advisory Group Member



I enjoy being part of the group as I get to use my lived experience to inform policy



Youth Advisory Group Member

Who else will be involved?

In our first year we have had seven young people involved. In Year 2, we would like to have around 10-15 young people in the group.

Five members of the group are going to be continuing on the project. There will also be a range of adults involved:



Chris has worked at Children in Scotland for six years and works on different projects with children and young people. He plays cricket and loves coffee.



Lynne works at the University of Stirling doing research into the experiences of children who have been referred to CAMHS for suicidality. Lynne loves mountain biking and walking her dog.



Elaine works with Chris and also does a lot of work with children and young people. She lives in Edinburgh and loves singing and dancing.



Jenny works under the NSPLG and is tasked with supporting this group to consider young people's needs in this work. Jenny loves baking mostly for the cake eating that comes with it and recently has gotten a puppy.

What support will I get to take part?

The group will be working directly with Elaine and Chris. Lynne will also support the group meetings, and Jenny will attend at different points. All the adults are here to provide support and make sure everyone's voice is heard.

To make sure you have the support you need for the project, we would like to connect with an organisation you work with who supports you. This will mean we can keep in touch easily and make sure the project works for everyone. You would be welcome to bring your worker with you to any meetings or arrange for them to be around if you would like to catch up with them after the meeting.

If you have any additional support needs, we would be happy to discuss any specific supports we can put in place to enable you to take part. We can also help provide wi-fi or phone top ups to support you to participate.

Young people who are involved also get vouchers following each session as a thank you for your time and participation.

? How do I get involved?

You just need to let us know you would be interested in taking part by getting in touch with us by emailing Chris Ross at cross@childreninscotland.org.uk.

When emailing us we need you to tell us the following information:

- Name
- Age
- Where in Scotland you live

We also need you to answer the following questions:

- Why do you want to get involved in this group?
- Why is it important that the views of children and young people with lived experience are considered by decision-makers, including the Suicide Prevention Leadership Group?
- What do you like doing in your spare time and why?

When sending us an email to say you are interested, please copy in an adult from the organisation who will provide you with support during the project. This will mean we can keep in touch with both of you. You should talk to them before copying them into the email.

You can send us the answer to these questions just in an email. Or you may prefer to send us a short video? Or share your answers in a poem or poster? That's great! Just email those to us.

All of the information you share with us will be stored securely in line with Children in Scotland's data protection policy. Let us know if you want to know more about this.



? What if I want to find out a bit more?

As part of inviting new members to join the group, we are going to hold a number of "Meet and greet" sessions.

This will be a chance to meet members of the youth advisory group and find out if the group is right for you. We will hold some of these for young people and some for adults who are interested in finding out more about the group for young people they work with. These will take place on:

- Saturday 22nd April - 11:00 - 12:30
- Tuesday 25th April - 17:30 - 18:30
- Thursday 4th May - 17:30 - 18:30

? What if I want to stop being involved?

That is absolutely fine! It is totally up to you if you want to stop being involved, you just need to let us know.

It is also fine to take some breaks from the project and to skip meetings if you don't feel up to it. Your participation is based on what works for you.