

A blueprint for Young Futures hubs

Summary

March 2025





The Government spends billions of pounds on public services trying to rebuild young people's lives after they reach crisis. In comparison, where these hubs already exist, they cost little yet do so much for us and thousands of young people around the country – people who will go on to work, pursue education and train for a career. Investing in hubs is an investment in our future.



Grace Ward, Warith Rawahi and Fiona Annis,
young people who have received support from
early support hubs

The Government's commitment to roll out Young Futures hubs to deliver open access mental health support to children and young people in local communities provides a unique opportunity to truly integrate and invest in early intervention for children and young people.

Hubs of this kind are not new. For many years, co-located services have demonstrated their effectiveness in providing holistic support for children, young people and families. Youth, Information, Advice and Counselling Services (YIACS), otherwise known as 'early support hubs', already offer flexible, community-based advice and mental health support to children and young people aged up to 25, on a self-referral basis.

Hubs of this kind provide support on a range of different issues related to mental health and wellbeing, all co-located under one roof. This often includes counselling and psychological therapies, employment advice, youth services, sexual health and housing support. Whilst these services may differ in the services they offer, they are united by a shared set of characteristics:

- Dedicated services for young people, currently for those aged 10 up to age 25
- Available for children and young people without the need to meet entry thresholds for support
- A focus on what matters to each young person
- Services combining youth work skills with the expertise of advice workers and counsellors or psychotherapists
- A voluntary relationship directed by young people.

The Fund the Hubs campaign group has long been calling for a national network of early support hubs to ensure that children and young people receive timely mental health and wellbeing support. There are over 60 of these hubs across the country, but they are not yet universally available in every community.

The Government's commitment to roll out Young Futures hubs presents a timely opportunity to **consolidate and build upon the existing network of open access, early support hubs operating around the country**. With sustainable funding for existing hubs, alongside the development of new hubs in areas currently underserved, the Government can ensure that every young person has access to a trusted, welcoming support hub within their local community.

Our blueprint sets out a vision for designing and delivering Young Futures hubs, based on the early support hub model:

- Young Futures hubs are co-created with young people to ensure successful engagement and impact. Young people should be involved in all stages of service development and delivery at both a national and local level.
- Hubs are designed and delivered against the values and principles set out in the [Youth Access 'YIACS' model](#).
- Hubs are centred on mental health and wellbeing as the core service offer and cater for young people from 10-25 to cover the whole of this crucial transitional period in a young person's life.
- Young Futures hubs build on, and integrate with, existing youth support infrastructure and expertise within local areas.

It is also crucial the Government use the learning from existing services and from other hub models, including the Sure Start and the Family hubs programme. This will put the Government in a strong position to design and deliver an effective model of support, and meaningfully contribute to the delivery of the Government's missions:

- Hubs can help break down barriers to opportunity by providing holistic support for young people ensuring they have the building blocks in place for a good standard of living. By offering a range of services simultaneously, from counselling and wellbeing support to advice on housing, employment or harmful substance use, hubs can help unlock young people's challenges, such as difficulties in accessing education or work, more effectively and enable them to reach their full potential.
- Hubs can help build an NHS fit for the future and raise the healthiest generation in our history by addressing high levels of mental ill health amongst young people and relieving pressure on the NHS. Hubs should be integrated within the wider mental health system and help reduce remand on NHS services. By addressing the drivers of poor wellbeing and mental ill-health together (such as poor housing, unemployment, and economic inequality) rather than treating individual symptoms, hubs have proven to deliver comparable mental health outcomes to statutory provision and to [reduce the number of presentations to A&E](#).

- Hubs can help stop young people being drawn into crime by providing open access mental health and wellbeing support and social welfare advice for young people to address issues relating to mental ill health, poverty, exclusion, and a lack of opportunity. Hubs should engage with young people on a voluntary basis support young people to find their way on their own terms. This approach fosters trust and enables these services to positively engage [higher proportions](#) of young people who have had contact with the justice system.

Recommendations

By the end of this parliament, it is our hope to see sustained funding for existing hub providers, so that they can continue their offer of support, alongside the implementation of new hubs where they are needed. We therefore call on the Government to set out a roadmap to deliver a hub in every local authority area, sufficiently resourced to offer accessible outreach provision beyond the physical hub, with the aim to have achieved 70% coverage within the next five years and 100% by the end of 2035.

To achieve this, the Government should:

1. Use the upcoming Spending Review to commit to a multi-year funding package for the roll out of Young Futures hubs. We estimate that £169-£210 million per year is required to roll out a hub in every local area, with a further £74m to £121m needed for capital and set up costs.
2. Carry out a comprehensive, cross-government consultation on delivering open access support for children and young people. This should include meaningful engagement with existing service providers, as well as establishing a 'national design panel' to co-design these services with young people.
3. Take a cross-departmental approach throughout the development of the Young Futures programme, ensuring that it aligns with long-term, cross-departmental strategies such as the Youth Strategy, the Child Poverty Strategy, and the 10-year Health Plan.
4. Develop joint commissioning guidance for local areas on implementing Young Futures hubs. This should include a mandated level of funding for hub services to ensure they are adequately resourced.
5. Work with existing hub providers to design a clear and consistent outcomes framework that captures both quantitative and qualitative data.
6. Set out a workforce development plan to support the roll-out of hubs.
7. Put in place a mechanism to capture and share learning and quality practice from hubs to support continuous development.

About this blueprint

This blueprint has been produced by the Fund the Hubs campaign, which was founded in 2020 in response to growing mental health needs experienced by children and young people. This campaign is led by the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition, Centre for Mental Health, Youth Access, YoungMinds, Mind, The Children's Society, Black Thrive Global and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

In autumn 2024, the Fund the Hubs campaign group convened the children's mental health sector, existing hub providers and young people to gather insight into the early support hub model and how it can inform the roll-out of Young Futures hubs. This blueprint brings together these insights. We would like to thank the Prudence Trust for their generous support with this work.

Read A blueprint for Young Futures hubs [here](#).

A blueprint for Young Futures Hubs

Published March 2025

Contact us:

BACP

Joanna Holmes, jo.holmes@bacp.co.uk

Black Thrive

Audrey Muwandi, Audrey.Muwandi@blackthrive.org

Centre for Mental Health

Kadra Abdinasir,
Kadra.abdinasir@centreformentalhealth.org.uk

CYPMHC

Charlotte Rainer, charlotte.rainer@cypmhc.org.uk

Mind

Tolu Fashina-Ayilara, t.fashina-ayilara@mind.org.uk

The Children's Society

Jack O'Neill, Jack.ONeill@childrenssociety.org.uk

Youth Access

Sarah Uncles, sarahu@youthaccess.org.uk

YoungMinds

Ellie White, Ellie.White@youngminds.org.uk