

Youth-Link (Dundee)

Supporting Dundee's Young People

**Children &
Young People**

Volunteers



Support



**Fun
Activities**

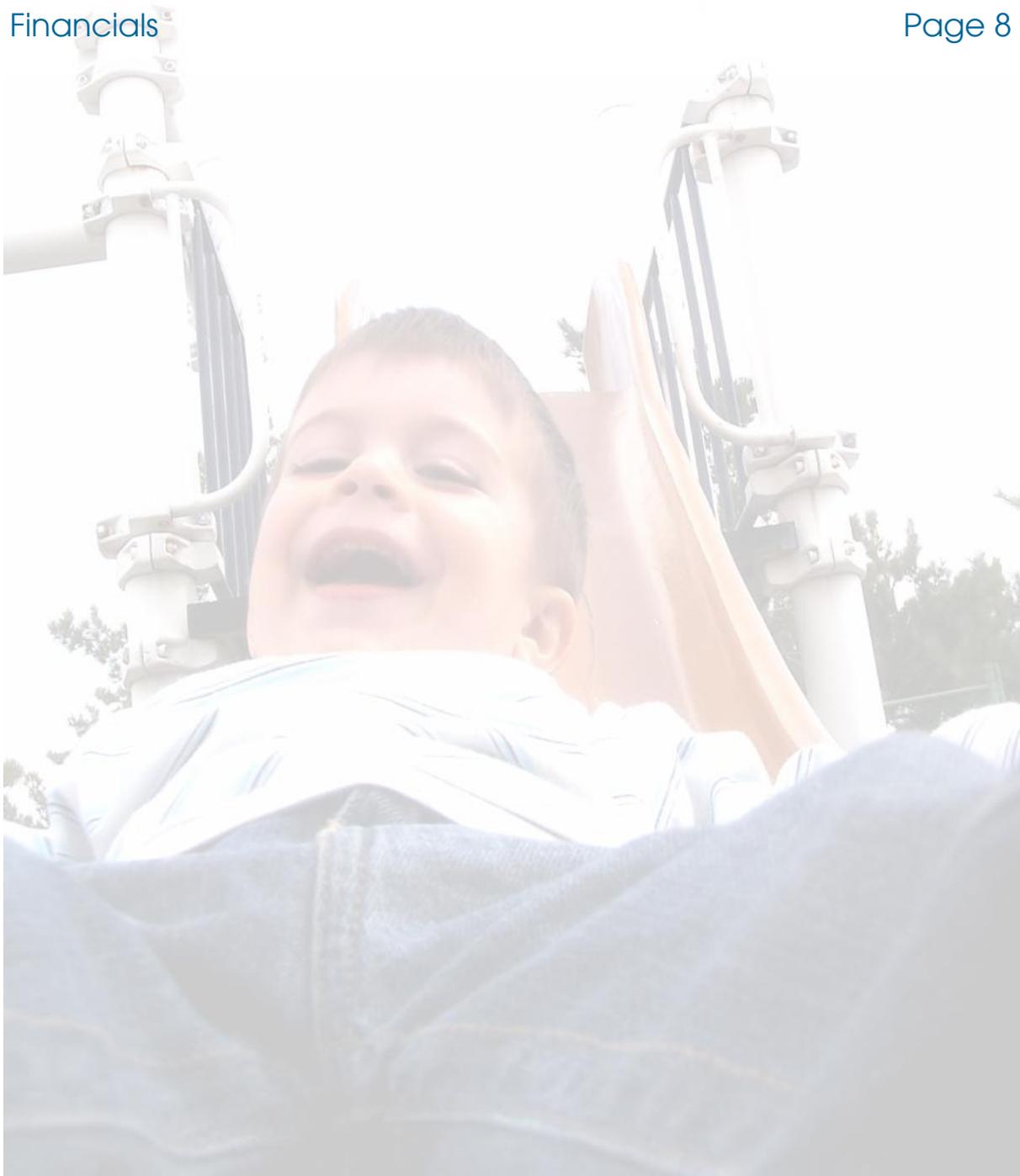


Annual Report

2015-2016

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Convenor's Report



This year has been one of metamorphosis as far as Youth-Link (Dundee) is concerned.

Our new Mission Statement is, "Volunteer befriending offering support to disadvantaged local children and young people."

These are challenging times for agencies, especially those in the voluntary sector who rely on public grants, charitable trusts, public donations and fund raising events in order to survive. Unfortunately we had to close our group work project, Kid's Unlimited due to lack of funding, resulting in redundancy for two staff members Susan Simms and Anne Jordan. We were all shocked at the recent sudden death of our Vice-Convenor, George Sturrock. George, as a valued Board member will be sadly missed.

Youth-Link (Dundee) would not be able to support our young people without our volunteers who tirelessly give up their time. Our One-to-One Befriending Project has offered the support and friendship to 66 isolated, vulnerable and disadvantaged

children and young people in the Dundee area.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank them and our staff members, Linda Smith and Wendy Hunter who are the driving forces behind the successful day-to-day operation of Youth-Link (Dundee).

Looking to the future and rebranding our name; with a significant increase in referrals for young people within the autistic spectrum and with mental health issues, we intend to expand our area of expertise. By 2019 Youth-Link (Dundee) will provide befriending support to children and young people up to the age of 24. We intend to:

- Develop Life Skills and improve well-being.
- Through raising the profile influence local policies and decision making.
- Continue to develop relationships with partnership agencies.

There have been changes to the Board this year with a new Convenor, two new Board members, Harry McEwan and Kevin Todd. Regrettably we lost one of our existing members Jill Reid. Existing Board members, Susan Bruce, Ivana Davidson, Grant Mulholland and Gordon Davidson helped to provide continuity. I would personally like to thank the Board members, themselves volunteers, for their time, effort and continued support.

As Convenor I am looking to the future with great hope and a renewed enthusiasm.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Gordon Davidson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Gordon Davidson

What We Do

We provide help and support through a One-to-One Befriending Service to vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people in Dundee who are experiencing difficulties or who are or at risk of becoming socially isolated.

One-to-One Befriending offers the friendship and support of trained, vetted and disclosure checked adult volunteers to local children aged 5-18 years who have been referred because they are experiencing difficulties within their lives. The volunteers and children enjoy activities together once per week or once every two weeks. These outings as well as giving the children the opportunity to have fun and gain new experiences also give the children the chance to discuss any problems or difficulties they may be having.

The Children and young people are referred for support for a broad range of reasons including Offending, Mental Health Issues, Bullying, Disability, Non Parental Care, Positive Experience, Domestic Violence, Caring Responsibilities, Abuse, Neglect, Substance Misuse, Behavioural Problems, Low Self Esteem, School Issues, Child Protection/Supervision Orders, Bereavement etc.

Our Mission:

Through volunteers, Youth-Link (Dundee) offers befriending support to disadvantaged local children and young people, developing their life skills and improving their well-being.

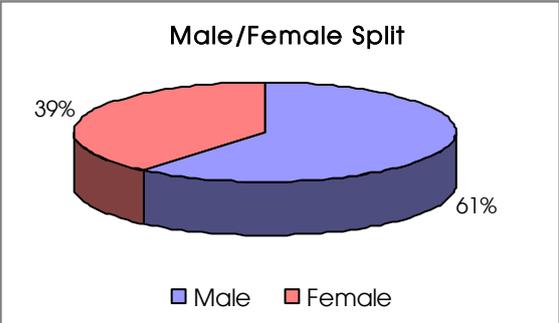
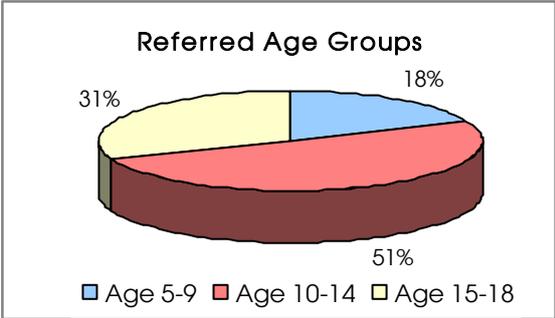
Our Key objectives for the children and young people:

- **Increase Confidence & Self Esteem**
- **Decrease Social Isolation**
- **Build & Maintain Friendships and Relationships**



Statistics

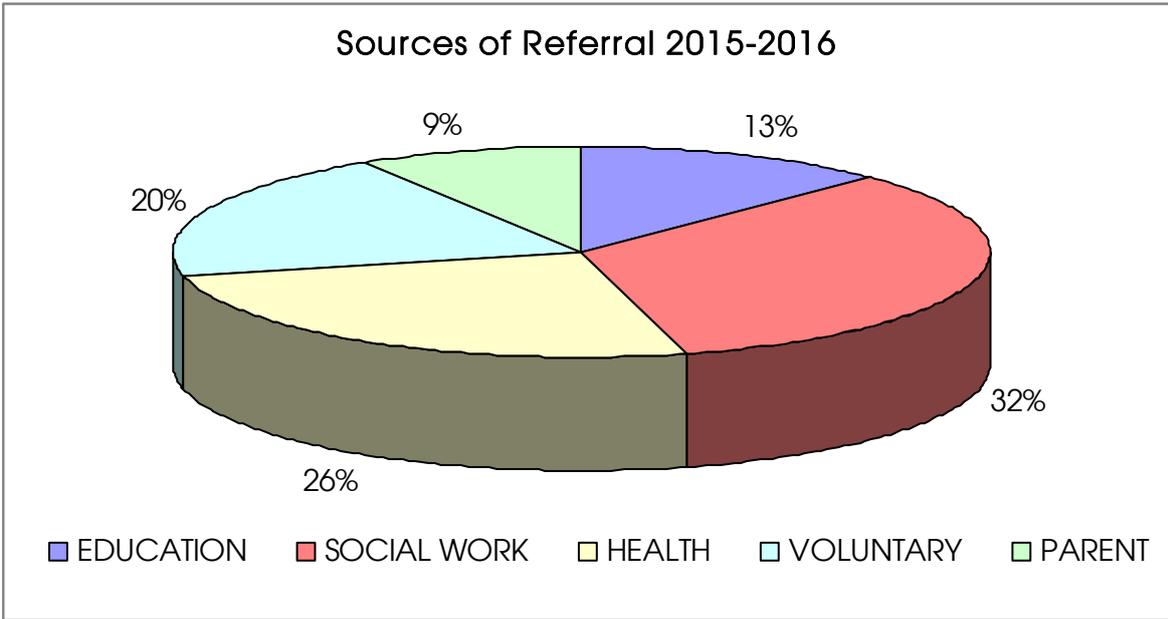
	2015-2016	2014-2015
No. of Referred Children	168	146
No. of worked with Children	66	64
No. of New Referrals	76	62
No. of Volunteer Enquires	49	51
No. of Volunteers Interviewed	42	49
No. of Volunteers Trained & Recruited	28	23
No. of Active Volunteers	50	52



I like getting out of the house and really love going to the park.
(Child)

I have seen such a difference in my child. Thank you Youth-Link.
(Parent)

This is an excellent service which really benefits local children.
(Referrer)



The Children We Support

Logan's Story

Logan is 13 years old, he was referred to our project as he struggled to maintain friendships and relationships. Logan lives with his grandparents and his grandfather suffers from dementia which takes its toll on the whole family. Logan helps his grandmother care for his granddad and although Logan loves his granddad like many teenagers he often resents having to do all of these chores which can cause conflict with his grandmother. Logan has a brother and two sisters who are in foster care and he has supervised contact with both his mother and father, being separated from his family has impacted greatly on him and his relationships with others.

Logan was matched to Hugh in January 2015 and although a little apprehensive at first engaged extremely well with the volunteer. Logan didn't mix well at school and was very distrusting of others, he was in his last year at primary school and his grandparents and social worker were concerned of how he would cope during the transition to high school.

Both Logan and Hugh were keen footballers and amongst other activities would often play five aside football at the local sports centre, this opportunity allowed them to develop a very positive relationship by using an activity they both loved. Logan was also able to form friendships/relationships with other individuals playing the game.

Logan and Hugh were matched for twelve months and during this time Logan's transition into high school was positive, his relationship with his grandparents improved, he had made friends and was going out so often that Hugh often found it difficult to have contact with Logan, this brought a natural end to the befriending relationship.

How we have helped the children:

56% Of children and young people felt that their confidence and self-esteem had significantly improved since receiving support.

Of children and young people felt that they were significantly less socially isolated since receiving support.

56% Of children and young people felt that their ability to build and maintain friendships had significantly improved since receiving support.



Our Volunteers

Feedback from a volunteer befriender

I have had a fantastic time being Sarah's befriender in the last year and feel like she has made a lot of positive progress thanks to Youth-Link's befriending service.

When I first started going on outings with her, she seemed chatty but tended to speak very negatively of her experience trying to make friends, not enjoying school and generally having quite a few 'confrontations'/arguments at home with her mum and stepdad. Over the course of the relationship, I felt like Sarah was really enjoying the activities we went on, ranging from swimming to lots of arts'n'crafts evenings, cinema viewings and walks to simple meals out. I feel like this helped her to open up to me as she was having fun and knew she had all my attention to herself.

Looking back now, it's difficult to remember that there was a time when she didn't have a single friend she spoke about, as she has since made friends at school, has started playing with children from her neighbourhood, has spoken about 'a best friend' and even a boy that she likes from school and has made several positive acquaintances when on outings with me. Other children seemed to find her very approachable and loved talking and playing with her at places like the Olympia or the Fun factory without me having to get involved at all, which I think is evidence of Sarah's progress concerning her socialising skills and personal confidence.

Recently Sarah has also been diagnosed with ADHD and started taking medication, which she says helps her a lot managing her daily demands more easily, which will hopefully also make things easier for her in the future. Apart from this and even though Sarah said in our last meeting herself that she feels like she has been able to make many new friends during our time together, I think she would potentially love to have, and benefit, from another befriender in the future as she has really taken to the befriending idea and it might help her progress even further.

Overall, I think Chloe and I have really changed for the better thanks to the befriending service and I could not recommend it more highly. Thank you so much to Linda and Youth-Link for making this service possible and changing so many young lives for the better!

How our volunteers have helped us

On average, each befriender has spent 3 hours per week with their child, collectively this amounts to a whopping 11,000 of volunteering hours. In addition to our befriending volunteers we also have a number of volunteers who offer us support in different ways which takes the total amount of volunteering hours to around 11,500.

This number is staggering and we would like to thank all volunteers who have committed their time and done such a wonderful job of supporting Youth-Link, the children and the work that we do.



Financials

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2016 Total £	2015 Total £
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Income From

Donations & capital grants	61,783	36,702	98,485	179,710
Charitable activities	5,633	-	5,633	16,998
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	67,416	36,702	104,118	196,708

Expenditure On

Charitable activities	90,629	71,977	162,606	168,775
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	90,629	71,977	162,606	168,775

Net Incoming/(Expenditure)

Net Income/(Expenditure) before transfers	(23,213)	(35,275)	(58,488)	27933
Transfers between funds	(217)	217	-	-
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(23,430)	(35,058)	(58,488)	27,933

Reconciliation Of Funds

Total funds brought forward	28,509	42,757	71,266	27933
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	5,079	7,699	12,778	71,266

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A huge thank you to all our supporters, funders and hard working volunteers - you are what makes our work possible.

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www.youthlinkdundee.org.uk

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