

SUBMITTING EVIDENCE TO A SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE**DATA PROTECTION FORM**

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Date:	19.06.18
Organisation: (if required)	Scottish Youth Parliament
Topic of submission:	Health and Sport – Evidence for the Year of Young People

I have read and understood the privacy notice about submitting evidence to a Committee.

I am happy for my name, or that of my organisation, to be on the submission, for it to be published on the Scottish Parliament website, mentioned in any Committee report and form part of the public record.

I understand I will be added to the contact list to receive updates from the Committee on this and other pieces of work. I understand I can unsubscribe at any time.

Non-standard submissions

Occasionally, the Committee may agree to accept submissions in a non-standard format. Tick the box below if you would like someone from the clerking team to get in touch with you about submitting anonymously or confidentially (not for publication). It is for the Committee to take the final decision on whether you can submit in this way.

I would like to request that my submission be processed in a non-standard way.

HEALTH AND SPORT COMMITTEE

YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE 2018

SUBMISSION FROM SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Introduction

The Scottish Youth Parliament represents Scotland's young people. Our vision for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its children and young people. Our goal is to make this vision a reality, in order to ensure Scotland is the best place in the world to grow up.

We are a fundamentally rights-based organisation, and our mission, vision and values are grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In particular, our purpose embodies Article 12: that young people have the right to express their views freely and have their opinions listened to in all matters affecting them. As a completely youth-led organisation, the words and sentiment of Article 12 have a profound importance for our work.

Our democratically elected members listen to and recognise the issues that are most important to young people, ensuring that their voices are heard by decision-makers. We exist to provide a national platform for young people to discuss the issues that are important to them, and campaign to effect the change they wish to see.

SYP's Values are:

- **Democracy** – We are youth-led and accountable to young people aged 12 to 25. Our democratic structure, and the scale of our engagement across Scotland, gives us a mandate that sets us apart from other organisations.
- **Rights** – We are a fundamentally rights-based organisation. We are passionate about making young people aware of their rights, and ensuring that local and national government deliver policies that allow those rights to be upheld.
- **Inclusion** – We are committed to being truly inclusive and work tirelessly to ensure the voices of every young person from every community and background in Scotland are heard.
- **Political Impartiality** – We are independent from all political parties. By working with all stakeholders, groups, and individuals who share our values, we can deliver the policies that are most important to young people.

Our approach

SYP welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Health and Sport Committee's call for views around the Year of Young People 2018, and invitation to give evidence to the Committee. This response is structured around the two questions asked by the Committee to our members (see below).

The former Conveners of SYP's Health and Wellbeing Committee and Sport and Leisure Committee, Chloé Robertson MSYP and Conor McNamara MSYP respectively, began consulting with their members on 2nd June 2018. Newly elected Conveners after SYP's 66th National Sitting on 9th-10th June 2018 Alice Ferguson MSYP and Ryan McShane MSYP closed the consultation on 14th June 2018.

MSYPs have a unique democratic mandate to represent the views of Scotland's young people. However, given the busy time-period during which this consultation was open, and the time constraints, we received only a few responses from members, detailed below. This means that the response to the questions represent the views of a couple of individual members, and do not necessarily reflect the views on our membership as a whole.

Nevertheless, we have included relevant SYP Policy below to further inform this response. As our membership represents young people aged 12-25, please note that SYP's response is not representative of children below the age of 12.

Response to questions on health and sport

1) How well are the views and interests of young people taken into account in health and sport policy?

Individual members' views:

- 'To be honest, I don't really know. I haven't heard much about any inputs of young people and what decisions have been made accordingly.'
- 'I don't think the Scottish Parliament does nearly enough to consult with young people. If they do and I'm missing this, then it really needs advertised far greater than it currently is.'

2) What are the priorities in health and sport for young people?

- Availability and better early intervention in terms of mental health is necessary.
- Healthy eating particularly in schools - school meals are poor, young people are targeted by promotional deals at takeaways and on sugary and salty foods – 'people develop unhealthy habits for life!'
- Body image needs to be addressed to tackle eating disorders, for example.
- Young people are concerned with the costs of gym memberships, especially those from deprived backgrounds. 'I know many young people in my area who feel the cost of it is unfair.'

SYP Policy

Topic	Policy	Background
Concessionary entry fees for young people to access sport.	“Publicly-funded sports centres and cultural and arts facilities should have reduced entry fees or discounts for young people to ensure they are affordable.”	<i>Lead the Way</i> Manifesto Commitment passed on 12th March 2016 with 83% agreement).
Mental health: -Teacher training -High quality information and services -Care experienced young people -Proportionate funding for mental health services at all levels	“The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that high quality, robust training on how to identify and support young people experiencing mental health difficulties should be a mandatory component of teacher training.”	(Policy Statement, 87% agreement, April 2018, Committee Motion by the Health and Wellbeing Committee).
	“There should be quality mental health services for young people, and support for mental health literacy and awareness, including investment in resources, better policies to educate practitioners, and movement to tackle negative stigmas and barriers.”	<i>Lead the Way</i> Manifesto Commitment passed on 12th March 2016 with 84% agreement).
	“The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that there should be a greater awareness that children and young people growing up in Scotland’s care system are at a greater risk of poor mental health outcomes than the wider population. The Scottish Government and NHS Scotland should work with relevant organisations to ensure that the needs of these young people are being met with accessible, sustainable and high quality mental health services.”	(Policy Statement, 98% agreement, April 2018, Members’ Motion by Helen Johnston MSYP and Ryan McShane MSYP)

	<p>“The Scottish Government should ensure that mental health funding is ring-fenced for young person-specific mental health services, and that this funding is shared proportionately between acute, high-intensity services, and preventative and early intervention support such as drop-in centres, peer support, and services provided by the third sector.”</p>	<p>(Policy recommendation from SYP Research Report, <i>Our generation’s epidemic</i>, available here).</p>
Invisible disabilities	<p>“The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that there should be a greater awareness of ‘invisible disabilities’ (debilitating illnesses and conditions with no visible symptoms), and that more support should be provided in schools for those who have them.”</p>	<p>(Policy Statement, 97% agreement, October 2017, Members’ Motion by Robbie Burgess MSYP and Chloe Whyte MSYP.)</p>
Period Poverty	<p>“The Scottish Youth Parliament believes that access to menstrual hygiene products is a basic human right, and that more effort should be made to ensure that those in disadvantaged financial situations have access to these products.”</p>	<p>(Policy Statement, 99% agreement, March 2017, Members’ Motion by Suki Wan MSYP).</p>
PSHE	<p>“All pupils should have access to up-to-date and effective PSHE (Personal, Social, and Health Education) from a primary age, which addresses lifestyle, health, relationships, equality, social justice, and citizenship.”</p>	<p>(<i>Lead the Way</i> Manifesto Commitment passed on 12th March 2016 with 79% agreement).</p>
UNCRC incorporation (would make children and young people’s rights play in policies above binding, not guiding, in Scots law)	<p>“The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) should be fully incorporated into Scots Law, and the rights of children and young people should be protected and promoted.”</p>	<p>(<i>Lead the Way</i> Manifesto Commitment passed on 12th March 2016 with 79% agreement).</p>