

The Scottish Youth Parliament's *Lead the Way* calls for 2021

In March 2016, after a mass, youth-led consultation, the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) launched its [Lead the Way](#) Manifesto 2016-21. This provides us with a strong mandate to represent the views of Scotland's diverse young people (please see [here](#)) and has been the basis of our work during this five year period. We are currently in the process of developing our 2021-26 manifesto, which we will share with you in autumn 2020.



SYP's Conveners Group have shortlisted the five most pressing issues for young people in Scotland right now from *Lead the Way* to ensure that our calls are heard from the start of Scotland's political parties' 2021 Manifesto development.

If you would like any more information on our manifesto or the issues raised, please get in touch with Kirsty Morrison, SYP's Public Affairs Officer on kirsty.m@syp.org.uk or 0131 552 0452.

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.



AGREE	84%
DISAGREE	3%
NOT SURE	14%

Mental Health

SYP's [Our Generations Epidemic report](#) (published 2016) made various policy recommendations about how young people believe that mental health provision could be improved in Scotland. Whilst some of these have been actioned by decision-makers, others are still to be adopted including:

1. Youth mental health service funding being shared proportionately between high-intensity services and preventive & early intervention support
2. The development of a **Mental Health Standard** in schools to increase the focus on mental health in the Curriculum for Excellence. We call on parties to **include these policies within their 2021 manifesto.**

UNCRC Incorporation

SYP fully supports the Scottish Government's commitment to incorporating the UNCRC into Scots Law. We believe that this must be achieved through **full and direct incorporation**, with legislation passed by the **end of this parliamentary term by 2021**. In the unlikely circumstance that this timeline is not achieved, we urge that incorporation is realised as soon as possible after the 2021 elections and that the full implementation of this legislative change progresses without delay.

You can find SYP's full stance on UNCRC incorporation [here](#).



AGREE	76%
DISAGREE	3%
NOT SURE	22%

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.

Action should be taken to drastically tackle climate change, protect the environment, and promote green initiatives, such as investing in clean and renewable energy, reducing emissions, encouraging recycling, reducing waste, and investing in public and active transport.



Environmental Protection

Following consultation with over 10,000 young people, MSYPs overwhelmingly voted for environmental protection to be the theme of SYP's 2019-20 National Campaign. Formally launching in late October 2019, *Pack it up, Pack it in* will focus on **single-use packaging, recycling and waste management**. We are [currently consulting](#) to gather young people's views on these areas, the results of which we can share November 2019. We ask parties to **stay tuned and echo our specific calls** in relation to these topics.

Education

With the PSE review recommendations calling the creation of a new toolkit and updated guidance, young people continue to call for the following areas to be included in the curriculum to adequately prepare young people of all elements of life: [bereavement](#), [climate change](#), [mental health](#), [political literacy](#), [human rights](#) (also see [here](#)), [invisible disabilities](#), [trade unions](#), and [inclusive sex education](#). We think teacher training is needed to achieve this (see why [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) and that young people must be involved in the [design of PHSE course content](#). These changes and the PSE review recommendations must be achieved by the **March 2021 deadline** at the very latest.

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.



Youth Work Budget Cuts

Youth work changes lives, yet in recent years, we have seen youth work budgets being cut across the country. Through SYP's [Youth Work and Me](#) campaign, we are taking action to challenge these cuts and to showcase the amazing impact of youth work across Scotland.

Earlier this year, 116 young people took part in an online survey to tell us about their experiences of youth work in Scotland (please see our report [here](#)).

From this, we are calling on parties to call on central and local government to commit to **greater funding allocation for youth work and participation**.

High quality youth work should be available to all Scotland's young people.

