

A Blueprint for Youth Leadership

Our Asks for Parliament

“Equipping young people with a toolkit to volunteer and generate positive change in their community can be extremely powerful for all members of society. We can never underestimate the value of leadership skills to young people.”

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, 11-time Paralympic Champion and President of Sports Leaders UK

We want to ensure the UK's future generations are equipped with leadership skills for life. Through volunteering and motivating their peers, young people have the power to generate cultural change – all whilst boosting their leadership capabilities and soft skills.

In this Blueprint for Youth Leadership, we ask Parliament to:

1 RECOGNISE YOUTH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Recognition of the potential for young people to lead, engage and inspire peers and local communities.

2 ACT ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Leadership skills, experiences and opportunities are provided for every school-aged child.

3 CHAMPION YOUTH LEADERSHIP

The importance of developing vocational leadership and soft skills for employability to be valued and promoted across Government

ABOUT SPORTS LEADERS UK

Through awards and qualifications, we create a fun and dynamic focus, with essential health, employment and social benefits. Our courses enable young people to improve their communication and teamwork skills, whilst boosting their motivation, self-esteem and confidence. We reach out to young people throughout society through applied, practical learning.

Sports Leaders UK is an independent social enterprise, funded by income from sales of educational materials, grants for project delivery, commercial partnerships and individual generosity.



Over

100,000

courses delivered in the past year across the UK.

Over

30 years



of empowering young people to become inspirations to their peers in their communities.

1 RECOGNISE YOUTH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Recognition of the potential for young people to lead, engage and inspire peers and local communities.

“Sports Leaders UK not only engage young people with sports and physical activity, but also support them to developing fantastic skills that they will have for the rest of their lives.

From leadership and communication, to boosting confidence and self-esteem, Sports Leaders UK is helping to create the next generation of planners, organisers and innovators to be employed in Wales.”

Ken Skates AM, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism at the Welsh Assembly

More than a third of young people feel they could influence decisions affecting their local area.

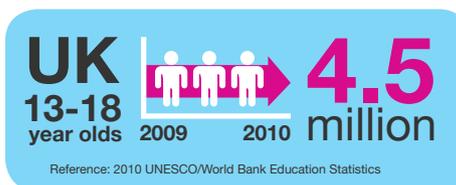
(Reference: Community Life Survey 2013-2014)

At Sports Leaders UK, we would like to harness this enthusiasm and encourage positive change in society. Young people should have the opportunity to become more active and more community minded.

We ask Parliamentarians to:

1.1 Recognise the potential for young leaders to make a meaningful impact on society

Young people can become leaders of change. The pupil population is expected to grow exponentially over the next 10 years and we believe there is a huge opportunity to capitalise on young people's passion for the community.



1.2 Recognise the importance of youth leadership for creating inclusive communities

Far too often young people are put off from fulfilling their potential due to emotional, social and economic constraints. Parliamentarians should recognise youth leaders' capacity for making a difference through peer-to-peer inspiration.

1.3 Recognise sport as a catalyst for youth engagement

Sport is a hook for creating social change. Over a fifth of those who have volunteered in the past year have done so in connection with the sports sector.

(Reference: DCMS, Taking Part 2014/15 Quarter 3)



90% of tutors felt that learners involved with Sports Leaders UK courses helped others get more active.

73% of tutors felt that the courses helped to increase their centre's links with the local community.

Reference: Institute of Voluntary Research, February 2015

Overall, 82%

of learners agreed that they were more likely to help their community in the future because they had done a Sports Leaders UK course.

Reference: Institute of Voluntary Research, February 2015

2 ACT ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Leadership skills, experiences and opportunities are provided for every school-aged child.

We understand that skills are of the utmost importance, to ensure young people succeed in the 21st century.

However, to get to the bottom of the employability conundrum, technical skills alone are not the answer. There must be an emphasis on nurturing rounded individuals.

To make sure school-aged children have the opportunity to become leaders, Parliamentarians must:

2.1 Act to ensure leadership opportunities are an integral part of the school curriculum

Evidence suggests leadership and social action provide young people with life outcomes and higher educational attainment. Personal development should be at the heart of the education curriculum, ensuring students are given the best chance to boost their confidence and self-esteem.

(Reference: Demos, The State of Service Nation, June 2013)

2.2 Act to provide soft-skills opportunities in schools equally alongside technical skills

Education institutions have a role to play in helping students develop and present their soft skills, including teamwork, self-management and communication, alongside formal education. Vocational pathways reward practical, transferable soft skills gained through hands-on experience.



of employers believe that soft skills are just as important as hard, technical skills.

2.3 Act to guarantee careers advice services will promote leadership opportunities

School-aged children need to have the smoothest transition possible from education to employment. We ask that leavers are able to explore leadership opportunities and are encouraged to recognise their achievements.



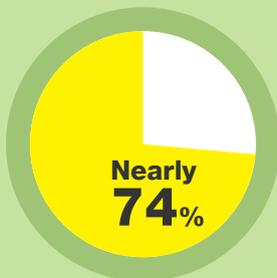
The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) Survey 2013 noted that of establishments recruiting school leavers, 18% of these recruits had poor attitudes to work and lack of motivation.

“Leadership can create an individual that an exam can’t.”

Gill Snape, Teacher at North Liverpool Academy



Over three-quarters of volunteers on our Energy Club initiative reported that their participation had a positive impact on communication and leadership skills.



said that Energy Club had enhanced their organisational skills.

3 CHAMPION YOUTH LEADERSHIP

The importance of developing vocational leadership and 'soft-skills' for employability to be valued and promoted across Government



Leaders can:

See the bigger picture and think strategically

Recognise when to lead and when to follow

Acknowledge contributions from others

Recognise when change is needed

Motivate and lead others

(Reference: McDonald's UK, The Value of Soft Skills to the Economy, January 2015)

Leadership skills need the support to ensure young people continue to be inspired to develop their soft skills and achieve better life prospects.

We ask Parliamentarians to:

3.1 Champion vocational pathways for employment

Aside from traditional pathways for learning, vocational education should no longer be regarded as a second class route to employment. Parliamentarians can promote leadership benefits which open doors for young people to higher education, apprenticeships and beyond.

3.2 Champion those young people who have sought to gain leadership and soft skills

Together with youth unemployment, we must ensure that we close the skills gap by ensuring the next generation of leaders are the best prepared and are given the best opportunity to succeed.

3.3 Champion the role of leadership skills for the workplace

ACEVO's, report on youth unemployment found that while many young people have acquired soft skills, there is evidence to suggest many of Britain's young unemployed have not, damaging their employability prospects.

(Reference: ACEVO: Youth unemployment – the crisis we cannot afford, 2012)



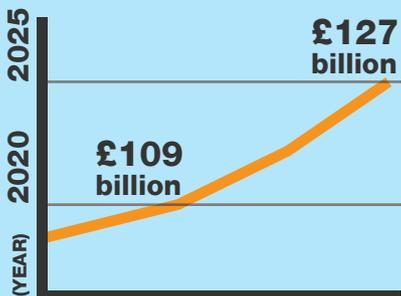
You need lots of different skills, but one of the most important attributes of a good Sports Leader is communication skills: you need to be able to communicate with whoever is in front of you.

The ability to organise is also very important and you need to be able to deliver activities with a lot of enthusiasm and a sense of humour!

Judy Murray, Captain of the British Fed Cup Team



Annual contribution of soft skills to the economy



By 2020, the annual contribution of soft skills to the economy is expected to grow in real terms to £109 billion and to just over £127 billion by 2025.

(Reference: McDonald's UK, The Value of Soft Skills to the Economy, January 2015)

Loss of production



The annual overall expected loss of production due to expected soft skills deficits is anticipated to amount to just under £8.4 billion per annum by 2020.

TALK TO US

We love to talk about youth leadership and connect parliamentarians with schools and community-based centres in their constituencies. If you have any questions regarding the impact of young leaders in the community, soft skills in schools or championing leadership in the workplace, then please contact us.

✉ political@sportsleaders.org

