

YOUNG VOICES

NEWSLETTER

Issue 1
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Welcome to
The Children and
Young People's
Alliance
newsletter!

Youth-Led Change: South Yorkshire Health Champions Launch Bold Manifesto

Championing Health. Empowering Youth. Changing Futures.



Young voices are leading the way in South Yorkshire, and their message is clear: health equity starts with listening, collaboration, and action.

The newly launched **South Yorkshire Health Champions Manifesto**, developed by young people and supported by Chilypep, is a powerful call to transform how we approach health and wellbeing across the region.

What Is the Manifesto?

The Manifesto is the result of two years of dedicated work by young people from across South Yorkshire, brought together through the **Children and Young People's Health Equity Collaborative (CHEC)**.

The manifesto outlines the priorities, ideas, and bold visions that young people believe are essential to creating a fairer, healthier South Yorkshire.

It was officially launched at a high-profile meeting with the **Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Board**, attended by **South Yorkshire Mayor Oliver Coppard**, who also unveiled the **Health is Wealth** report — a ten-year plan to tackle health inequalities across the region.



Children and
Young People
making a
difference





Key themes

The Manifesto is more than a document – it's a movement. It focuses on:

Tackling health inequalities

...by addressing root causes like poverty, housing, education, and access to services.

Boosting mental health and wellbeing

...with youth-designed initiatives like the *Friday Fun Club* in Rotherham.

Amplifying youth voice

...in decision-making, ensuring young people are not just heard but actively shaping policy.

Collaborative working

...between NHS, councils, schools, and community organisations - proving that when young people lead, big things happen.

Tools for change

A piece of standout work as part of CHEC is the insights gathered by and from young people. It has captured real stories and experiences from young people across South Yorkshire. The insights influenced the creation of the Child Health Equity Framework- now a national tool that helps inform how best to target service provision to reach those who most need it.

Download research documents here: [CHEC: Framework for the Drivers of Health](#)

Get involved

Want to read the full Manifesto or learn more about the South Yorkshire Health Champions? Visit: <http://www.chilypep.org.uk/south-yorkshire-health-champions> or explore the resources on the Chilypep Bookshelf.

Let's continue to support and celebrate the incredible work of young people who are shaping the future of health in South Yorkshire.

Influencing policy

They have already shaped the **Government's Child Poverty Strategy** and influenced the priorities of the **South Yorkshire Children and Young People's Alliance**. On 13th November 2025, five Health Champions from South Yorkshire will take their message to the **House of Commons** at the **Children's Commissioner's event**, "*Growing up in a Low-Income Family – Children's Ideas for the Child Poverty Strategy*". This will show Parliamentarians firsthand how poverty affects children and young people's health, education, and opportunities.

Youth voice in action

Mayor Coppard said it best:

"Health isn't just something you get at a hospital - it's built in our homes, our schools, our streets, and our communities."

This echoes the Manifesto's core belief: health is a community-wide responsibility, and young people must be at the heart of it.





International Youth Day – 15th August 2025

Young people across South Yorkshire have been making their voices heard and shaping real change. Through the **Youth Work Unit (YWU)** and **SYMCA**, our Health Champions have joined other young people in meetings on transport, nature recovery, housing, and homelessness — ensuring their views help influence local policies.

SYMCA also released a film featuring our Health Champions, capturing youth voice and celebrating their impact. Many of the points raised align closely with the Manifesto, highlighting shared priorities around health, wellbeing, safe transport, housing, and opportunities for young people.

 Watch the video to hear directly from young people about their experiences and contributions.
Youth MCA Youtube link:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/7OkIMbhDpRU?feature=share>

Experiences & involvement

One of the Young Health Champions, Cohen, talks about his experiences and involvement in the voice and influence work he has done through Chilypep and as South Yorkshire Health Champion before he goes off to university.

You can watch this fascinating and impactful interview here: <https://youtu.be/b51zBMONAp0> and a huge thanks to Cohen for all his work over the years and we wish him all the very best as he starts University this year.

#YouthVoice #SouthYorkshire
#InternationalYouthDay2025



Meet the champions

Each newsletter will introduce you to two of our inspiring South Yorkshire Health Champions, sharing their voices, passions, and the positive changes they're helping to drive.

Angel Omo-Iroque (she/her)

Age: 16

About Me: I'm seeking new experiences to develop my communication and self-expression skills. I enjoy braiding hair, and my personal goal is to become a paediatrician.

Mission: I aspire to create a society where equality is celebrated and discrimination no longer exists. I envision a safe environment where public opinions are valued, leading to a better society where excellent care is accessible to every citizen.

Esther Akeremale (she/her)

Age: 16

About Me: I believe that prevention is better than cure, and I want to help reduce avoidable illnesses by encouraging healthier everyday choices. I have skills in hairstyling, cooking, and creative handcrafts such as crochet.

Mission: My mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals across the community.

Over the next few months the Young Health Champions will be supporting;

- **Martha's Rule Pilot:** Shaping the project with young people's voices.
- **Bullying Definition:** Creating a youth-informed definition to guide schools in Yorkshire and the Humber.
- **Transition Healthcare Training:** Embedding young people's input into regional training.
- **Health & Work Experience Model:** Co-developing an NHS framework with young people.
- **Hospital Inspection:** Inspecting hospital settings using *You're Welcome Standards* and producing recommendations.