

NO LiMiTS

**Helping Young People
Help Themselves**



By Us, For Us

**No Limits' Youth
Empowerment Strategy
2024-2027**

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Introduction

No Limits is committed to ensuring that children and young people from birth until their 26th birthday receive the support they need to thrive and reach their full potential. To help us do this, we have been actively engaging with children and young people to help shape our services, collaborate on projects, and enhance our support offer. We want to share power with children and young people, by championing their ideas and supporting them to advocate for themselves.

Our approach aligns closely with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12), which asserts the right of children and young people to participate in decisions affecting their lives and futures.

Together with young people we have created this strategy to elevate our level of youth empowerment, pushing beyond our previous successes to achieve more meaningful collaboration. Right from the beginning we have worked together, with our collective thoughts, ideas and experiences helping shape its every word. Our strategy is further informed by valuable insights from Hear by Rights (NYA, 2022), Sharing power with young people (TLF, 2022), and Altogether Better (YA, 2018). We are committed to upholding these principles and ensuring their integration into this youth empowerment strategy.



What is youth empowerment to our young people?

For us (children and young people), youth empowerment means being right in the mix - actively involved, engaged and feeling empowered to make decisions that affect our lives, our communities and everything around us.

It's all about having a say in what goes on, from big decisions to the little everyday stuff. No Limits are all about working together to make things better. It's not just them making the call - it's all of us, working side by side, to get the best results together.

Youth empowerment could include:



Supporting and developing youth-led initiatives that are important to us



Helping us advocate for ourselves



Changing, developing and reviewing No Limits' services



Changing and adapting policies



Helping No Limits grow and learn



Having a say in the recruitment of suitable staff



Sharing our work with the public

How our young people describe youth empowerment

A word cloud of terms used by young people to describe youth empowerment. The words are arranged in a non-linear fashion, with varying font sizes and colors. The most prominent words are 'collaboration' (large, dark blue), 'together' (large, orange), 'teamwork' (large, pink), and 'feedback' (large, dark blue). Other significant words include 'empowerment' (dark blue), 'development' (green), 'respect' (pink), and 'decisions' (orange). Smaller words include 'trust', 'power', 'leading', 'control', 'equality', 'advocacy', 'ideas', 'motivation', 'engagement', 'culture', 'success', 'bridging', 'voice', 'innovation', 'inspiration', 'sharing', 'influence', 'focus', 'achievement', 'mission', and 'justice'.

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As young people, we want to be involved more than just No Limits asking for our opinions; we want to be an active part of the organisation and services. We want to be involved in shaping change together, for us and other children and young people in the future. By us taking the lead we will get the best support, experience and outcomes possible.

A word from our Youth Ambassadors

“ The world changes so often, that the strategies that worked even one year ago are not relevant today. Older people cannot comprehend the barriers that young people face in the world today to the extent that, without youth participation, it would be impossible to provide a service that will help young people through the issues that they face.

We have so little power in this society that youth participation is a way for us to help and advocate for ourselves.

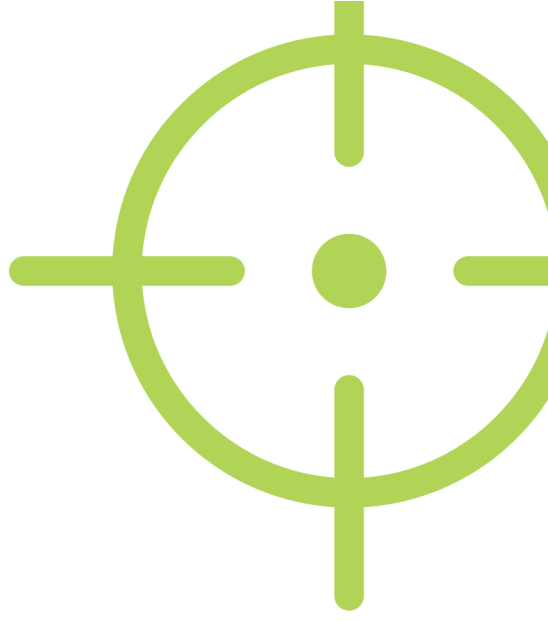


Our commitment to a whole-organisation approach

For youth empowerment to be effective and lasting, it needs to be an ongoing collaboration we build together, not just a one-time thing. Sustaining it requires continued commitment in terms of contributions, staff time, and funding. No Limits are committed to integrating and promoting youth empowerment across all service levels, fostering a culture that truly centers around the needs of young people.

Our strategy's key aim

- Ensure that children and young people engaged in our youth empowerment initiatives reflect the diversity of the local population, including socially marginalised and vulnerable groups.
- Facilitate young people's active involvement across all aspects of No Limits and its services, with a focus on sharing power and empowering self-led participation.
- Provide engagement opportunities at local and national level participation.



Our action plan

Sharing Power

Increase children and young people's involvement in decision-making processes (sharing power with young people).



Giving young people a voice

Create a dedicated space for children and young people to connect and discuss opportunities for sharing power, voice their opinions and participate in decision-making processes within No Limits, ensuring inclusivity and equality to those from different backgrounds and experiences.



Inclusive participation

Children and young people's life experiences are valued, and they are involved in the design, delivery, and evaluation of all No Limits services including, including workforce training ensuring structured mechanisms are in place that allow ongoing evaluation of services, ensuring children and young people's input is used for continuous improvement.





Empowering

Offer training and capacity-building opportunities for young people to develop leadership, communication, and decision-making skills.



Youth-focused recruitment

Incorporate the active participation of children and young people in the recruitment process for the No Limits workforce, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in decision-making regarding hiring and selection.



Valuing young people's contribution

Promote a culture within No Limits that values and respects the contributions of young people. By creating an environment where young people feel heard, valued and empowered to share their ideas and options without fear of judgement or dismissal.

Our action plan

Opportunities

National and regional level participation opportunities are promoted to young people in the service, working collaboratively with local and regional partners to promote this e.g. commissioners, referral organisations, local community groups etc.



Access to participation

Develop awareness among young people in our service about national and regional participation opportunities through targeted campaigns, informational materials, and digital platforms, ensuring easy access to relevant information.



Fostering partnerships

Support collaborations with local and regional partners including commissioners, referral organisations, and community groups, to establish a network actively promoting national and regional participation opportunities for young people.



Outreach

Create outreach programmes to engage local and regional partners, having active involvement of young people to increase awareness, and encourage participation.



Reflect and evaluate

Form a strong monitoring and evaluation system to track the impact of our efforts, regularly assessing participation rates and gathering feedback.



Our action plan

Youth-led

Encourage and support youth-led projects within No Limits. Empower young people to identify issues that are important to them and develop projects or initiatives to address these issues.



Building skills and confidence

Build an environment to empower children and young people by providing them with necessary skills and resources to initiate and lead their own projects, enhancing their confidence and capabilities.



Engaging youth perspective

Apply a continuous feedback loop that involves regular communication with children and young people to understand their experiences, challenges, and aspirations in starting and leading projects. Use this feedback to refine and improve support structures and processes.





Inclusion and diversity

Encourage involvement of children and young people from all backgrounds, cultures, abilities, and experiences, ensuring opportunities are accessible for all individuals.



Celebrating young people's achievements

Develop processes to highlight and celebrate the projects started and led by children and young people, encouraging a culture of recognition and appreciation within No Limits and the broader community.



Establishing frameworks

Create structures and processes within No Limits which support children and young people's ideas and projects, ensuring they have the necessary guidance and resources at each stage.

