

CONNOR DWYER

Organisations I've Participated With

UK Youth Parliament, British Youth Council, Friends of the Earth, Strong Young Minds



Name: Connor Dwyer

Age: 17

Where I Live: Preston, Lancashire

"Improving youth engagement is vital to improve provision for young people, in mental health, in the environment and in politics."

I have worked with the UK Youth Parliament since 2014, having been elected to represent Preston. In the role, I have worked to introduce political education classes to secondary schools, as well as lowering the voting age, and encouraging decision makers to listen to the voices of young people.

After producing a report on issues surrounding young people's mental health services and working with the Department for Education, I began work with DCC Andy Rhodes to set up a charity aiming to challenge the issues I'd identified in schools and colleges. In October 2015, Strong Young Minds became a registered charity which started work in educational establishments in Lancashire. We offer resilience training, helping young people respond to their own and others' mental health needs. Participants in the programme are empowered to become ambassadors for positive mental health. I sit as Vice-Chair and Trustee of the charity. It makes me so proud to see the positive effects we're having on the

people who participate.

Currently I am working to engage more with the wider community too, attending peaceful anti-racism demonstrations, supporting the local homeless community and campaigning for renewable energy and against fracking. I'm looking to encourage the setting up of youth climate action groups, to further show that youth engagement can really make a difference, even in the face of such a large and important issue.

CHARACTER VIRTUES

I'VE DEVELOPED THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ACTION

Confidence | Resilience, Perseverance & Determination | Leadership
| Community Awareness | Hope/Optimism

#iwill

... take social action out to where young people feel comfortable and welcome, making it easier to get young people from diverse backgrounds and communities to have their say on issues they felt they couldn't have an impact on.