



# **SCOTLAND'S FIRST DIGITAL YOUTH WORK HUB LAUNCHED AS THOUSANDS OF YOUNGSTERS STRUGGLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH DURING PANDEMIC**

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Thousands of young Scots are set to benefit from the creation of Scotland's first Digital Youth Work hub.

Launched by YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work, [digitalyouthwork.scot](https://digitalyouthwork.scot) is a collection of the most relevant and up-to-date resources for anyone working with and supporting young people in online spaces.

The initiative is the result of a 4000% increase in the number of inquiries from organisations for digital training received by the agency in the wake of Covid-19, after hundreds of thousands of young people were immediately cut off from vital local support due to lockdown restrictions.

To meet the increased demand, YouthLink Scotland worked in partnership with Youth Scotland, Young Scot, LGBT Youth Scotland and YMCA Scotland to draw upon the greatest digital minds in the youth work and third sectors, ensuring the essential support thousands of young Scots rely on was able to be adapted for online delivery almost overnight.

With the launch of [digitalyouthwork.scot](https://digitalyouthwork.scot), youth workers and education practitioners now have a one stop shop for digital learning in Scotland.

Training, webinars and toolkits are available to explore key issues such as online safeguarding, digital privacy, and cybersecurity, while fun activities, wellbeing applications and gaming opportunities are signposted to help practitioners maintain meaningful engagement with young people on trusted platforms.

Whether you're a completely new to the digital realm and need guidance on which platforms to use to safely connect with young people, or you're looking for new cyber school activities to help develop young people's skills – [digitalyouthwork.scot](https://digitalyouthwork.scot) caters for all levels of digital engagement.

Tim Frew, CEO YouthLink Scotland said:

*"Youth work is about meeting young people where they are. For many young people during this pandemic, that place is online and it has been inspiring to see youth workers rapidly transform their services to ensure thousands of young across Scotland get the vital support they need. This fab collection of digital youth work resources will enable youth workers to continue to support young people to overcome loneliness and isolation and engage in educational and fun activities both now and beyond COVID-19."*



Hilary Phillips, who has been working with YouthLink Scotland since early April to support digital development across the sector, said:

*"A lot of valuable work has been done to take youth work online in the last few months and we don't want that progress to get lost just because it all happened so quickly. New resources and guidance are now available and we have already seen a massive benefit in organisations working together and sharing their resources. We know that youth workers and managers value being able to find the right resources quickly and easily, and that's what we are aiming for here."*

## **Ends**

For interview and media inquiries please contact Sarah Paterson, Communications and Public Affairs Manager at YouthLink Scotland on 07804 603762 and at [spaterson@youthlinkscotland.org](mailto:spaterson@youthlinkscotland.org).

## **Notes to editors**

Link to report:

YouthLink Scotland is the national agency for youth work. It is a membership organisation and is in the unique position of representing the interests and aspirations of the whole of the sector both voluntary and statutory. We champion the role and value of the youth work sector, challenging government at national and local levels to invest in the development of the sector.