



A Guide to Social Action
thekeyuk.org

WELCOME TO YOUR SOCIAL ACTION GUIDE

Who are we? We are The Key, a North East charity empowering young people to unlock fulfilling futures for themselves.

What is this guide for? This guide is here to help you every step of the way as you plan and deliver your KEY+ social action project. Whether you're just getting started or already have an idea, you'll find inspiration, practical tips and useful tools to help bring your project to life and make a positive difference in your community.

Inside, you'll find everything from generating ideas and planning your project to promoting your work and celebrating your impact.

CONTENTS

- pg. 3 - What is Social Action?
- pg. 4 - The Benefits of Social Action
- pg. 5 - Where Do I Start?
- pg. 6 - Project Ideas
- pg. 7 - Top Tips for Success
- pg. 8 - Let's Get Started



**Information found through research, #iwill and EmpowHER*



WHAT IS SOCIAL ACTION?

Social action is when people come together to make a positive difference in their communities. It's about taking action to improve the lives of others, tackle local issues, and create positive change. There are lots of ways to get involved.

Fundraising, campaigning, and volunteering are some of the most common types of social action, but they're not the only ones. Whether you want to raise awareness, organise an event, support a local cause, or use your own skills and talents to help others, every contribution matters.

This toolkit is here to help you plan and take part in your own social action activities. Whether you're creative, sporty, shy, confident, or somewhere in between, there's a place for everyone. You might enjoy volunteering, fundraising, campaigning, or trying something completely new. Whatever your interests or strengths, you'll find ideas, tips, and guidance to help you make a real difference in your community. Every action counts, and together we can create positive change.

3 TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTION

Fundraising - a way of collecting money to help support a charity, a cause, or a project that makes a difference.

Campaigning - speaking up for something you care about and encouraging others to help make a positive change.

Volunteering - Volunteering is giving your time to help others, your community, or a cause without getting paid.

SOCIAL ACTION IN PRACTICE

Take a look at these inspiring social action projects led by young people. Discover what they did, the difference they made and how their ideas came to life.



THE QUACKADOODLES

The Quackadoodles used their love of music to organise their own live gig, raising over £800 for Mental Health Matters. Alongside performing an original song about being your authentic self, they planned every aspect of the event, from budgeting and marketing to organising rehearsals and merchandise.



THE OTHER DIRECTION

The Other Direction wanted to tackle vaping among young people by creating a campaign. They carried out peer-led research and used their findings to create an awareness video, school and youth group resources, and support bags to encourage healthier choices. The group also shared their work at youth events and an NHS health conference.



THE JAMMIE DODGERS

The Jammie Dodgers wanted to make a difference for animals in need by supporting their local cat and dog shelter. After contacting the shelter to find out what was needed most, they collected and donated essential supplies before spending time volunteering at the shelter. During their visit, they learned more about the animals' stories and how the shelter cares for them every day.

WHY TAKE PART IN SOCIAL ACTION?

BENEFITS FOR YOU

Discover new passions & perspectives

Social action helps you understand different issues, see things from new perspectives and discover causes, interests or talents you might not have known you had.

Build confidence and wellbeing

Taking part can help you step outside your comfort zone, build confidence and develop a sense of purpose. Being involved in something meaningful can also help reduce feelings of stress, anxiety and loneliness.

Develop valuable skills

You can build skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, leadership, project management and public speaking.

Improve future opportunities

Social action gives you practical experience that employers value, helping you develop skills and examples you can use in applications for jobs, college, volunteering or further opportunities.

Meet new people

Working towards a shared goal helps you build friendships, strengthen relationships and connect with people you may not normally meet.

"It's taught me that young people matter and that even if we feel like we're so miniscule compared to everyone else, we really do have an impact."

Bethany

78%
of young people
feel a stronger
sense of
belonging in their
community

44%
of young people
said they became
more confident
sharing ideas and
expressing
themselves.

*Quote from a young person who took part in social action through KEY+
*Figures based on findings from the [National Youth Social Action Survey 2019](#)

BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Create positive change

Social action helps communities tackle issues that matter, from improving local spaces to supporting people who need help.

Bring people together

Projects can unite different groups of people around a shared goal, helping build trust, stronger relationships and a greater sense of community.

Raise awareness

Young people can help others understand important issues and encourage more to get involved.

Solve local problems

Social action can lead to real improvements, such as cleaner parks, community gardens, food banks, fundraising or campaigns that support others.

Give young people a voice

Social action allows young people to share their experiences, highlight issues they care about and influence positive change.

Over
50,000
people were reported to have
benefited from youth social
action projects in 2019 and
2020!

Figure from UK Community
Foundations 'Youth Social
Action in Communities' report

WHERE DO I START?

Big changes often start with a few simple questions. Use these six prompts to help turn your idea into action.

Who

Who do you want to engage with your social action project? How can you make your project fun, exiting and accessible?

Why

Why do you want to get involved with social action? Why does this matter to you? Think about your own experiences or issues you care about in your community.

When

When is the right time? There is no set timeline for social action. Start whenever you're ready, or plan your project around local or national events.

What

What specific challenges need addressing? What needs to change? Think about the challenges in your community and how your skills could help.

Where

Where will your project make a difference? Social action can happen anywhere, whether its locally, nationally or internationally. Think about where your project will have the greatest impact.

How

How will you make it happen? Think about who can support you and how your strengths can help your project succeed.

IDEAS

Issues to tackle:

- Climate Change
- Refugees/Asylum Seekers
- Food banks
- Homelessness
- Poverty
- Mental Health
- Disability Awareness
- Identity
- Politics
- Racism
- Sexuality
- War
- Bullying
- Eating Disorders
- Human Trafficking
- Modern Slavery

Get active and ask people to sponsor you:

- Sponsored run/jog
- Sponsored walk
- Fitness challenge
- Step challenge
- Sports challenge
- Yoga challenge
- Sponsored swim
- Climbing challenge

Volunteer and help others:

- Animal shelter
- Care home visits
- Community events
- Youth clubs
- Charity volunteering

Care for your community:

- Community clean up
- Community garden
- Food bank collection
- Community pantry
- Coffee morning
- Book swap
- Litter pick
- Community fun day

Make fundraising exciting with games and prizes:

- Raffles
- Lucky dip
- Guess the score
- Tombola
- Art or craft competition
- Spin the wheel
- Best dressed competition
- Seasonal competitions
- Photo scavenger hunt
- Pet photo competition
- Bean bag toss

Raise awareness:

- Awareness campaign
- Posters
- Social media campaign
- Short film
- Assembly/Presentations
- Podcast
- Information packs

SOCIAL ACTION IDEA GENERATOR



TOP TIPS

- 1. Ask for Support:** You don't need to know everything about your chosen cause. Reach out to charities, community groups, teachers, friends, or local organisations for advice and support. There are lots of people who will be happy to help you along the way.
- 2. Work Together:** Teamwork makes a difference! Share your ideas, skills, and experiences with others, and be open to learning from the people around you. Working together often leads to even better results.
- 3. Make It Count:** Think about how your project can create lasting change. The best social action projects don't just make a difference today — they leave a positive impact for the future.
- 4. Use Social Media Wisely:** Social media is a great way to share your project, raise awareness, encourage donations, and inspire others to get involved. Use it positively and responsibly to spread your message and celebrate your achievements.
- 5. Be Creative:** There are so many ways to make a difference. Whether you choreograph a dance, create artwork, organise a challenge, or come up with a brand-new idea, don't be afraid to think outside the box. Let your creativity shine!
- 6. Find Your Voice:** Speaking out can help raise awareness and inspire change. You could organise a stall or community event, give a presentation, create a campaign, or write letters to local decision-makers. Every voice matters, and yours can make a difference.

Take time to reflect on what you have learnt.

Set your goals high to challenge yourself.

Make your project impactful and positive.

Try to think creatively and outside the box.



WHATS NEXT?

Take some time to work through these questions - they'll help you think more deeply about your project and how you can make the biggest impact!

What problems do people in your local area face?

A large, solid pink rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question about local area problems.

What will you educate yourself on?

A large, solid light green rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question about self-education.

How will your project create lasting change?

A large, solid yellow rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question about lasting change.

Who are you going to reach out to for help and what for?

A large, solid blue rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question about reaching out for help.

What skills do you have to help fix problems in your local community?

A large, solid orange rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question about skills for community problems.

How will you look after your wellbeing throughout your project?

A large, solid teal rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question about wellbeing.