

Young People's Support should be **UP TO THE AGE OF 25**



Centre 33 believes:

Young people experiencing major life transitions such as changing schools, leaving care or leaving home, need appropriate, young people-focussed support up to the age of 25. Actively redesigning transitions between children's and adult support services ensures young people don't fall through gaps and that their needs are met.

Evidence shows that:

- Young people's development continues (at different rates) up to the age of 25 - systems are poorly designed around their developmental realities. ([Youth Access, 2017](#))
- The system is designed to gatekeep, and in reality cut off points become even younger as statutory services' waitlists grow. ([Youth Access, 2017](#))
- Over ½ of young people aged 16–25 with a mental health need do not receive support; the gap widens for those aged 21–25, where nearly 2/3 receive no support. ([Youth Access, 2017](#))
- The majority of mental health problems begin before the age of 25 with prevalence and complexity increasing during the transition into early adulthood. ([Kessler et al., 2005](#))
- Drop off in service accessibility and engagement is high at key transition points, particularly between children's and adult services. (HSIB, 2021)

This means that Centre 33:

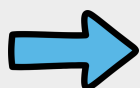
- Offers support up to age 25 delivering targeted support for key transitions, including from school into further education, employment or independent living.
- Reduces reliance on referrals and thresholds by maintaining open, entry points so young people are not required to re-access services as they grow older.
- Adapts support to the changing needs of young people in early adulthood, recognising increasing complexity across mental health, housing, education and relationships.
- Works with partners to bridge gaps between children's and adult systems, particularly in areas such as substance misuse, employment, and further education.

SECTOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

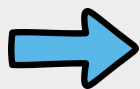
(for commissioners, policy makers, and system leaders)



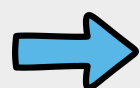
- Build a shared understanding of how young people aged 16–25 experience the system, including where they fall through gaps and patterns of crisis, urgent and preventative support.



- Commission accessible, early and holistic support for young people aged 16–25, reducing reliance on thresholds and late intervention.



- Jointly commission across children's, youth and adult systems to remove age-based cut-offs, improve continuity, and enable flexible pathways of support.



- Co-produce services with young people and deliver them in partnership with the voluntary and community sector, recognising their role in reaching and engaging young adults.