

FEELING
STRONG

OUR 23-26 STRATEGY



WHO WE ARE

We are Feeling Strong, Dundee's youth mental health charity. We exist to make sure that every young person aged 8-26 in Dundee who has experienced a mental health or wellbeing challenge is supported to reach their full potential. We deliver projects, services and campaigns in the community to tackle stigma, build confidence, develop resources, create networks and most importantly support the positive recovery journey of our young people.

FOREWORD

Feeling Strong has quickly become a household name in Dundee but we still have much more work to do. As we approach our fifth birthday we've asked ourselves who we want to be three, five, even ten years from now, and what we have to do to make our ambitions a reality. Our vision is to create a Dundee filled with connections and a strong safety net for young people who all too often slip through the cracks. The environment in which we operate is far from perfect, so it's up to us to use our influence and leverage as the authentic voice of young people in Dundee to challenge when needed and support where appropriate.

Building not just a sustainable organisation but a wider movement in Dundee will take a lot of planning and coordination - only if we work together can we make the transformational change that our young people so desperately need. So to the person reading this strategy we invite you to make the change with us - you'll never know what you could do to help unless you ask.

BROOK MARSHALL

ABBIE WILSON

GABRIEL CALVERT

OUR PRINCIPLES

LEADERSHIP

Not only should we be contributing to the local and national agenda, we should play a part in leading it. We're not afraid to stand up for what we believe in, even if that means making waves, and amplifying the voices of the voiceless to be leaders in their own right.

EMPATHY

Listening is easy, acting on what you hear is hard. We'll work with our young people to really understand their experiences and use those to shape our work. We'll harness those experiences to create opportunities where there were none, and foster an environment of respect, understanding and equity.

INCLUSIVITY

We'll ensure that accessibility is at the heart of our work, standing alongside all young people who want to work with us, no matter their circumstances or background. We know that diverse identities play a huge role in the barriers faced by our young people so intersectionality will underpin how we work.

HOW WE'LL MAKE THE **CHANGE**

Feeling Strong's approach has changed in the last few years - initially we were purely focused on employability, but our young people asked us to deliver more and so we did. Now we offer a range of projects, services and campaigns ably delivered by a committed and dedicated staff and volunteer team of young people with their own lived experience of mental health and wellbeing challenges.

Our place based approach is working, but it is our aim to further embed ourselves in both our local community and the decision making groups that affect it, bringing the authentic voice of young people to the table. We want to

further our work focused on recovery by including an element of early intervention and prevention. We also know that we have to do more to level the playing field because the barriers our young people face can often seem insurmountable when compared to those of their peers.

We have distilled our ambitions to three themes across our three workstreams:

OUR OWN PATH

BEATING THE ODDS

THE HEART OF DUNDEE



OUR OWN

PATH

Our Campaigns & Content workstream puts Feeling Strong front and centre in Dundee, playing a leadership role to try and improve outcomes for our young people. We want to develop the work we do by bringing local services together.

OUR VOICES

We will work with our young people and partner organisations to further develop our influence in local and national decision making groups, delivering relevant campaigns and acting as a critical and challenging friend when needed.

OUR PERSPECTIVE

We will become the go-to service for warm and person-centered information and resources that take into account the diverse needs of our young people and the issues that are unique to Dundee.

OUR SERVICES

We will continue our work using our influence to improve outcomes in statutory services for Dundee's young people, working both inside and outside the system as needed.

BEATING THE ODDS

Inclusivity is what defines our Community & Learning workstream - doing our best to level the playing field for our young people by offering both formal and informal accessible learning opportunities in the community.

LIFE SKILLS

We will offer a new range of services to tackle the entrenched life skills gap between young people with mental health and wellbeing challenges and their peers, removing key barriers.

LEARNING BITES

We will offer a range of bespoke training for young people, community groups and larger organisations on how mental health can impact our work, studies and wider issues in order to increase awareness.

TRANSITIONS

Going from school into work or university can be an uncertain time for many, and the stress can exacerbate mental health challenges. We will develop new support for the transitional stages of young people's lives.

THE HEART OF DUNDEE

Our Recovery & Support workstream is based around our value of Empathy, finding out what our young people need from us to heal and supporting them on their recovery journey.

SUPPORT GROUPS

We will continue to develop our provision of activity groups to include condition and symptom based support groups to create informal networks.

COMMUNITY LINKS

We will create a single referral pathway for individuals, partner organisations,

community groups and statutory bodies to simplify and streamline the process of getting involved with our work, and provide them with options for a person-centred plan of support.

EARLY INTERVENTION

We will further develop our work with schools to identify which young people may be at risk of escalation to formal statutory services without targeted deescalation support by providing a range of non-clinical therapeutic and peer-based input.

OUR NEXT STEPS

Our vision is ambitious, and we won't be able to deliver it alone. We'll be seeking the support of partners, developing a broad coalition of different groups across the community who share our desire to build a safer Dundee, where young people are supported to thrive and empowered to lead the change that affects them. Most importantly however, the change we'll make together requires the buy-in of our core demographic, the young people of Dundee. We'll work hard to bring our work to as many of their communities as we can, sharing our vision and making our work as easy

to engage with as we can. We hope that you've taken away something from this strategic manifesto, and that you'll want to support the work we do for those who need it most. We're always keen to work in partnership, so get in touch - we can only make this work if we move forward together.

If you would like to help us out on our journey why not become a member or supporter of Feeling Strong? Our members and supporters receive regular updates on our projects and services - sign up on our website!

**THANK YOU
FOR READING!**



LIVE FOR
THE
MOMENT

Feeling Strong would like to thank every young person, partner, volunteer, staff member and trustee who contributed to our strategy.

To find out more about the work we do visit our website at:

<http://www.feelingstrong.co.uk/>

Or check out our social media.

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