

Taking Care of Our Future: A Manifesto by Young People, for Young People

NYAS Cymru Manifesto for the 2026 Senedd Elections

We are members of the Young People's Advisory Group in NYAS Cymru; a group of care-experienced young people and we want to help other children and young people. We believe if the Welsh Government listen to our Manifesto asks, it will help all the future generations of children and young people in Wales.

We want **all** children and young people in Wales to feel safe and able to have their voices heard. We want to make sure they do not feel like they are alone and that they are being listened to by decision makers. This is a manifesto by young people, for young people, that calls on the next Welsh Government to take care of our future. You can help take care of our future by supporting these four asks in the next Senedd Elections.



This document aims to encourage candidates of all political parties or none to make commitments in their campaigns during the 2026 Wales General election, which would champion the rights of children and young people. It is not intended to promote or support any particular political parties or candidates, and must not be used for this purpose.

1

Making sure all children and young people are at the centre of Welsh Government decisions

Why does this matter to us?

"Children and young people are the future of what is created in Wales, so it is important our opinions and views are considered when Welsh Government are making decision. Sometimes, adults can make decisions from their own perspectives and not from our perspectives as children and young people. Adults should not be the only ones making important decisions as the outcomes will shape everyone's future. We want to help make changes in Wales!"

What could this look like?

- Appointing a Minister for Babies, Children and Young People in Welsh Government.
- Giving more powers to the Children's Commissioner in Wales.
- Placing a legal duty on Welsh Government to publish targets every year to end child poverty in Wales and monitor how this is being achieved.





2

Making sure all children and young people can have their views, wishes and feelings heard

Why does this matter to us?

"When we do not have our voices and feelings listened to, it can make us feel upset and it's not fair that other people can make decisions about our lives without listening to us first. As care-experienced young people, we want our views, wishes and feelings heard so we can live our lives like other young people and not have adults making decisions about our lives, without listening to us first. Listen to us, so we can help make sure things that have happened to us do not happen to other children and young people in the future."

Our advocates have been so important in our lives. Sometimes they have been the only person who has been there for us and listened to what we truly want. No matter if we had messed up, our advocates have always been there for us. Every care-experienced child and young person should have an advocate who is there for them."

What could this look like?

- Reviewing how care-experienced children and young people are informed about their right to know about advocacy by making sure they are automatically referred to an advocacy service and given the option to 'opt out' when contacted by an Independent Advocate.
- Creating more support for families to prevent children and young people from entering care through introducing a legal right for all parents to receive independent advocacy if they are receiving intervention, support or care from social services.
- Giving all care-experienced young mothers in Wales an automatic referral to receive support from Project Unity.



3

Making sure all children and young people understand their rights

Why does this matter to us?

"Knowing what our rights are is one of the most important things in life. It helps us know what support we are entitled to and keeps us safe. Some of us did not learn about children's rights until we were nearly adults, and if we had known what our rights were earlier in our childhoods, a lot of outcomes could have been so much different for us. We think all professionals should teach children and young people about rights from a young age, including in schools. There should be more focus on upholding children's rights in Welsh laws and Welsh Government must always consider how their decisions will impact children's rights."

What could this look like?

- Incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Welsh domestic law to give Welsh Government more power to create change for the rights of children and young people.
- Increasing the Tax-Free Personal Allowance to help lift more young people out of poverty.
- Making public transport free for all children and young people until the age of 25.





4

Making sure all children and young people are treated fairly and do not face discrimination

Why does this matter to us?

"Discrimination happens too often and more needs to be done to stop children and young people experiencing it. One of the easiest ways is through education making small changes and realising it's okay to ask questions if you are unsure! It is important to recognise and celebrate everyone's differences."

As care-experienced children and young people, we can often be labelled or discriminated against because of our childhood experiences in care. There are lots of negative stereotypes about care experience and a lot of people do not understand what it actually means to be care-experienced. When we are labelled all the time, sometimes we can start to see ourselves as that label. Making care a protected characteristic would help to protect all care-experienced people and make sure there is more support for us, like those with other protected characteristics."

What could this look like?

- Treating 'care' as a protected characteristic across all local authorities in Wales.
- Developing a strategy to implement the anti-racism plan into practice across Wales to specifically challenge racism and discrimination experienced by children and young people.
- Reviewing the Corporate Parenting Charter in 2028 to understand what more needs to be done to help all care-experience children and young people thrive.

For more information about our pledges, please contact policy@nyas.net