

The Youth Endowment Fund

Head of Change – Children's Services

Reports to: Assistant Director for Change – Children's Services, Neighbourhoods & the Youth Sector

Salary: £67,900

Contract: 2 year fixed-term – potential to extend. Open to 0.8FTE for the right candidate

Location: Central London, Hybrid*

Closing date: 12pm on Wednesday 24th September 2025

About the Youth Endowment Fund

We're here to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

Last year, 244 people in England and Wales tragically died after being assaulted with a knife. Of these, 32 were children. Every child captured in these numbers is an important member of our community and society has a duty to protect them. Even when violence doesn't strike directly, we know that the fear of violence has a terrible effect on children's lives.

The Youth Endowment Fund exists to try and permanently change things. To succeed, we must build an exceptional body of knowledge about violence affecting young people and how we reduce it. This knowledge has to be both rigorous and highly relevant to those making decisions about how to support vulnerable young people. We need to find out what works and what doesn't through evidence synthesis, data analysis and qualitative research into children's lives. We need to convert this into highly accessible content on what works, how delivery organisations need to change their practice and how the systems they operate in need to be reformed. We then need to work with the right people that can make change happen, across systems, policies and practice, to have a real impact on reducing violence affecting children's lives.

Key Responsibilities

We build demand and interest in evidence across the Children's Services sector

This will include:

- Running events, speaking at conferences and curating webinars to bring evidence to life for practitioners

We have great relationships with the people who can make change happen.

This will include:

- Developing great relationships with senior policy makers, sector leaders and experts, including representing YEF in external meetings and speaking at events.
- Managing a Strategic Advisory Board of leading experts across the children's services sector and keep members onside and excited about our work.

We deliver our children's services system recommendations.

This will include:

- Helping to identify the right recommendations at a system level (such as changes in policy, regulation, inspection, funding, or guidance) that make it more likely highly vulnerable children get access to the right support at the right time.
- Work out the best way to make our system recommendations happen (due for publication in December 2026) and then do it – persuading the key people to make changes that make a difference.
- Tracking progress carefully, being thoughtful and creative about when and how to change the plan.

We work out the most effective ways to connect people with the evidence, then make those things happen.

This will include:

- Helping children's services leaders change how they plan or provide services to better protect children from violence, based on the YEF Children's Services Practice Guidance – due for publication in May 2026.
- Creating a plan to get people to follow our guidance, using what we know about how they think and behave.
- Creating practical tools and resources that help leaders put evidence into action
- Continuously testing and improving our approach to get better results.

As a senior member of staff in the organisation you also:

- Build a culture where it is natural to perform well and support colleagues brilliantly.
- Contribute to setting the strategy, delivering results, and building and modelling the culture that we need to succeed.

About You

You are this sort of person:

- **You know how to make change happen.** You combine analytical sharpness with emotional intelligence and real-world experience. You understand why people resist change – and how to move them through it. You're curious about human behaviour and what drives decision-making.
- **You bring deep experience of the children's services system.** You've worked at a senior level in or with children's services – potentially commissioning support for young people at risk of or involved in violence. You understand how Directors of Children's Services and other senior leaders think and know how to navigate and influence within the system.
- **You communicate complex ideas clearly.** Whether speaking or writing, you break down complicated concepts in ways that make sense to different audiences – without oversimplifying. You bring clarity where others bring jargon.
- **You get things done.** You're organised, delivery-focused, and produce high-quality work, even under pressure. You work independently and to a high standard.
- **You build trust and connect with people.** From government ministers to social workers, CEOs to 15-year-olds – you know how to listen, build rapport, and make people feel heard. You've led meetings, made strong introductions, and bring people with you.

- **You think big and adapt fast.** You're a strategic thinker who can see the big picture without losing sight of the detail. You're logical, creative, and open to challenge – always testing and refining your ideas.
- **You understand young people.** You get what life can be like for vulnerable young people and you understand the systems and organisations around them. Ideally, you've seen this first-hand, whether professionally or personally.
- **You're committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion.** Not just in theory – but in how you work, who you listen to, and what you prioritise.

You must have this sort of experience.

- **Delivering concrete change in practice or systems that improved children's lives.** You have significant experience in leading behaviour, practice or policy changes within a children's services setting. You can show how these have been effective in delivering tangible change.
- **Leadership experience in the children's services system.** You've worked at a senior level in or with children's services – especially local authority children's services, commissioning and/or children's social care policy, and you understand how to navigate and influence within these complex systems.
- **Firsthand knowledge of the system that supports highly vulnerable children,** particularly those at risk of or involved in violence. You understand the barriers these children face and what it takes to get them the right support.

While it's not a criterion, we're especially interested to hear from applicants who have lived experience of youth violence.

It's also important to us that the people we hire do not discriminate. We believe in being inclusive and giving everyone an equal chance to succeed. Applications are welcome from all regardless of age, sex, gender identity, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation, transgender status or social economic background.

Hybrid Working Details

The office is based in Central London. Those living in and around London are expected to be in the office for a minimum of 2 days per week. If you live outside of London and work remotely, you'll be expected to work from the London office 2 days per month.

As part of our commitment to flexible working we will consider a range of options for the successful applicant. All options can be discussed at the interview stage.

To Apply

To apply, please send a CV, your answers to the three questions below and complete the monitoring form by clicking on "*Apply for this*" button by **12pm on Wednesday 24th September 2025**.

When applying for this role, please ensure that your cover letter can answer, within a maximum of 1000 words, the following questions:

Improving practice or systems

1. Can you describe a time when you successfully supported children's services leaders to improve practice or systems? Please include the scale and context of your experience. (maximum 500 words)

Developing strategy

2. Please provide an example of a strategy you developed from scratch and implemented independently. What did you do, what was the impact, what did you learn? (maximum 500 words)

Personal and professional experiences in violence prevention

3. What personal and professional experiences have shaped your understanding of the children's services sector's role in preventing violence? (maximum 500 words)

Interview Process

This will be a 2-stage interview process. The first stage interview will take place on **9 and 10 October 2025**

The second stage interviews are currently scheduled for the **week commencing 13 October 2025**.

PLEASE NOTE: We do not sponsor work permits and you will be required to provide proof of your eligibility to work in the UK.

Benefits Include

- £1,000 professional development budget annually
- 28 days holiday plus Bank Holidays
- Employee Assistance Programme – 24hr phone line for free confidential support
- Volunteering days – 4 half days per year
- Death in service – 4 times annual salary
- Flexible hours. Core office hours 10am – 4pm
- Financial support including travel and hardship loans
- Employer contributed pension of 5%

Personal Data

Your personal data will be shared for the purposes of the recruitment exercise. This includes our HR team, interviewers (who may include other partners in the project and independent advisors), relevant team managers and our IT service provider if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. We do not share your data with other third parties, unless your application for employment is successful and we make you an offer of employment. We will then share your data with former employers to obtain references for you. We do not transfer your data outside the European Economic Area.